

## **CHILD LIFE INTERNSHIP**

Child Life, Music & The Arts Program

Arnold Palmer Medical Center  
Orlando, Florida

The child life internship program at Arnold Palmer Medical Center is offered to both undergraduate and graduate students during winter, summer and fall rotations. It is 14 weeks in length (40 hours per week) and includes exposure to various units within the hospital. The program is designed for students who have had the required academic preparation for child life, who have had experience working with children and who are interested in a career with children in a specialized setting. The goal of the student experience is to apply the acquired knowledge, experience and interest so that skills can be developed and sharpened. This will enable students to be better prepared for an entry-level position within a child life program. The internship training will also promote the following:

- a. Enhance knowledge regarding the psychosocial care of infants, children, youth, and families
- b. Familiarize student with additional literature and resources related to the psychosocial needs of children and families in health care setting
- c. Increase understanding of the needs for a multidisciplinary team while developing skills to work on such a team
- d. Demonstrate assessment and intervention skills
- e. Increase independence in providing services
- f. Develop sensitivity to the needs of families

Students should possess certain qualities if working with patients and their families. These individuals must display a sincere interest and ability in working with children, youth and families. Students must also demonstrate flexibility, show initiative and enthusiasm, and have the ability to get along well with others. A commitment to the profession of child life and a willingness to learn from every experience and situation is imperative to the success of the student experience.

## **GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS**

Students are an important asset to the Child Life Program at Arnold Palmer Medical Center. The process of working with students, which includes orientation, observation, supervision and evaluation, extends and enriches the staff. The following guidelines are designed to familiarize students with our expectations, thereby, laying the foundation for a mutually positive experience.

During the internship, students should consider themselves members of the hospital staff and conduct themselves as professionals. Being at work on time is essential to meeting the requirements of the internship and gaining full benefit from the experience. Any emergency or illness, which prevents a student from coming to the hospital when expected, must be reported to the supervisor at the earliest possible time.

Students are expected to dress in a manner that enables them to work comfortably with children, yet also demonstrates a professional appearance. Denim, sleeveless tops, scrub pants, tee-shirts, and sandals are NOT acceptable in a health care facility. It is best to wear apparel that is easily laundered after each wearing. The hospital and departmental dress codes are strictly enforced.

Confidentiality and protection of patient privacy, which are governed by HIPAA, are essential aspects of professional conduct and is required of all interns. Information that is shared between health care professionals is meant for the provision of quality care; however, this information must NEVER go beyond this arena. Those being trained at Arnold Palmer Hospital are privy to this sensitive data so they can be prepared for their roles as clinicians. Such information is considered personal and confidential therefore discretion must be exercised at all times.

As the intern progresses through the internship experience, the student is expected to display increased initiative and independence. This will be evidenced by:

- (1) assuming greater responsibility for planning and carrying out activities,
- (2) demonstrating increased competence and confidence in working with patients and families,
- (3) participating as a member of the health care team, and
- (4) making constructive and efficient use of "free time."

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **School Supervisor/Advisor**

- Responsible for having contractual agreement signed on the part of the university/college
- Initially screen potential student to help determine appropriate placement
- Provides dates for grades and other pertinent information to be submitted
- Makes direct and regular contact with students (in person or by telephone)
- Is available for consultation as needed or requested by student and/or Intern Coordinator
- Works with Corporate Education to certify student has successfully completed the Orientation/Test packet prior to acceptance for internship placement

### **Student**

- Completes and submits application
- Arranges for the mailing of school transcript and two letters of recommendation
- Prepares written goals and objectives for internship
- Reads required books and articles prior to and during internship
- Completes hospital orientation packet prior to start of internship (Provided by OH Corporate Education Department)
- Secures necessary health information as required by hospital
- Maintains rotation checklist and completes all designated assignments
- Evaluate the field placement at the conclusion of the internship experience

### **Child Life Specialist (preceptor):**

- Coordinates student's day-to-day activities, oversees patient care services
- Give ongoing direction to the student
- Communicates with coordinator regarding student's progress
- Provides student with educational resources as needed
- Reviews and comments on student's written assignments
- Meets daily with student for planning and evaluation
- Participates in student's final performance evaluation

### **Child Life Education Coordinator:**

- Initially screens the student's application/paperwork
- Orients students to hospital setting and placement
- Functions as advocate for the student during internship and meets with them throughout the internship to assess learning and overall experience.
- Coordinates the overall on-site rotations.
- Maintains contact with university supervisor
- Is available for questions, concerns, and suggestions of students
- Participates in student's final performance evaluation

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Before participating in an internship program, it is imperative that students engage in the following activities to promote and enhance their own professional development:

1. Volunteer on a hospital pediatric unit and provide activities in the playroom or at bedside. Helping with volunteer orientation or hospital tours may also be options.
2. Volunteer in Hospice programs, specials Olympics, YMCA/YWCA, school tutor programs, summer camps, Boy/Girl Scouts, as well as volunteer or work with normally developing children in day care or after school programs.
4. Participate in a Child Life practicum experience under the director of a Child Life Specialist.
5. Recommended: A Child Life practicum experience of at least 80 hours is highly beneficial as preparation for the internship experience.
6. Recommended: Complete a college level course taught by a Certified Child Life Specialist. This is a necessary step for certification and not mandatory to be completed to be considered for internship but can provide a solid foundation of knowledge prior to the intensive, hands on work of the internship.

## **INTERNSHIP**

### **Definition:**

Concentrated, full-time placement in a health care setting where a senior or graduate student gains practical, hands-on experience under the direction of a certified child life specialist. It will serve as the vehicle by which a student will build on their coursework and put theory into practice.

### **Goal:**

The primary objective is to afford the student with an experience to continue developing competencies in the profession of Child Life, as stated by the CLC guideline, "Competencies for Child Life Specialists."\* A student will gain enhanced knowledge of psychosocial care, demonstrate assessment and intervention skills, increase independence, and be better prepared for an entry-level position.

### **Number of Hours:**

Minimum of 560

To be completed in 14 weeks (**NO EXCEPTIONS**) working full time  
Holidays and sick time must be made up during internship

### **Components:**

1. Must be supervised by a Child Life Specialist who will have a minimum of 4,000 hours of paid work experience.
2. Must be able to plan and implement activity programs for all age groups (0-21), for both a one-to-one basis and for groups.
3. Participation in the administrative aspect of the Child Life Department (i.e., staff meetings, patient care conferences, data collection).
4. Gain knowledge, exposure to, and experience, when applicable, in planning, organizing and implementing preparation programs for children and families regarding the hospital stay.
5. Orient and direct Child Life volunteers and Child Life Assistants.
6. Work with other disciplines within the hospital setting to promote a positive experience for the hospitalized child and family.

### **Objectives:**

1. To understand the facets of the Child Life profession.
2. To begin the transition from student to professional worker.
3. To develop leadership and team-oriented skills.
4. To gain basic knowledge of the organization and administration of a Child Life Department.
5. To develop professional attitude, growth, maturity and judgment.

\*Adapted from Child Life Council's Guidelines for the Development of Child Life Programs. (1996)

### **Prerequisites:**

1. Must be completed during senior year (or second year if graduate student).
2. Must have successfully completed the academic course work recommended by Child Life Council. Students must provide a copy of their transcripts so that appropriate academic preparation can be determined.
3. Must have completed 150 hours working with children. These hours could be volunteer or paid time. Students will be better prepared if they have experience working/volunteering with medically, physically or emotionally challenged children (i.e., hospital, medical summer camps, adaptive educational or rehab settings, etc.) as well as healthy children. These experiences must be documented by a supervisor and include number of hours and quality of experience. A Child Life practicum experience, which is strongly recommended, counts toward these hours if documented.
4. Student must be certified in infant, child and adult CPR prior to and during internship.

### **Other Information**

1. Housing arrangements: The hospital does not have housing for Child Life Interns.
2. Stipend: No stipend is paid to Child Life Interns.
3. Hours: Students will be required to work 40 hours per week; including days, evenings, and weekend shifts.
4. Fees: There is a \$10.00 fee for the hospital security badge and a \$25.00 fee to cover the cost of the student manual and other supplies. These fees are non-refundable and paid at the beginning of the internship.

## **APPLICATION FOR CHILD LIFE INTERNSHIP**

Arnold Palmer Medical Center

Orlando, Florida

The application for the Arnold Palmer Medical Center (APMC) Internship Program is comprised of two portions:

1. The Common Child Life Internship Application available on the Child Life Council website ([www.childlife.org](http://www.childlife.org))
2. A statement of interest in why you specifically chose APMC as a prospective internship site.

Mail completed applications with supporting documents to:

Child Life, Music & the Arts

Attn: Internship Coordinator

Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children, MP 309

92 West Miller St. MP-309

Orlando, FL 32806