

Internship Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do you accept non-affiliated students?

Yes, we accept both non-affiliated and affiliated students. Non-affiliated students will be expected to acquire liability insurance, with the guidance of the internship coordinator.

2. Does your hospital require a contract with my school/university?

If you are an affiliated student, a contract between your school/university and Huntsville Hospital must be in place before the beginning of your internship. Huntsville Hospital holds current contracts with several schools/universities. Once an intern is chosen, the internship coordinator ensures that a contract is in place. Please note that if a contract has not been established with Huntsville Hospital in the past, it can take up to 3-4 months to do so.

3. What is the size of your hospital?

We have 881 total hospital beds and 92 pediatric beds, which includes neonate beds.

4. What population do you serve?

Child life is present in pediatrics, pediatric intensive care unit, special procedures, antepartum, emergency room, pre-op, radiology, neonatal intensive care unit, antepartum, and the St. Jude affiliate clinic. We visit the children of adult patients and pediatric patients located in our adult hospital on a consult basis.

5. Do you require a child life practicum to be completed before the start of the internship?

We do require students to have completed a practicum under a Certified Child Life Specialist before the start of the internship. However, the practicum can be in progress during the application and interview period.

6. Do you require the coursework to be completed before the start of the internship?

Yes, your coursework related to certification eligibility must be completed before the start of your internship. However, coursework can be in progress during the application and interview period.

7. Is there a fee associated with the internship?

We do not charge a fee to complete an internship at our site.

8. What are the housing opportunities for internship?

Unfortunately, we do not offer housing for our interns. We will work with you to educate you on the best areas of town to live.

9. What do I need to wear during my internship?

You may choose to wear scrubs that match the child life specialists in Caribbean Blue or wear business casual clothing. Comfortable shoes that are quiet on tile floors are strongly suggested. Please keep in mind that you will be exposed to possibly sitting in the floor with a child, being involved in a messy craft activity, and/or bodily fluid during a procedure/trauma.

10. What does the workload include?

You will be working full-time alongside a Certified Child Life Specialist. Along with clinical work, you will complete relevant assignments equivalent to the workload of one-two classes. These assignments can, at times, be completed while at the hospital, but be prepared to finish these after internship hours at home.

11. What assignments are included during the internship?

We follow the Internship Learning Modules suggested by the Child Life Council. The following topics will have correlating assignments, discussions, and in-services:

- Development of the Child Life Profession
- Lifespan Development
- Patient and Family-Centered Care
- Communication
- Assessment
- Play
- Medical/Health Care Play
- Therapeutic Play and Coping
- Coping with Pain and Distress
- Psychological Preparation
- Documentation
- Palliative and End of Life Care
- Administration
- Professional Development

Other assignments include the following:

- Daily reflective journal
- Medical terminology
- Article critiques
- Case Study
- Project

12. Will I have an opportunity to observe the behind the scenes activity amongst the child life team?

You will be included for pieces of our staff meetings, particularly when we problem solve a case or have a guest speaker.

13. Will I be ready for a job when I leave here?

It is our goal to have you confident and ready for the next step into the field. We dedicate our work to not only patients and families, but to you as the student as well.

14. Is your internship accredited?

Yes! We are an accredited internship site. Accreditation is conducted by the Internship Accreditation Oversight Committee of the Association of Child Life Professionals. For more information pertaining to these standards, visit

<https://www.childlife.org/resources/for-educators-internship-coordinators/internship-accreditation>

<https://www.childlife.org/certification/certification-resources/internship-deadlines/accredited-internships>

15. Are students required to be vaccinated for COVID-19?

Yes, all students at Huntsville Hospital are required to be vaccinated to be able to participate in this learning opportunity. Proof of vaccination must be presented in order to obtain a badge.