

# UW HEALTH JOB DESCRIPTION

## Child Life Specialist

Job Code: 540007, 540076

FLSA Status: Non-Exempt

Mgt. Approval: J. Auenson

Date: August 2021

Department: AFCH Child Life Services

HR Approval: K. Fleming

Date: August 2021

### JOB SUMMARY

The Child Life Specialist is a health care professional whose knowledge of growth and development and of children's responses to the stresses of illness and medical care enables them to provide play encouraging achievement of maximum developmental potential and mastery of the difficulties that often accompany treatment. The Child Life Specialist provides age-appropriate information, administering appropriate child life therapies in conjunction with the patient's age, medical condition, and family/significant others.

The Child Life Specialist works with both outpatients and inpatients (and families) during their medical encounters to foster a level of trust and comfort, which allows children to express their fears, discontents, and misconceptions about their care. Furthermore, the role of the incumbent is to advocate for patients and provide appropriate clinical interventions to the ever-changing needs of children with chronic illness and handicapping conditions that are potentially disruptive to children's development and effective family functioning.

The Child Life Specialist works with an interdisciplinary team to set priorities in the planning, implementation and evaluation of therapeutic and psychosocial programming of child life services with all children and families receiving care in the outpatient and inpatient areas in which children are being serviced across both AFCH and UW Health. The incumbent is responsible for programs that support family centered care, for the scheduling and coordination of special events, both internally and externally.

The Child Life Specialist maintains ongoing communication with the department manager to establish and maintain overall child life programming.

### MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Assesses and interacts with patients and families using theories of human growth and development, family systems, and cultural background.**
  - a. Uses developmentally appropriate play as a primary tool in assessing and meeting the child's psychosocial needs in the health care setting.
  - b. Matches interactions and activities to developmental level and emotional state.
  - c. Uses informal and formal assessment techniques to accurately determine patient's developmental/emotional state.
  - d. Seeks the involvement of families in their child's care, matching expectations with family needs and views.
  - e. Uses resources to accommodate cultural needs and to bridge differences.
  - f. Works with the interdisciplinary team to formulate and implement plans of care which include child life goals based upon individual assessments.
  - g. Recognizes and addresses the importance of therapeutic play in facilitating child's mastery of coping with the health care experience, e.g. medical play.
  - h. Determines with the health care team, level of patient coping with medical treatment, and provides age appropriate interventions to assist with reactions to the overall hospitalization experience.
  - i. Provides child life services within UW Health and AFCH, monitoring requested services less frequented by children.
  - j. Collaborates with medical, nursing staff to coordinate pre-op tours. Contacts families to arrange tours.
- 2. Provides a therapeutic and safe environment for individuals and groups, ages 0-18.**
  - a. Provides varied activities matching patient's condition and need.
  - b. Sets up and organizes activity areas.
  - c. Follows infection control and safety procedures and policies.
  - d. Maintains and assists others in respecting the privacy and confidentiality of children and families in a constructive in formative manner.
  - e. Follows medical orders and procedures.
  - f. Prepares and offers procedural support to the child and family for impending procedures, surgical experiences.
- 3. Assists patients and siblings coping with the stress of hospitalization, illness, death and/or loss.**
  - a. Empathizes objectively. Maintains therapeutic relationships with patients and their families.
  - b. Demonstrates, explains, and/or provides techniques to aid coping, matching technique, developmental and emotional state to stressor.
  - c. Provides support to parents and siblings regarding patients' health care experience and responses.
- 4. Participates in patient/family teaching.**
  - a. Uses developmentally appropriate accurate teaching aids and techniques in such a way that knowledge is increased and emotional needs are supported. Identifies and develops teaching aids as needed.
  - b. Advocates for the patient and family throughout hospitalization, surgical processes, and medical procedures for a less anxious experience. Uses relaxation and mental imagery techniques when appropriate.

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**5. Participates in staff education**

- a. Provides staff education, formal or informal, as appropriate around developmental approach to care, comfort, distraction, and other areas of expertise.

**6. Relevant to AFCH Facility Dog Handler**

- a. Serves as a handler for an assigned facility dog, providing clinical interventions that meet the diverse psychosocial need of patients and families while supporting medical staff across settings.
- b. Utilizes the facility dog to provide therapeutic interventions in the assigned clinical setting at American Family Children’s Hospital and University Hospital as directed by hospital and program leadership.
- c. Develops and implements education that addresses psychosocial needs and challenges of hospitalization with the clinical benefits of utilizing a therapy dog in collaboration with the Child Life Educator and Manager.
- d. Collaborates with clinical staff and leadership to create opportunities for the facility dog to be included in applicable research.
- e. Participates in the planning and implementation of special events and programming that involve the facility dog.
- f. Maintains program statistics to assess and evaluate quality of programming.
- g. Attends specific dog handling training and maintains all requirements for dog handlers established by Canine Assistants and UW Health regarding dog health and well-being.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURE:**

- Develops program goals annually. Documents goals, progress of and action plans with department manager.
- Can demonstrate on any given day individualized planning and interventions.

**ALL DUTIES AND REQUIREMENTS MUST BE PERFORMED CONSISTENT WITH THE UW HEALTH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.**

### JOB REQUIREMENTS

Education	Minimum	Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in Child Life, Child Development, or a related field
	Preferred	Master’s degree from an accredited college or university in Child Life, Child Development, or a related field
Work Experience	Minimum	Completion of a Child Life internship with a minimum of 480 hours in a pediatric health care setting
	Preferred	1. At least two (2) years of related experience working with children and adolescents in a hospital setting 2. Experience in specific specialty area 3. Paid clinical experience
Licenses & Certifications	Minimum	1. Certified as a Child Life Specialist by the Association for Child Life Professionals (ACLP) or certification in progress with ability to obtain this credential within one (1) year from date of hire 2. CPR certification or attain certification within three (3) months of hire
	Preferred	
Required Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities		1. Knowledge of and an ability to use various computer programs such as word processing, database, spreadsheet, calendar, and email 2. Effective verbal and written communications skills

### AGE SPECIFIC COMPETENCY (Clinical jobs only)

Identify age-specific competencies for direct and indirect patient care providers who regularly assess, manage and treat patients.

**Instructions:** Indicate the age groups of patients served either by direct or indirect patient care by checking the appropriate boxes below. Next,

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Infants (Birth – 11 months)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Adolescent (13– 19 years)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Toddlers (1–3 years)		Young Adult (20 – 40 years)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Preschool (4– 5 years)		Middle Adult (41 – 65 years)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School Age (6 – 12 years)		Older Adult (Over 65 years)

### JOB FUNCTIONS

Review the employee’s job description and identify each essential function that is performed differently based on the age group of the patient.

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### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

**Indicate the appropriate physical requirements of this job in the course of a shift.** *Note: reasonable accommodations may be made available for individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of this position.*

<b>Physical Demand Level</b>	<b>Occasional</b> Up to 33% of the time	<b>Frequent</b> 34%-66% of the time	<b>Constant</b> 67%-100% of the time
<b>Sedentary:</b> Ability to lift up to 10 pounds maximum and occasionally lifting and/or carrying such articles as dockets, ledgers and small tools. Although a sedentary job is defined as one, which involves sitting, a certain amount of walking and standing is often necessary in carrying out job duties. Jobs are sedentary if walking and standing are required only occasionally and other sedentary criteria are met.	<b>Up to 10#</b>	<b>Negligible</b>	<b>Negligible</b>
<b>X</b> <b>Light:</b> Ability to lift up to 20 pounds maximum with frequent lifting and/or carrying of objects weighing up to 10 pounds. Even though the weight lifted may only be a negligible amount, a job is in this category when it requires walking or standing to a significant degree.	<b>Up to 20#</b>	<b>Up to 10#</b> or requires significant walking or standing, or requires pushing/pulling of arm/leg controls	<b>Negligible</b> or constant push/pull of items of negligible weight
<b>Medium:</b> Ability to lift up to 50 pounds maximum with frequent lifting and/or carrying objects weighing up to 25 pounds.	<b>20-50#</b>	<b>10-25#</b>	<b>Negligible-10#</b>
<b>Heavy:</b> Ability to lift up to 100 pounds maximum with frequent lifting and/or carrying objects weighing up to 50 pounds.	<b>50-100#</b>	<b>25-50#</b>	<b>10-20#</b>
<b>Very Heavy:</b> Ability to lift over 100 pounds with frequent lifting and/or carrying objects weighing over 50 pounds.	<b>Over 100#</b>	<b>Over 50#</b>	<b>Over 20#</b>
List any other physical requirements or bona fide occupational qualifications:			

Note: The purpose of this document is to describe the general nature and level of work performed by personnel so classified; it is not intended to serve as an inclusive list of all responsibilities associated with this position.