Ann & Robert H. Lurie
Children's Hospital of Chicago®

Child Life Internship Frequently Asked Questions

Before submitting your internship application, please review the list of questions below.

Q. Where can I gain more information about Child Life as a career?
The Association of Child Life Professionals (ACLP) has a wealth of information about Child Life including educational information, the role of a child life specialist, where they work, job placement, average pay by location, etc.

Q. What major fields of study do most child life specialists have?
A bachelor's or master's degree in a variety of areas such as Child Life, Child Development, Sociology, Psychology, Human Development, Therapeutic Recreation, Counseling or other related fields with an emphasis on child development and/or working with children under stress.

Although these are examples of degrees, we do have applicants with degrees in other fields. To be considered for our child life internship, we require that applicants have completed the 10 specific college courses and completed the eligibility assessment per the ACLP. For more information on the steps to becoming certified, see the Become Certified (childlife.org)

Q. Can I shadow a child life specialist?
Due to patient/family confidentiality regulations, job-shadowing opportunities are not available at Lurie Children's.

Q. Do you offer a practicum?
Yes, we do offer a practicum. Learn more.

Q. How can I volunteer? Will I be able to volunteer under the supervision of a CCLS?
Opportunities are available to volunteer under the supervision of a CCLS. If you are interested in volunteering at Lurie Children's, please check out our volunteer requirements through out Volunteer Resource department.

Q. When should I apply for an internship?
The Child Life program at Lurie Children's follows the guidelines for application recommended by the ACLP. We keep our website as up to date as possible with the appropriate due dates for applications and terms we will be offering an internship. Please check out the updated application deadlines at Clinical Internship (childlife.org) for all rotations.

Q. Are the applications online or to be mailed in?
Our application is online. We follow ACLP guidelines and utilize the Common Internship Readiness Application: Internship Readiness Common Application (childlife.org).. We use a Microsoft Form link with all the Common App contents along with an additional video submission requirement. These two documents are the only components that will be reviewed. We will not review letters of recommendation, cover letters, or resumes.

Q. How many hours is the internship?
Interns will complete 600 hours during this internship.

Q. When do I take the exam – before or after the internship is complete?
You will take the Child Life certifying exam after the internship is complete. The Clinical Internship Coordinator will sign and verify that all standards for entry level clinical competence have been achieved. The Clinical Experience Verification form with the required signature will be necessary to provide to the ACLP to establish eligibility to sit for the exam.

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Q. Is there a fee to complete a Child Life Internship or Application?
There is no fee to apply or to complete the child life internship here at Lurie Children's Hospital.

Q. If I am from out of town, do you provide housing?
Housing is not provided, but links to resources can be given to help in your search.

Q. How many interns are accepted for each offering?
The number of interns accepted will vary for each internship offering due to the number of applicants and supervisor availability.

Q. What is the structure of the Child Life internship?
Pending staff availability, we aim to offer Winter/Spring and Fall rotations set forth by the ACLP. Interns will rotate through two different areas of the hospital, one inpatient and one outpatient, with additional shadowing opportunities as available. Daily schedules will match those of the rotation supervisor; this may include weekend days and evening hours.

We require interns to complete two case studies, one final project, and weekly journal entries. Interns will meet for weekly reflective supervision with the Clinical Internship Coordinator. The Child Life internship program at Lurie Children's currently utilizes the Child Life Internship Curriculum developed by the ACLP.

Q. Do interns get to pick where they're placed?
Interns have the ability to provide feedback about which units/populations in the hospital are most interesting to them. It is the Clinical Internship Coordinator's final decision as to where an intern is placed based on supervisor availability.

Q. Do you accept interns that are not currently enrolled in/affiliated with an academic institution?
Yes. We accept both independent applicants as well as applicants who are enrolled in school. If a candidate is completing an independent internship, it is the applicant's responsibility to obtain liability insurance with guidance from the Clinical Internship Coordinator.

Q. Do you accept interns who have not completed a practicum?

Yes. We do not require that an intern complete a Child Life practicum.

Q. What are the expected steps within the application and interviewing process?

Applications will be reviewed by our internship committee. We will then reach out to our top candidates to move forward with a virtual interview with our team. We follow the ACLP guidelines for offer dates for internships.