Child Life Pre-Internship (Practicum) Description

The Child Life pre-internship (practicum) student has an opportunity to experience the Child Life profession through both observation and supervised participation. A child life practicum placement is designed to introduce the student to the field of child life, as well as a variety of experiences facing children and adolescents in the healthcare setting. The WakeMed Practicum curriculum follows the **ACLP Pre-Internship Learning Modules** to maintain consistency and prepare students for a child life internship. Students will observe child life assessments, medical play, procedural preparation and coping, playroom programming, and work with volunteers. Students also develop documentation skills, participate in special events and hospital committees, and may observe trauma and bereavement support.

A practicum placement is highly recommended for those considering a career as a Certified Child Life Specialist. Practicum students generally complete eight to ten hours per week for a minimum total of 120 hours. During the practicum, the student will complete various unit rotations to observe child life interventions that support children, adolescents and their families within the healthcare system. The student will complete an orientation process and participate in ongoing guidance and evaluation by the child life staff and site supervisor.

Program Components

- Observation of child life services on various units: Pediatrics, Rehab, Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Surgical Services(Endoscopy and Day Surgery), Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Children's Emergency Department
- Observation and supervised participation in group and individualized interventions and assessments
- Access to departmental resources such as health care team members, library, and articles
- Opportunities to attend meetings including, but not limited to seminars given by Child Life Specialists, interdisciplinary rounds, care conferences, etc.

Program Objectives

Throughout the practicum experience, the student will enhance their knowledge and skills to be able to:

- Gain a strong understanding of the practices of child life and be able to articulate an understanding of current issues and trends in child life practice
- Develop communication skills and demonstrate competence in approaching and communicating with children, adolescents, and family members in the healthcare setting
- Learn techniques to determine the developmental and emotional needs of patients and families

- Assist in developing and implementing child life care plans based upon individual assessments
- Demonstrate, explain, and/or provide techniques that can be used by children to cope with medical procedures or other stressful events
- Recognize the value of developmentally appropriate, therapeutic, and psychosocially supportive interventions
- Increase comfort levels in interacting with members of the interdisciplinary team
- Evaluate own performance and set goals for learning
- Identify ways to integrate classroom knowledge with child life practice

Assignments

- Attend orientation with Student Coordinator
- **ACLP Pre-Internship Learning Modules** and assignments
- Participate in bi-weekly meetings with Student Coordinator
- Complete an evaluation form of the practicum site, supervisors, and practicum experience