CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST — M.S.

Program director
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The Department of Counseling and Family Sciences offers high-quality academic education and clinical training leading to a master’s degree in the Child Life Specialist Program. This degree prepares individuals to provide child life services in a health-care setting. In addition, practice experiences within the United States and in other countries will provide students with child life practice in diverse environments.

The child life profession
Child life specialists are professionals in the field of child development. They promote effective coping through play, preparation, education, and self-expression activities. Child life specialists provide emotional support for families and encourage optimum development of children facing a broad range of challenging experiences, particularly those related to health care and hospitalization. Understanding that a child’s well-being depends on the support of the family, child life specialists provide information, support, and guidance to parents, siblings, and other family members. They also play a vital role in educating caregivers, administrators, and the general public about the needs of children under stress (Child Life Council <http://www.childlife.org>).

The program
Certification for the child life profession
Through the Child Life Council, the certified child life specialist (CCLS) credential was developed to increase the proficiency of child life professionals by identifying a body of knowledge, uniform and improved standards of practice, and ethical conduct while enhancing the status and credibility of the profession. The requirements for certification are based on academic and internship experience and successful completion of an examination process (Child Life Council <http://www.childlife.org>).

Learning outcomes
Upon graduation, students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to represent and communicate child life practice and psychosocial issues of infants, children, youth, and families.
- Be knowledgeable of child development and family systems theory.
- Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively in diverse settings.
- Be eligible to obtain the certified child life specialist (CCLS) credential administered by the Child Life Council.
- Be knowledgeable of legal and ethical standards of the profession.
- Be knowledgeable of the impact of health and health issues in the global setting.

Professional experience
Students will participate in supervised clinical training at Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital and various hospitals located in the United States. A 100-hour practicum and 600 hours of internship are required to complete the master’s degree. These experiences will provide an opportunity to help students build on course work and put theory into practice.

Financial assistance
Students accepted into the M.S. degree program may receive financial assistance through merit-based awards, such as teaching fellowships and a variety of research and student service assistantships; or through need-based financial aid, such as a loan or the University’s work/study program. Students may apply for financial aid by writing to:

Student Financial Aid Office
Student Services
Loma Linda University
Loma Linda, CA 92350
909/558-4509

Accreditation
Loma Linda University is regionally accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501; telephone: 510/748-9001; fax: 510/748-9797; Web site: <http://www.wascsenior.org> or <http://www.wascsenior.org/contact>.

Admissions
Applicants must meet Loma Linda University (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/#admissionrequirementstext) and School of Behavioral Health (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/behavioral-health/#generalregulationstext) admissions requirements; and give evidence of academic ability, professional comportment, and mature judgment. Those who meet these requirements, as well as the published deadlines, for any of the following terms may enroll during Autumn and Winter quarters.

Additional admission requirements include:

- Bachelor’s degree in the social sciences or equivalent from a regionally accredited college or university.
- Minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in bachelor’s course work for at least the final 45 units prior to graduation.
- Written statement of purpose for applying to the program.
- Interview with department faculty, as scheduled (on-campus group interviews are scheduled for January through March; other on-campus and telephone interviews are scheduled individually).
- Volunteer experience under the direction of a Certified Child Life Specialist is highly recommended.

Pre-entrance requirements (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/#preentrancerequirementstext):

- A background check
- Health clearance

Program requirements
Required
CFSG 584 Global Practice Experience 3
Other degree requirements

- Residence of at least two academic years.
- A minimum G.P.A. of 3.0.
- A minimum of 73 quarter units of graduate work, which includes credit received for core courses, writing course, and a 3-unit religion course.
- A minimum of 700 hours of clinical child life hours (CHLS 604, CHLS 605 and CHLS 608) completed within the degree program.
- A minimum of 20 hours of global practice experience.
- Successful completion of a written comprehensive examination (taken before advancement to candidacy) and a final oral and written examination at the end of the program.
- Background check passed prior to matriculation.
- If taken for elective credit, foreign language courses numbered 400 or higher.

Normal time to complete the program

2 years (7 academic quarters) — full-time enrollment required

Courses

CHLS 501. Hospitalized Infant and Toddler Development. 3 Units.
Emphasizes the development of infants and toddlers in the hospital setting. Presents theory and research findings regarding socialization, emotional development, and temperament. Focuses on working with this specific population in the health-care system and exposes students to practical interventions and activities. Discusses bereavement topics, appropriate health, safety, and nutritional practices. Provides tools to develop competencies and skills necessary to effectively work with infants and toddlers.

CHLS 502. Child Life Seminar. 2 Units.
Develops a child life specialist identity through readings, presentations, and discussion of child life history and practice. Reviews child growth and development theories. Encourages application for student membership in professional organizations, such as the Child Life Council. Reviews standards of clinical practice using the clinical documents of the Child Life Council.

CHLS 503. Child Life Seminar. 3 Units.

CHLS 504. Child Life Administration and Program Development. 3 Units.
Introduces students to the history and development of the child life profession. Health-care environment, administrative issues, program development, and outcome assessment process. Develops competencies and skills necessary to effectively administer a child life program.

CHLS 505. Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Health Care. 3 Units.
Introduces students to the diversity of cultures and the powerful impact diversity has on the delivery of health-care services. Explores specific characteristics regarding the composition, cultural aspects, and unique health-care issues faced by African Americans, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders, Hispanics/Latinos, and American Indians/Alaskan Natives. Enhances students’ understanding of human differences, preferences, biases, and stereotypes; and fosters development of the awareness, sensitivity, knowledge, and competence required to affirm diversity in health-care and practice settings.

CHLS 506. Therapeutic Play for Children Affected by Illness and Injury. 3 Units.
Teaches the developmental aspects of play therapy, in collaboration with the developmental stages of the child/teen and family in the context of a health-care setting. Provides student with an experiential understanding of play therapy, recreation therapy, education, and practice.

CHLS 507A. Aspects of Illness and Disease. 3 Units.
Teaches the child life student about the childhood disease process and describes the pathophysiology, symptoms, diagnostic testing, and treatment of disease. How disease affects the child and family's behavioral, social, and emotional development and coping strategies.

CHLS 507B. Aspects of Illness and Disease. 3 Units.
Focuses on childhood disease process and describes the pathophysiology, symptoms, diagnostic testing, and treatment of disease. Discusses how disease affects the child and family's behavioral, social, and emotional development and coping strategies. Prerequisite: CHLS 507A.
CHLS 508. Grief and Loss. 3 Units.
Promotes understanding of various theories, and practices specific interventions that assist hospitalized children/teens or adult family members when they encounter issues of death, loss and/or grief. Students examine how these issues affect them personally and professionally; and describe their own epistemology regarding death, loss and grief. Examines these issues from a family-system's perspective in a hospital setting.

CHLS 509. Child Life Assessment. 3 Units.
Orients students to child life in hospitals and other health-care environments. Gives attention to stress and coping assessment, along with other interventions used to assist patients and families. Examines additional interventions and significant variables, such as providing emotional support for families and encouraging optimum development of children facing a broad range of challenging experiences. Addresses roles and responsibilities of membership on an interdisciplinary team of health professionals, as well as requirements for professional standards of practice.

CHLS 600. Child Life Theory and Practice. 3 Units.
Examines children and their families in a health care setting from the perspective of a child life specialist. Demonstrates the role of the child life specialist in minimizing the stress and anxiety experienced during hospitalization. Focuses on educational and play components, as well as the general support and scope of practice that are unique to the field of child life.

CHLS 604. Child Life Internship and Supervision I. 3,4 Units.
While accumulating the hours required by the Child Life Council to establish eligibility for the certification examination, students work with children, youth, teens, and their families in a hospital and/or related setting under the supervision of a certified child life specialist. Gives special attention to legal, ethical, moral, educational, cultural, spiritual, and gender issues in the clinical internship. 3 units (250 hours) required for students under pre-2014-2015 catalogs; 4 units (300 hours) required for students beginning with the 2014-2015 catalog. Prerequisite: CHLS 608.

CHLS 605. Child Life Internship and Supervision II. 3,4 Units.
While accumulating the hours required by the Child Life Council to establish eligibility for the certification examination, students work with children, youth, teens, and their families in a hospital and/or related setting under the supervision of a certified child life specialist. Gives special attention to legal, ethical, moral, educational, cultural, spiritual, and gender issues in the clinical internship. 3 units (250 hours) required for students under pre-2014-2015 catalogs; 4 units (300 hours) required for students beginning with the 2014-2015 catalog. Prerequisites: CHLS 608.

CHLS 606. Parenting Medically Fragile Children. 3 Units.
Introduces students to parenting issues related to the medically fragile child. Provides knowledge of theories, techniques, skills, available community resources, and legal and ethical considerations that pertain to this specific group.

CHLS 607. Child Life Professional. 3 Units.
Prepares students for entering the professional field of child life by demonstrating clinical assessment, documentation, and skills related to child life practice. Includes application of ethical principles, as well as issues of professionalism. Requires a 100-hour practicum.

CHLS 608. Child Life Practicum. 1 Unit.
Students carry out assigned playroom duties: supervise activities that foster creativity, divert patients from stress and worry, and normalize their environment; and provide opportunities for patients and families to socialize and engage in developmentally appropriate activities. Students assist with bedside interaction and interventions and assist staff with escorting patients to other locations of the hospital for special programming.

CHLS 609. Global Practice: Child Life Specialist. 2 Units.
Introduces students to child life practice in a global context. Examines the ethical and practice issues associated with delivery of pediatric psychosocial services in health-care systems in underdeveloped and developed environments. Gives critical attention to issues of pediatric and adolescent growth and development, family-centered care, grief and loss, and advocacy. Shares models for learning and collaboration within the context of health-care delivery. Prerequisite: CHLS 502.

CHLS 694. Directed Study: Child Life Specialist. 1-4 Units.
Individual study in areas of special interest concerning the pediatric patient and family. May be repeated for credit at the discretion of the faculty.