

# Child Life Practicum



**Position:** Child Life Practicum  
**Reports to:** Child Life Specialist  
**Status:** Practicum-Unpaid

ChicagoCAC students are expected to perform their job duties and act in a manner consistent with the Core Values of the organization.

## Overview

The objective of the Child Life Program is to make a child's experience visiting ChicagoCAC less stressful and more empowering through child-directed play. Child Life students work to provide a therapeutic and trauma-informed environment that can build trust and relieve anxiety among the families served. Child Life students do this by facilitating different forms of play and engagement to normalize the environment and encourage healthy coping. They also help children understand more about their visit to the center and answer their questions in a developmentally appropriate manner. Students will meet with the Child Life Specialist on a regular basis for reflective supervision and to ensure practicum requirements are being met.

## Objectives

- The student will become knowledgeable in Child Life assessment, support, and different modalities of play.
- The student will demonstrate knowledge of the purpose and benefits of play to children and will successfully carry out play interventions.
- The student will be able to identify factors that affect a child's ability to cope with potentially triggering or traumatic events.
- The student will be able to identify coping techniques utilized by different children based on culture, temperament, and developmental levels.
- The student will be able to identify systemic barriers and cultural factors that affect the support provided to our clients.
- The student will be able to provide various accommodations in response to child behavior and emotional response.
- The student will demonstrate professionalism as it pertains to respecting confidentiality and maintaining therapeutic relationships with clients and families.
- The student will demonstrate professionalism while interacting with multi-disciplinary team members.

## Primary Responsibilities:

- Provide trauma-informed care to clients and their families during child abuse investigations and therapy appointments.
- Facilitate child-directed play and socialization.
- Observe and monitor child behavior and emotional responses, providing intervention and support as needed.
- Ensure the physical and emotional safety of children while working with each family.
- Arrange for provision of food and/or comfort items to children receiving Child Life services.
- Communicate significant information obtained from the child to the MDT members.
- Collaborate with ChicagoCAC staff and partner agency members.
- Complete all readings, journaling, and other assignments.
- Create and implement activities according to assignment guidelines for all clients and siblings.

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- Provide assistance with special programming.
- Complete daily cleaning duties in Child Life spaces.
- Attend ChicagoCAC trainings and other learning opportunities as available and/or required.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

## Discretion

Child Life Students have a low-level range of discretion and independent decision-making.

## Relationships

Child Life Students work closely with the Child Life, Mental Health, Advocacy, and Forensic Interviewing teams.

## Qualifications

- Currently enrolled in or completed an undergraduate/graduate program, pursuing a degree in child life, child development, or another closely related field.
- Experience working with children of different developmental levels and backgrounds in both one-on-one and group settings.
- Excellent time-management and communication skills.
- Bilingual (English/Spanish) preferred but not required.

Please note: Students will work on average 16 hours a week over 3 months in both direct and indirect support.

## To Apply

Send resume and cover letter to [CLpracticum@chicagocac.org](mailto:CLpracticum@chicagocac.org). Also, please attach two essays answering the following prompts (maximum one page each, double spaced).

1. Why are you interested in a practicum at ChicagoCAC? What do you hope to gain from the practicum at ChicagoCAC?
2. Tell us about one time in which you engaged a child in play that was therapeutic in nature, facilitated coping, or was beneficial to their development.

Fall, Spring, and Summer practicums may be offered. Please check the website for up-to-date information. Applications deadlines are:

- Fall: May 1
- Spring: October 1
- Summer: February 1<sup>st</sup>