



DUKE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL & HEALTH CENTER
Child & Adolescent Life Program

Thank you for your interest in the Duke Children's Hospital Child & Adolescent Life Internship Program! This internship is an unpaid, intensive, clinically based position spanning 16 weeks and covering more than 600 hours of direct patient care. Enclosed you will find more information about how to apply, Duke Children's Hospital, Duke's Child & Adolescent Life history, a description of the internship program, student learning objectives, and possible internship rotations.

**Duke Children's Internship is offered only two times a year:
Spring Semester (January – April) and Fall Semester (September-December)**

Please note, Duke Children's follows the ACLP guidelines for Spring and Fall internship deadlines and offer dates. Internship-ready candidates can find more details about the application process [here](#) and complete the "Internship Readiness Common Application" at <https://aclp.smapply.io/>

Once complete, you will need to email your PDF application to childlifestudents@duke.edu to ensure both Duke Student Coordinators receive it. Simply attach your completed PDF application to the body of an email along with your full name and the semester you are applying to.

Please be aware, Duke Children's Hospital has the following additional requirements for intern candidates:

1. Successful completion of a Child Life practicum under the supervision of a Certified Child Life Specialist
2. Affiliation with an academic institution for the duration of the student placement (internship semester)

Upon receipt and review of the completed application, Duke's Student Coordinators will be in contact with you regarding your application status, potential interview, and potential internship offer based on the ACLP deadlines. Phone, on-site, or Zoom interviews will be conducted following the application review process. No additional documentation will be reviewed or required.

If you have any other questions regarding the Duke Internship program, please contact:

Michelle Ashford, CCLS or Robin Hales, CCLS
919-684-6003 or ChildLifeStudents@duke.edu

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Duke Children's Program Mission & History

Child Life Specialists strive to meet the psychosocial and emotional needs of pediatric patients and their families while in the health care environment. Specialists promote positive coping related to a child's stress and anxiety as well as promote the normal growth and development before, during and after hospitalization or outpatient clinic visits. These primary goals are achieved through developmentally appropriate therapeutic play opportunities; psychological and emotional preparation related to medical/surgical and diagnostic procedures; advocacy; emotional support for patients, parents, and siblings; and helping to maintain a child and family friendly environment.

The Child & Adolescent Life Program at Duke Children's Hospital was established in 1969. Since then, Child Life Specialists have been working as part of the interdisciplinary health care team collaborating with nurses, doctors, social workers, school teachers, respiratory therapists, physical and occupational therapists, dieticians, chaplains and other technicians providing comprehensive quality patient care.

It is the mission of the Child & Adolescent Life Program to provide all pediatric patients and their families access to Child Life services. We believe all children have the right to understand what is happening to them, be supported by their caregivers and staff, and have opportunities for play and mastery especially in new or unfamiliar medical environments. As Child Life specialists, we are trained in helping children and their families overcome challenging medical events while promoting effective coping through play, preparation, education, and self-expressive activities. The Child & Adolescent Life Program also provides procedural and emotional support for families and encourage opportunities for optimal development of children facing a broad range of challenging experiences.

The Child & Adolescent Life staff consists of 13 full-time specialists with Bachelor and Master Degrees in a variety of fields including Child Life, Psychology, Education, Child Development, and Counseling. Child Life services are currently provided in areas including:

- 1A (inpatient general surgery, ENT, urology, neurosurgery, organ transplant, & ortho)
- 2A (inpatient mental health, GI, complex care, pulmonology & CF)
- 2B (inpatient Pediatric Intensive Care Unit)
- 3A-3B (inpatient Cardiac Intensive Care and step down)
- 4A (inpatient Pediatric Bone Marrow Transplant and Cellular Therapy)
- 4B (inpatient hematology/oncology, general pediatrics, neurology, mental health)
- Pediatric Outpatient Specialty Clinics
- Surgical and PACU areas
- Procedure Sedation Unit
- Outpatient Hematology/Oncology and Brain Tumor clinic
- Pediatric Emergency Department

Additionally, the Duke Child Life team has a Child Life assistant position that covers the inpatient areas and activity rooms.

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Internship Overview

The student internship program at Duke Children's Hospital and Health Center is an unpaid 16 week, 600+ hour program. Throughout the semester, an Internship Coordinator and two Rotation Supervisors supervise students. All supervision is done by certified Child Life Specialists who meet ACLP qualifications based on their clinical hours. Students will also have opportunities to shadow and learn from other members of the Child Life team as well as the greater multi-disciplinary team.

Internships are designed according to the following sixteen-week schedule:

Week 1:	Orientation and Shadow Week
Weeks 2-8:	First Rotation
Weeks 9-15:	Second Rotation
Week 16:	Independent Conclusion Week

During the orientation week, students will shadow several Child Life Specialists on staff. This will allow students the opportunity to learn more about Duke and the various inpatient and outpatient areas where Child Life services are provided.

Beginning week 2, students are assigned to a seven-week rotation based on student preferences and availability. Rotation supervisors only have one intern at a time to provide their full attention to that intern. A brief description of rotations are included below along with student responsibilities and expectations. Week 9 begins the second rotation, allowing students to complete both an inpatient rotation and an outpatient rotation.

Throughout the internship, our goal is to provide interns with opportunities to further build their clinical skills. This typically means the last week in each rotation is building to complete independence. Additionally, interns will complete daily assessments, plan and provide appropriate interventions, and create unique programming to support treatment goals to ensure they are job ready at the end of the semester.

Finally, the last week of internship is designed as an independent week for students to complete any last assignments, present to staff about their accomplishments, transition care for patients/families back to primary Child Life specialist, and close relationships with staff. There might also be opportunities for students to see units or procedures that have not been accomplished throughout the previous 15 weeks.

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Student Rotations

Available rotations may change each semester. However, student coordinators will try to accommodate student preferences listed during the interview process.

Inpatient Settings

1A Pediatric Inpatient Unit: 17 bed unit serving infants – adolescents. Common patient populations here include general surgery, ENT, urology, neurosurgery, organ transplant, & orthopedics.

2A Pediatric Inpatient Unit: 17 bed unit serving infants – adolescents. Common patient populations here include step-down, organ transplant, pulmonary, general surgery, and complex care.

2B Pediatric Intensive Care Unit: 20 bed PICU serving infants – adolescents. Common patient populations here include pulmonary, neurology, surgery, and trauma.

3A-3B Pediatric Cardiac Intensive Care Unit: a 20 bed ICU and 17 bed step down unit serving infants – adolescents. All cardiology patients are admitted in these two units.

4A Pediatric Transplant and Cell Therapy: 17 bed bone marrow and stem cell transplant unit serving infants – adolescents.

4B Pediatric Inpatient Unit: 20 bed unit serving infants – adolescents. Common patient populations here include neurology, EEG monitoring, psych, hematology, and oncology.

Outpatient Settings

Procedure Sedation Unit – 7 bed unit where outpatient procedures are completed with moderate to deep sedation. Common procedures include: MRI's, CT's, LP's, VCUG's, and various biopsies.

General Outpatient Specialty Clinics – Pediatric clinics include ENT, Cardiology, Infectious Disease, Endocrine, and Rheumatology. Child Life provides procedural support and teaching.

General Outpatient Specialty Clinics – Pediatric clinics include Neurosurgery, Nephrology, and GI. Child Life provides procedural support and teaching.

Pre-Op, Surgical, and PACU Areas – all pediatric surgeries and procedures under anesthesia happen here. Child Life provides surgery preparation and anesthesia induction support.

Outpatient Hematology/Oncology and Neuro-Oncology clinics – Child Life provides diagnosis teaching, procedural support, and coping support for all outpatient pediatric oncology patients.

Pediatric Emergency Department – 18 bed unit specific to pediatric trauma and emergency needs.

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Student Education Program Goals and Objectives

A Child Life internship is the foundation for professional skills of assessment, intervention, preparation and documentation. Students will begin the internship by completely observing Certified Child Life Specialists. As both the inpatient and outpatient rotations progress, students will be asked to provide care with the support of their clinical rotation supervisor, and then finally end with almost complete independence - providing direct clinical care for patients and families. This level of responsibility progresses gradually, until the student is functioning at the level of a starting Child Life specialist.

Throughout the internship experience, we expect students to:

- Gather assessment information about how patients and families are coping with hospitalization and/or illness.
- Provide therapeutic play, interventions, and normalization activities for both groups of children in the playroom setting and individual children at the bedside or outpatient clinics.
- Provide medical, diagnosis, pre-procedural, and pre-operative teaching and education for both inpatients and outpatients.
- Provide medical play and exploration with children in the group setting and on a one-to-one basis.
- Provide procedural preparation for patients in the inpatient and outpatient setting.
- Provide procedural support for patients in the inpatient and outpatient setting.
- Provide family centered care including emotional support and education for caregivers or siblings of pediatric patients.

Other Clinical and Professional Skills

Throughout the internship experience, students will also:

- Enhance charting skills – write objective observations, assessments and recommendations in patient's medical record.
- Participate in patient care conferences as necessary communicating the psychosocial and emotional needs of the patient to the interdisciplinary team members.
- Advocate for patient and family needs – escalating concerns as appropriate.
- Complete weekly assignments, an individual student project, a group administrative project, and a case study.
- Keep weekly journals reflecting on Child Life interventions provided for patients and families, specialized needs of children in the health care setting, and personal goals for the internship.
- Attend and participate in weekly student seminars provided by certified Child Life Specialists.
- Occasionally attend and participate in monthly Child Life staff meetings.
- Supervise college and community volunteers.
- Observe and assist in the facilitation of special events, entertainers, and visitors coming to the hospital