Child Life Pre-Internship Program

Texas Children's Hospital is the nation's largest, not-for-profit pediatric hospital. This state-of- the-art facility provides primary, secondary and tertiary care for a diverse population of chronically and acutely ill children. Texas Children's Hospital collaborates with the Baylor College of Medicine to support a comprehensive pediatric medical education and research program.

The Child Life Program was established in 1975 to meet the unique developmental, social, emotional, and recreational needs of hospitalized children. Reporting directly to Patient and Family Services, program team members include: 3 managers, approximately 50 child life specialists, 8 activity coordinators, 3 music therapists, 2 art therapists, 7 animal assisted therapy coordinators, 2 media producers, 1 gaming activity coordinator, 2 school coordinators, 2 children's library coordinators, and an administrative secretary. Child Life Specialists serve as members of interdisciplinary teams in the following patient care areas at Texas Children's Hospital: Pediatric ICU, Transitional ICU, Orthopedics, Endocrine, General Medicine/Transplant, Surgery, Cardiology, Pulmonary, Neurology, Hematology/Oncology, Nephrology, Pediatric Dialysis, Outpatient Clinical Care, Radiology, Emergency Center, Infant Care areas, Premature Nursery, Neonatal ICU, and Women's services. Child Life Specialists in all areas of the hospital utilize therapeutic play to promote growth and development, education, and coping skills of pediatric patients.

Program Description: The Child Life Pre-internship at Texas Children's Hospital is designed as a pre-internship experience for individuals interested in pursuing a child life internship and a career as a certified child life specialist. During the pre-internship, students have an opportunity to become familiar with the child life profession and children's reactions to hospitalization and illness. The program's foundation is to provide the students the opportunity to learn how child life specialists apply theory to practice. Therefore, a large part of the pre-internship schedule consists of students shadowing child life specialists and other staff to gain assessment skills through observation. In addition, students will also have "hands-on" experience with patients and families as they plan activities and develop communication skills.

Pre-internship placements are unpaid and do not guarantee future employment at Texas Children's Hospital. Housing, transportation, meals, and medical insurance are the responsibility of the student.

For additional general information about practicums/ pre-internship, internships, certification, and the child life profession, please visit the Association of Child Life Professionals website, at www.childlife.org.

Pre-internship Overview:

There will be two different pre-internship placement tracks that are adaptive to student's needs. Students will choose one of the two tracks mentioned below. These tracks include:

Play and coping track: Immersive play experience that is heavily focused on engaging patients and families in play throughout various hospital experiences and environments. Students will gain

confidence in providing play as a coping tool to all developmental stages and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Procedural and coping track: In depth experience shadowing and observing child life specialists providing education and coping support for patients in various hospital experiences and environments. Students will expand their knowledge and understanding of providing coping support in procedural situations.

The specific goals and objectives of the program are:

1. To become familiar with child life profession.

2. To recognize and understand patients' and families' reactions to stress, illness, and pain.

3. To recognize the developmental, psychosocial, and medical needs of patients and families and how those needs are incorporated into goals of normalization and coping.

4. To understand the value of play in the health care setting and increase skills in facilitating therapeutic play through planning group and individual activities.

5. To develop communication skills with patients/families and other health care professionals.

6. To recognize the importance of working within an interdisciplinary team.

7. To continue to develop professional attitudes, maturity, and judgment.

8. To set goals and self-evaluate one's performance.

9. To integrate theory and research into practice (Evidence Based Practice).

Pre-internship Schedule:

The pre-internship program offers a comprehensive experience within the child life department. Variable options available for length of pre-internship sessions with students completing a four week or six week pre-internship. Schedules are mutually agreed upon between the child life pre-internship coordinators and the student. This schedule may vary due to child life staffing and other considerations. Alternative scheduling options can be discussed on a case by case basis.

Entrance Requirements:

Applicants must:

A. Per hospital requirements, all applicants **must be university affiliated** or **receiving course credit** at the time of their internship or practicum/pre-internship experience

B. Have completed 3 out of the 10 ACLP required courses for Academic Eligibility before Practicum/pre-internship start date:

a. Play course

b. Child Development course

c. Child Life course Revised 08/10/2022

C. Ability to pass a mandatory health screening and background check according to Texas Children's Hospital Policy.

D. The practicum/pre-internship must be completed within one semester if accepted.

A complete application must include the following:

A. SACLP Practicum/pre-internship Application pages 2-8

B. SACLP Course In-Progress forms (only for the 3 required courses)

C. College or university transcript(s) that list course work. Does not need to be official.

Our pre-internship program will not be considering resumes or reference forms for application reviews so please do not submit these items.

Unfortunately, the submission of an application does not guarantee placement at Texas Children's Hospital, as our program has a high volume of applicants and a limited number of placements. Due to limited placement availability, we highly recommended that individuals apply for a pre-internship experience at several institutions.

*Individuals meeting the minimum entrance requirements may submit an application via email. Applicants are responsible for meeting the application deadlines listed below.

Application deadlines: The Child Life Department of Texas Children's Hospital offers child life pre-internship experiences three times per year. The deadlines for the applications are as such:

Summer Term: January 8, 2027 Fall Term: March 12, 2027 Winter/Spring Term: August 27, 2027

SEND COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKET ELECTRONICALLY TO childlifepracticum@texaschildrens.org

** All documents must be sent in doc or pdf files. No google drive documents will be accepted.