
Dear child life practicum applicant,

Thank you for your interest in our child life practicum! The Cook Children's child life practicum program provides students an opportunity to become more familiar with the field of child life and the needs of hospitalized infants, children, youth, and families.

This packet is designed to outline the Cook Children's application requirements. Please read it all the way through. Many of your questions are answered in this packet. Should you have additional questions or seek clarification, please refer to the FAQ section of our webpage or email

ChildLifeStudents@cookchildrens.org.

We recognize how important it is to find a program that is the right fit for you. Our Child Life department is large, with over 45 Certified Child Life Specialists. Other department members are child life activity coordinators, Child Life Zone staff, music therapists, school teachers, therapeutic clowns, artists in residence, and the resident dogs in our Sit...Stay...PLAY program. Below you will find a brief overview of our program philosophy. We hope this helps you have a better understanding of our program.

Our philosophy

The Child Life program at Cook Children's Medical Center strongly emphasizes balance between play and preparation. This balance is achieved through clinical practice. We are a "hands-on" department. Though we believe that we have a function in educating staff and advocating for the children, the majority of our time is spent with the patients and families. We believe child life has a role in the changing health care environment and we are evolving in response to this. In addition to the traditional inpatient areas, we offer integrated services in the Emergency Department, Radiology, PICU, NICU, Special Procedures Unit, and several outpatient areas. We are team focused, both within our department and within our areas of coverage, and we see students as a part of that team. All students are given opportunities for self-directed learning. We also help them identify and access resources within the health care system.

Program Information

- We choose to follow the [Association of Child Life Professionals recommended standards](#) for child life practicum
- We offer child life practicum three times a year beginning in January, May, and September
- The child life practicum is a 13-week experience
 - 16 hours/week, consisting of two 8-hour days (either Tuesday & Wednesday or Wednesday & Thursday)
- Students will obtain between 150-200 hours of child life practicum experience
- Students are expected to be available for child life practicum during standard business hours
 - Certain individual rotations may require a practicum student to work some evenings
- Child life practicum curriculum includes a variety of assignments and readings

Applicant Requirements

- Junior level in college or beyond, graduate student, or college graduate
 - Must have a minimum of 100 hours of experience interacting with children, beyond required experiences for coursework
 - Experience in an established child life program is preferred
 - Experience in a hospital is preferred
 - Applicants must show the following courses with a final passing grade or “in progress” on the academic transcript
 - (1) child development course
 - (1) play course
 - (1) child life course
- IMPORTANT:** Please view [this document](#) and visit the [ACLP webpage](#) for more detailed information.
- GPA of 3.0 or above
 - If the child life practicum is for academic credit or the fulfillment of any academic requirements, it is the applicant’s responsibility to verify the child life practicum at Cook Children’s Medical Center fulfills the expectations of the academic program

Application deadlines

CL Practicum Session	Application deadline	Initial Offer Date	Student must accept position by	2 nd Offer Date
Winter/Spring	September 19	4 th Tuesday of October	the following Wednesday	the following Thursday
Summer	January 19	4 th Tuesday of February	the following Wednesday	the following Thursday
Fall	March 29	3 rd Tuesday of May	the following Wednesday	the following Thursday

Application Submission Requirements

- We use an [online application process](#)
- All documents must be submitted to the online submission portal in PDF format
- The submission portal closes at 11:59 pm (Central time) the night of the application deadline. It is your responsibility to ensure your application submission is complete by that time.
- Reference forms will be completed online as well, and are also due by 11:59 p.m. (Central) the night of the application deadline. It is your responsibility to notify your references of this deadline requirement.

Explanation of Application Requirements

- Cook Children's Child Life Practicum application (available on the Cook Children's child life practicum webpage)
- Cook Children's essay question responses (questions are on the second page of the application)
- All academic transcripts; unofficial transcripts are acceptable
- Two (2) Reference Forms – this is an electronic form that is submitted via email by the reference. You will identify your references through this link: [Child Life Reference Requests](#)
 - One (1) reference must be completed a person who has directly observed and/or supervised your experience with children.
 - One (1) reference may be completed by a person (nonfamily member) of your choice.
 - You will receive a confirmation email each time one of your references submits the form.
 - Your application will be considered incomplete if all reference forms are not received via email by 11:59 p.m. on the application deadline date (deadline dates are posted above)
- Professional résumé

Application reminders

- The [online submission portal](#) will close at 11:59 p.m. the night of the application deadline. Any incomplete applications will not be considered
- Each application will be examined to ensure that the student meets the program's basic requirements
- Submitting a completed application does not guarantee a student an interview or placement; only the most qualified applicants will be invited for an interview

Interview information

- We use an interview format called Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI)
- Only the most qualified applicants will be offered interviews
 - An on-site interview is strongly preferred, though phone interviews may be allowed due to travel constraints
 - It works to your benefit as a candidate to participate in an on-site interview. This allows you to see our program and for our student leadership team to develop a better understanding of your strengths.
- We interview between eight and ten students each semester

Additional requirements for applicants who are accepted as child life practicum students –

This is for your information only, these will be completed once a student is accepted into the child life practicum program. Costs associated with each requirement are approximations.

- Clear criminal background check
- Current negative drug screen (\$25)
- Current negative TB Test
- American Heart Association Healthcare Provider CPR certification (\$65)
- General volunteer orientation
- Patient care volunteer orientation
- Current health insurance
- Proof of individual liability insurance or coverage by university (\$35)
- Signed individual educational experience agreement (when practicum is not for school credit)
- Signed affiliation agreement between university and Cook Children's (when practicum is done for school credit)

If you have additional questions, please contact:

ChildLifeStudents@cookchildrens.org or call **Linsey Hammon at 682-885-4740**

Child life practicum program goals

1. Enrich rapport building skills
2. Introduce child life services
3. Develop, implement, and adapt activities
4. Enhance assessment skills

The child life practicum student is exposed to the child life profession through observation and participation in child life activities. This exposure is designed to prepare the child life practicum student for a more intensive, career-oriented training experience (internship).

Through observation of child life professionals and hospitalized children and teens, active participation in various areas of programming, and ongoing supervision and feedback, the student will integrate knowledge with practice as she or he...

1. Becomes familiar with the child life profession.
2. Develops communication skills with children/families in the health care setting, as well as with other health care professionals.
3. Recognizes and understands children's/adolescent's reactions to stress, illness, and pain.
4. Recognizes the value of play and psychosocially supportive interventions.
5. Learns to plan and facilitate a variety of activities for groups of children of diverse ages and capabilities, as well as for individual children or teens and practices these skills in activity centers and at bedside.
6. Gains knowledge of medical terminology, diagnoses, and procedures.
7. Sets goals for learning and evaluates own performance.
8. Begins to develop professional attitudes, growth, maturity, and judgment by functioning as a member of the health care team.

Specific expectations will be reviewed during program orientation.