



CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM INTRODUCTION

Mercy Children's Center is a network of pediatric services within Mercy Medical Center, an 802-bed acute care, not-for-profit Catholic hospital situated on three campuses. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1893, Mercy is Des Moines' longest continually operating hospital and one of the largest employers in the state, with more than 6,600 employees and a medical staff of more than 950 physicians and allied health professionals. Mercy is also one of the Midwest's biggest referral centers, offering a variety of specialty services that are unique to Iowa and the region. Mercy Children's Center pediatric services include inpatient care, Center for Craniofacial and Children's Reconstructive Surgery, Children's Emergency Center, Variety Club Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Variety Club Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and Children's Heart Center, Pediatric Clinics, Pediatric Subspecialty Clinic, Mercy Franklin Center and Pediatric Rehab. Mercy Children's Center is proud to be Central Iowa's only pediatric cardiology and cardiovascular surgery program.

The Child Life Program at Mercy Children's Center is a vital component of the healthcare team. Staffed by professionally trained individuals, our Child Life team helps children and their families cope with the emotional and psychological stress of medical experiences. Beginning in 1996 with just one Child Life Specialist providing services to Pediatrics and the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, the program has expanded to include seven Child Life Specialists providing services throughout the Medical Center. Areas of service include Pediatrics and the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Medical Imaging, Pediatric Emergency Department and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Child Life Specialists are also on-call 7 days a week to work with children of patients in adult units and throughout the hospital who could benefit from Child Life interventions. Our goal is to meet the psychosocial needs of as many children as we can within the Medical Center.

The 120 hour Child Life Practicum offered over the summer at Mercy Children's Center is designed as an introductory experience to the hospital environment and the child life profession. Students gain exposure to the unique needs of hospitalized children and their families through observation, play opportunities and other educational experiences demonstrating how Child Life theory is applied to practice in the clinical setting. This experience, in addition to others, will help to provide students with a knowledge base to continue pursuing a career in Child Life.



CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM PREREQUISITS

- Enrolled Sophomore-Senior in one of the following recommended degrees: Child Life, Child Development, Child and Family Services, Psychology
- High Academic Achievement: GPA of 2.5+
- Ability to pass mandatory health screening and show proof of up-to-date immunization record
- Ability to sign contract of agreement for practicum participation with your college/university
- Proof of Liability Insurance if not covered within your college/university contract
- Familiarity with Child Life Certification requirements set forth by the Child Life Council Certifying Committee.
- Upon acceptance into the program, ability to pay \$15 non-refundable practicum fee to compensate for materials needed throughout the duration of the practicum program.



CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____ - _____ - _____

Emergency Contact:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ - _____ - _____ OR _____ - _____ - _____

Relationship _____

Applying for: Summer 20____

(Summer 2010 applications due February 1, 2010; future deadline for summer 2011+ is January 5th)

Application Packet Checklist:

___ Completed Application Form

___ Official Transcripts to date

___ Professional Resume

___ 1 Letter of Recommendation in sealed and signed envelopes

___ Written Essay

Academic Background

University/College _____

Dates Attended (Month/Year) From _____ To _____

Major _____ Minor/Areas of

Emphasis _____

Planned Graduation Date _____ GPA _____

University/College _____

Dates Attended (Month/Year) From _____ To _____

Major _____ Minor/Areas of

Emphasis _____

Graduation Date _____ Degree Earned _____ GPA _____

List coursework relevant to Child Life practice (completed or in process of completion)

Course Title

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____
- 11. _____
- 12. _____

List your experiences with children in non-healthcare settings (include estimated hours)

List your experiences with children in healthcare settings (include estimated hours)

Describe experiences working with children and families of various socioeconomic, cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds.

Please list your special skills/talents.

Tell us about your interest in Mercy Children's Center and why this would be a good match for your practicum experience.

Essay (1 page maximum) addressing all of the following:

- 1) How you became interested in the field of Child Life
- 2) Goals that you hope to meet as a practicum student

I agree to the following:

- I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure all components of this application are submitted by the specified postmarked deadlines
- I have completed the application truthfully and to the best of my knowledge
- I have read the application packet and understand the application requirements and internship prerequisites

Applicant's signature _____ Date _____

All applicants will be notified following an application review. We will be using the Child Life Council recommended offer (February 22nd) and acceptance deadlines (February 28th). All applicants are strongly encouraged to apply to other sites, as spaces are limited. Thank you for considering Mercy Children's Center for your practicum experience, we look forward to reviewing your application.

Please return completed application packet to:

Mercy Medical Center
Attn: Jolene Vos, Mercy Children's Center
Dept. # 5301100
1111 6th Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50314

Please direct any questions to Jolene Vos at 515-643-2896