

Child Life Practicum

The child life practicum at The Children's Hospital at OU Medicine is offered once a year during the summer and fall semesters. The practicum is a minimum of 150 hour (8-16 hours per week for 14-16 weeks) observation experience supervised by Certified Child life Specialists, with opportunities to work on developing skills and assist with the implementation of special events.

The practicum schedule consists of one day in orientation, one day to present final project and wrap up assignments, and five rotations. The schedule is tentatively as follows:

- Week 1: General orientation to the hospital and the child life department
- Weeks 2-13: Rotations (2 two week rotations, 2 four week rotations, 1 play rotation)
- Week 14: Closing week to finish assignments and present final project

Units available for child life rotations:

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| General Medicine | Dialysis |
| Surgical Services | Pediatric Intensive Care |
| Outpatient Surgery | Radiology |
| Outpatient Hematology/Oncology | Emergency Department |
| Neonatal Intensive Care | |
| Inpatient Hematology/Oncology/Stem Cell Transplant Unit | |
| Adolescent Medicine/Pediatric Epilepsy Monitoring Unit | |

There *may* also be some observation opportunities available in Adult Services. Practicum rotations will be decided based upon the availability of child life specialists. Students typically follow the schedule of the current rotation supervisor. Students may be asked to participate in after hours and/or weekend child life services.

Child Life Mission Statement

The Child Life Department advocates for and assists in meeting the psychosocial needs of patients and their families. By providing developmental support, preparation for medical events and maintaining a normalized environment, the department strives to minimize hospital induced stress, maximize positive coping and promote a family centered culture throughout OU Medical Center.

Practicum Assignments

Weekly Journals
Readings
Medical Art Individual and Group Activities
Diagnosis Presentation
Procedure Checklist
Internship Applications and Site Comparison Grid
Mock Interview/Resume Review

Student Role

The role of a practicum student is very important. While observing how child life specialists provide recreational, educational and emotional support to our patients and their families, a practicum student will be experiencing growth in the child life field. Practicum students have opportunities to interact with and observe child life specialists with patients in various areas of the hospital both in groups and in individualized settings. Practicum students should focus on becoming familiar with the hospital environment while assessing the developmental levels of children and identifying stressors that accompany the hospital experience for patients and families.

Child Life Practicum Goals/Objectives:

- 1) Develop a personal comfort level and confidence to function within the hospital environment
- 2) Increase knowledge regarding children's response to hospitalization, issues specific to children's developmental levels, and subsequent planning to meet developmental and/or therapeutic needs
- 3) Increase knowledge regarding the importance of therapeutic play opportunities for hospitalized children and the creation of therapeutic environments
- 4) The ability to build rapport with a child/teen and engage him/her in normalization activities
- 5) Increase knowledge regarding the role of and basic approaches of preparation and medical play
- 6) The ability to set goals and objectives that will enhance personal and professional learning within child life
- 7) General playroom management (i.e., safety, selections of toys, craft materials, activities)