



Dear Student,

Thank you for your interest in a Child Life internship at Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC Children's). CHOC is a licensed 238-bed acute care pediatric facility located in the city of Orange, approximately 5 miles from Disneyland. Enclosed is some information about our internship program along with an application.

Our Child Life internship is a 15-week 600 hour full-time program in which candidates are given an opportunity to put classroom theories into practice. Applicants must have completed an undergraduate program in Child Development, Early Childhood Education, Child Life, Psychology, Recreation Therapy, or a closely related field by the start of the internship experience.

The child life department is staffed by a manager, a department assistant, 12 child life specialists, an activity specialist, and a music therapist. Interns are exposed to multiple units of the hospital throughout their experience. To provide you with the best experience, we are not able to offer weekend or evening hours for internship completion. Our comprehensive program requires flexibility in your schedule. Rotations may begin as early as 4:30am (surgery) or end as late as 12:30am (emergency department). Unfortunately, we do not currently have any stipend or housing available.

To be considered for the internship, you will need to submit the following:

- CHOC Children's Internship Application
- Transcripts from all universities attended (student copy is acceptable), which reflect coursework that meets the requirements for the Child Life Specialist Certification Exam
- Current resume
- Letters of recommendation
- Documentation showing a minimum of 100 hours child life practicum or 150 hours volunteer work under the supervision of a child life specialist
- 1 page essay describing yourself
- Child Life Council course work review showing you have met the criteria for the Child Life Certifying Exam (See Child Life Council Website)

After the application packet is evaluated, you may be contacted for an interview. Selection of interns is based on college major, GPA in core subjects, previous experience working with children, letters of recommendation, and the interview.

If you wish to apply for an internship position, please read the enclosed packet and fill out the application information requested. A contractual agreement between the university and our facility must also be in place prior to the start of any internship. If you are pursuing completion of your internship hours without a university affiliation, please make note of that on the application.

Again, we thank you for your interest in the CHOC Child Life internship program and look forward to receiving your application information. Please feel free to contact me at (714) 532-8473 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
Annie Esguerra, MS, CCLS  
Child Life Intern Coordinator



## MISSION STATEMENT

*"To nurture, advance, and protect the health and well-being of children"*

Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC) is the center of a regional pediatric health care system dedicated to serve the medical needs of infants, children, and adolescents. The hospital not only provides high quality care to our patients, but CHOC also promotes the wellness of children by reaching out to the community with pediatric health education, preventive medical care, and child health advocacy programs. Our goals are further supported by pediatric research and medical education.

Driven by abiding interest in the care of the whole child, CHOC educates and involves the family in the care delivery process while nurturing the patient's emotional, psychological and physical well-being. CHOC believes well-qualified staff and volunteers working in an efficiently managed and supportive environment best support its commitment to excellence in regional pediatric health care. Within the boundaries of financial responsibility and quality performance, care is provided to children from all socio-economic levels without regard to race, creed, national origin, religious preferences or the family's ability to pay.

## ABOUT CHILD LIFE

The Child Life Department helps meet the emotional, psychosocial, and developmental needs of children. The goal is to help children adjust to illness and hospitalization by minimizing stress and anxiety while encouraging positive coping strategies.

The Child Life Department uses play to help children understand, express, and develop. Through goal oriented programs, patients are given the opportunity for socialization, self-expression, physical and emotional growth, creativity, decision-making, increased confidence and independence.

Professionally trained child life specialists evaluate and assess the needs of patients and families to determine the appropriate plan of care. After assessment, child life specialists provide interventions to meet the goals outlined in the plan of care.

## CHILD LIFE SERVICES

The Child Life Department provides services throughout the hospital. There are child life specialists located in Oncology/Hematology, Medical/Surgical Units, Surgical Short Stay, Pavilion Outpatient Surgery, Outpatient Cancer Clinic, Pediatric ICU, Oncology ICU, Cardiovascular ICU, and Emergency Department. Services are also provided to Specialty Clinics and the Neonatal ICU, as needed. There are three playrooms located on the Oncology/Hematology and Medical/Surgical floors of the main hospital, which are supervised by the Child Life Department. Listed below are some of the goal-oriented programs:

*Medical Play and Pre-Procedural Preparation:* Medical play enables children to learn through the use of medical equipment and special teaching dolls. It provides an opportunity for patients to express fears and anxieties while demonstrating positive coping techniques. Also, it allows the child life specialist to clear up any misconceptions a patient may have. Pre-procedural preparations take place in all of the serviced areas.

*Multidisciplinary Team Member:* Child life specialists collaborate with many members of the health care team to provide optimal care for CHOC patients. The Pain Team, Palliative Care Team, Feeding Team, and Bereavement Team are some of the multidisciplinary committees that child life is a member of.

*Pre-Operative Program:* A non-threatening way to introduce children to the hospital. The program is an interactive program which includes: medical play, a question and answer session, and a tour of the unit where the child will be staying.

*Discovery Arts:* Discovery Arts is an organization that brings dance, music, activities, and costumes to the inpatients once a week. This provides an opportunity for the children to socialize, create, imagine, dance, dress up, and much more.

*Creative/Expressive Program:* Weekly program planning provides activities such as *What's Cooking* for children to enhance cognitive development, imagination, creativity, fine and gross motor skills, and socialization skills. Specially trained artists are also available to provide group and/or one-on-one interactions with patients.

*Teen Program:* The child life department helps plan and implement teen-oriented activities such as a yearly oncology prom, teen nights, and teen outings.

*School Program:* There are two certified Orange Unified School District teachers available to work with inpatients in a classroom setting and at bedside throughout the calendar school year. Child life also facilitates *Homework Club*, a tutoring program staffed by community volunteers.

*Special Community Programs/Celebrity Visits:* The Child Life Department hosts a number of community individuals and/or groups to promote a stress-free, stimulating environment. Programs may be educational, therapeutic, or simply entertaining.

*Pet Therapy:* CHOC patients are visited by professionally screened pet therapy dogs three times per week. The program offers education, play, and normal life experiences, while providing a welcome diversion from the hospital and treatment routine.

*Music Therapy:* Music Therapy is an established healthcare profession that uses music to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals of all ages. Music Therapy is a component of the interdisciplinary team that uses musical experiences and activities in a skilled manner by a trained and board certified music therapist to achieve non-musical goals.

## INTERNSHIP ROTATIONS

The CHOC internship program will expose candidates to a wide variety of patient care areas. Listed below are the core units where the interns will rotate in order to receive a comprehensive experience. Candidates will also be introduced to the NICU and outpatient areas.

### ROTATIONS

The **Medical Surgical Units** (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> floors) will introduce the child life intern to patient condition reports, diagnosis, volunteer supervision, assessments, documentation, interdisciplinary rounds, procedure distraction and support, playroom responsibilities, and bedside interventions. *Hours 8:30am-5:00pm*

The third floor houses **Oncology/Hematology** patients. Many of the intern duties are similar to those of the Medical/Surgical unit, but this floor has specific medical diagnosis and procedures that the intern will become familiar with. Interns may have opportunities to conduct medical play, distract for procedures, and to provide new diagnosis education. Responsibilities may also include working in the **Outpatient Oncology Clinic** and the **Oncology Intensive Care Unit** (OICU). *Hours 8:30am-5:00pm*

On the **Short Stay Unit** (SSU) and **Pavilion** units, the intern will learn to assist with our pre-operative *Hello Hospital* program, learn the various stages of development first hand, provide bedside therapeutic interventions, and accompany patients to their surgeries until the induction of anesthesia. *Eight-hour shifts vary depending on surgery lineup, 4:30am-3:00pm*

In the new **PICU/CVICU** (6<sup>th</sup> floor) interns will learn the importance of working with other medical disciplines to create a patient's plan of care, how to educate siblings to the environment, and how to provide bereavement support to patients and families. *Hours 8:30am-5:00pm*

CHOC is one of the few hospitals to have a specialist on staff in the **Emergency Department**. Interns will refine assessment skills in this quick-paced, high turnover environment. Duties include preparation for surgery, hospital admission, and medical procedures. There is a high demand for diversion and support during procedures, parent and sibling education, and providing play opportunities for children experiencing extended waiting periods. *Hours 3:30pm-12:30am*

## INTERN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- To encourage communication and positive relationships between patients, families, and the healthcare team.
- To recognize ways in which hospitalized children react to and cope with hospitalization, medical procedures and new diagnosis.
- To learn the roles of various disciplines in the hospital setting and to develop skills in relating to and working with other professions.
- To be a patient and family advocate while providing family centered care.
- To have the ability to ask questions from the health care team including child life specialists, physicians, nurses, social workers, and chaplains.
- To be a positive professional in manner and appearance at all times. To follow the Child Life dress code and to be aware of my body language, tone of voice, and attitude at all times.
- To learn how to apply theories of human growth and development and Child Life theories to hospitalized children.
- To be able to set up activities that will provide mental and physical stimulation as well as help create a socially normal atmosphere.
- To assist patients in various craft activities and games regulating content of program according to patient interests, developmental level, and physical ability.
- To assist in the pre-operative program *Hello Hospital* as an aid in preparing children for hospitalization.
- To assist in medical play sessions to help reduce anxiety levels and to help clarify any misconceptions of medical procedures.
- To learn about medical procedure preparation and diagnosis preparation in order to help educate patients and siblings.
- To study patients' reactions to various activities and report symptoms indicative of progression and/or regression.
- To supervise child life volunteers.
- To conduct patient rounds and delegate assignments to volunteers and co-workers.
- To attend staff meetings, team conferences, multidisciplinary meetings, and relevant education sessions.
- To ask questions from the medical staff when a diagnosis, procedure, or aspect of patient care is not understood.
- To demonstrate pre-procedural preparations and coping techniques.
- To assist in documentation of patient activity including assessment, plan of care, and interventions.
- To complete weekly internship coursework, journals, evaluations, and readings.
- To understand and apply appropriate medical concepts and terminology during medical play sessions with patients.
- To learn a variety of distraction techniques used for procedural distraction.
- To learn 'soft language' in order to appropriately prepare children for the hospital experience.
- To understand and follow isolation procedures and infection control techniques.



## Child Life Internship Application

Name	Home Phone	Cell Phone	
Address	City	State	Zip
Educational Institution	Major	Graduation Date	
Semester you plan to intern:  <input type="checkbox"/> Spring <input type="checkbox"/> Summer <input type="checkbox"/> Fall	University Affiliation:  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
If yes, please provide the name, address, and email address of your university affiliated contact person:			

<b>Internship Term</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>Offer Deadline</b>	<b>Acceptance Deadline</b>
Winter (Jan - April)	September 5	October 22	October 28
Summer (May – Sept)	January 5	February 22	February 28
Fall (Sept – Dec)	May 5	June 22	June 28

**Emergency Contact: (Give Name, Address, and Phone)**

Name	Phone	Relationship
Address	City	Zip

**Please include the following in your application:**

- This completed form
- A current resume
- Transcripts from all universities attended (student copy is acceptable)
- 1 page essay about yourself
- A letter of recommendation from your academic advisor
- A letter of recommendation from a college/university professor
- A letter of recommendation from someone familiar with your work with children and/or related field (other than a relative or friend)
- Child Life Council course work review showing you have met the criteria for the Child Life Certifying Exam

Signature	Date
-----------	------

**Please return your application to:**

**Annie Esguerra, MS, CCLS**  
**CHOC Child Life Department**  
**455 South Main Street**  
**Orange, CA 92868**

Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. How did you become interested in the child life field?
2. Describe your experiences working with healthy children.
3. Describe your experiences working with special needs children and/or hospitalized children.
4. What professional goals do you have and how do you expect your internship experience at CHOC to help you meet these goals?
5. How does a child life specialist contribute to the health care experience of a child and his family?
6. Describe your current strengths and limitations as an internship applicant and future professional in the field of Child Life.
7. Briefly describe your expectations regarding what you will see and experience during this internship.