

Child Life Services

Child Life Student Program: Phase 1 Field Placement

Referral must be submitted by email to childlifestudents@helendevoschildrens.org from the university child life educator or advisor. Please include “Phase 1 Referral” in the subject line of the email when submitting the form.

Important Program Information

Students who complete Phase 1 at Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital are not guaranteed a Phase 2 (120 hour Practicum) or a Phase 3 Internship (600 hour clinical field placement) at Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital. Students applying for Phase 1 field placement must be pursuing Child Life Certification through the ACLP. Child Life Students must show proof that they are enrolled in an affiliated college or university (having a signed affiliation agreement with Spectrum Health- to be verified by Spectrum Health Human Resources) at the time of placement.

Eligibility

Phase 1 student field placement is open to interested child life students pursuing certification as a child life specialist through the ACLP. Students must be enrolled in an affiliated university at the time of their Phase 1 placement.

Phase 1 Student Field Placement Overview:

The Phase 1 Field Placement at Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital offers students:

- Structured field hours directly with patients and families in a pediatric health care setting under the direct supervision of a Certified Child Life Specialist. This may include interactions with patients in playroom or bedside setting.
- An understanding of the philosophies and goals of Child Life Services gained through observational experiences with Certified Child Life Specialists.
- Exposure to the psychological impact of medical experiences on children and families.
- Opportunities to observe a wide range of the implementation of educational and developmentally appropriate activities.
- An opportunity to conduct an interview with child life professionals, music therapists, and/or hospital schoolteachers within the Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital Child Life Program.

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Phase 1 Student Field Placement Shifts:

Placements are 16 weeks. Completing one 8-hour shift per week.

- Monday-Friday
 - 7am-3:30pm; 11:30am-8pm
- Saturday & Sunday
 - 7:30am-4pm; 11:30am-8pm

Placement Opportunities:

Placements are available three times per year.

- Winter Placement: January to April
 - Referral Deadline: November 1st
- Summer Placement: May to August
 - Referral Deadline: March 1st
- Fall Placement: September to December
 - Referral Deadline: July 1st

Completion of the Child Life Student Phase 1 Field Placement does not take the place of the required 600 hour clinical experience, required by the ACLP for child life certification. However, the phase 1 placement may be required for application eligibility. Because each hospital program has different eligibility requirements for application, students should become familiar with the requirements of the programs where they are applying for their required clinical experience.

Child Life Student Phase 1 Field Placement Referral

Must be completed by a university child life educator or advisor.

Student Contact Information

Name: _____

Primary Email: _____

Primary Phone number: _____

Education

College / University: _____

Major(s): _____

Minor(s): _____

Academic Advisor / Supervisor

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Please share your reasons for referring this student:

1. How have you seen this student perform at their best?

2. Describe the student's qualities and skill set that will benefit them on their journey to becoming a child life specialist.

Clinical Field Placement Definitions:

Phase 1: Phase 1 field placement is an introduction to play, as the foundational work of a child life specialist, in a children's hospital setting. Students will have a balance of direct patient interaction (in playrooms and at bedside) and indirect responsibilities (cleaning and restocking toys, passing out activities, sorting donations, etc...) all under the supervision of a Certified Child Life Specialist (no minimum hour requirement for supervisor). Phase 1 hours are required to meet the application eligibility for most Phase 2 (practicum) and Phase 3 (internship) student programs. Any academic credit received for Phase 1 field placement will be at the discretion of the student's the academic institution.

Phase 2: Phase 2 field placement is commonly referred to as a "Child Life Practicum" and serves as introduction to the psychosocial therapy provided Certified Child Life Specialists. A minimum of 100 hours is recommended for Phase 2, with the majority of these hours spent shadowing the clinical interventions of the Certified Child Life Specialists. Phase 2 students are required to complete an assigned curriculum and will receive a written evaluation from their preceptor. The Phase 2 supervisor must have a minimum of 2000 hours of paid work experience as a Certified Child Life Specialist. Although most students receive academic credit for Phase 2, credit received is at the discretion of the student's academic institution. A Phase 2 field experience is not required by the ACLP but is strongly recommended. Most child life programs do require a Phase 2 experience to meet the eligibility requirements to apply for a Phase 3 placement.

Phase 3: Phase 3 field placement is commonly referred to as a "Child Life Clinical Internship" and is the required phase for students seeking to become eligible for child life certification through the ACLP. Most child life programs require completion of phases 1 and 2 to apply for a Phase 3 internship. The clinical internship is a minimum of 600 hours and internship supervisors must have a minimum of 4000 hours of paid work experience as a Certified Child Life Specialist. For more information on the complete list of ACLP eligibility requirements for Phase 3, visit childlife.org.

Phase 4: Phase 4 field placement is commonly referred to as a "Child Life Fellowship." This opportunity is not required for child life certification through the ACLP. However, students in a child life master's degree program may receive course credit for completing a fellowship. The fellowship is a "paid internship" experience, for 1 year. Fellowship students are given a professional mentor and are expected to complete a research assignment during their fellowship. Applicants must have completed all requirements to sit for the child life certification exam, prior to applying for the fellowship.