

FLYING HORSE FARMS

Child Life Practicum Standard Validation

As stated by the Association of Child Life Professionals; *“The Child Life Practicum is designed as an introductory experience for individuals interested in pursuing a career in child life. Through experiential learning and observation of Certified Child Life Specialists®, child life practicum students begin to increase their knowledge of evidence-based, developmentally-appropriate interventions including therapeutic play, preparation and education that support and reduce fear, anxiety and pain for infants, children, youth and families as they cope with the stress and uncertainty of illness, injury and treatment. Through these experiences, child life practicum students will enhance their knowledge of the child life profession and investigate the process of applying child life and developmental theory to practice.*

While the Association of Child Life Professionals (ACLP) does not require specific practices or protocols for child life practicums at this time, and child life practicums are not currently accepted to establish eligibility for the Child Life Professional Certification Examination, ACLP encourages child life practicum programs to follow these recommendations set forth in 2013 by the ACLP Practicum Task Force,” (Association of Child Life Professionals, 2013.)

Flying Horse Farms works to provide a comprehensive practicum-level experience under the supervision of their full-time certified child life specialist. The child life practicum student will gain exposure to the facets of the child life profession within an alternative child life setting, both within FHF’s medical center and throughout camp. Outlined below are the Child Life Practicum Recommended Standards as recommended by the Association of Child Life Professionals, and the ways in which FHF’s achieves those standards.

STANDARD 1

“THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM IS LARGELY AN OBSERVATIONAL EXPERIENCE WITH CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM STUDENTS BEGINNING TO ENGAGE IN INDEPENDENT PLAY AND DEVELOPMENTALLY SUPPORTIVE INTERVENTIONS WITH INFANTS, CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES AS DEEMED APPROPRIATE BY THE SUPERVISING CERTIFIED CHILD LIFE SPECIALISTS® (CCLS),” (ASSOCIATION OF CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONALS, 2013.)

The FHF child life practicum student will have the opportunity to observe FHF’s full-time certified child life specialist assess and engage campers with various medically complexities and developmental abilities in therapeutic play, procedural education and support, grief support interventions, new diagnosis education and processing, psychosocial response calls, and child life programming. As deemed appropriate and under the supervision of the CCLS, the student will be given the opportunity to engage in practicum-level, play-based and developmentally supportive interventions.

STANDARD 2

“THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM STUDENT WILL BE SUPERVISED BY A CCLS WHO HAS ACHIEVED A MINIMUM OF 2,000 HOURS OF PAID WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD. THE SUPERVISING CCLS MUST BE CURRENTLY PRACTICING IN THE FIELD OF CHILD LIFE; HOWEVER, THE SETTING OF THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM COULD VARY,” (ASSOCIATION OF CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONALS, 2013.)

Rebecca Gordon, MA, CCLS, will serve as the supervising certified child life specialist for the clinical practicum at FHF. She has been certified since 2019, worked in inpatient/outpatient pediatric healthcare settings, served as chair of the ACLP’s Education and Training Committee and as an identified subject-matter expert in the Internship Readiness project. She currently is employed in a clinical child life capacity full-time at FHF.

STANDARD 3

“THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM ENCOMPASSES A MINIMUM OF 100 SUPERVISED HOURS. THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE MAY INCLUDE A COMBINATION OF PRACTICUM HOURS BEING COMPLETED IN NO MORE THAN TWO DIFFERENT SETTINGS GIVEN EACH SETTING BUILDS UPON AND STRENGTHENS A CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM STUDENT’S CONTINUAL DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH AS A CCLS,” (ASSOCIATION OF CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONALS, 2013.)

The FHF practicum student will complete 300 supervised hours under the supervision of FHF’s full-time CCLS. The practicum will take place on-site at FHF both within the medical center and addressing psychosocial needs throughout camp.

STANDARD 4

“CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM HOURS SHOULD BE COMPLETED IN AN APPROPRIATE SETTING THAT PROVIDES THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM STUDENT WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBSERVE AND LEARN FROM PSYCHOSOCIAL INTERVENTIONS THAT ASSIST INFANTS, CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES COPING WITH THE STRESS AND UNCERTAINTY OF ILLNESS, INJURY AND TREATMENT. APPROVED SETTINGS CAN INCLUDE:

PEDIATRIC IN-PATIENT UNITS INCLUDING CRITICAL CARE UNITS AND IN OUTPATIENT AREAS INCLUDING EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS, RADIOLOGY AND IMAGING, SPECIALTY CARE CLINICS, BEHAVIORAL AND REHABILITATION, COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS, PRIVATE PRACTICE, HOSPICE SERVICES AND HOME HEALTH, CAMPS FOR CHILDREN WITH HEALTHCARE NEEDS, PRIVATE MEDICAL AND DENTAL PRACTICES, SERVICES TO CHILDREN OF ADULT PATIENTS,” (ASSOCIATION OF CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONALS, 2013.)

The FHF child life practicum will take place under the category “Camps for Children with Healthcare Needs.” Students will be exposed to the role of a CCLS within the camp setting and its medical center.

STANDARD 5

"THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM INCLUDES OBSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING THEORY AND INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO CHILD LIFE PRACTICE:

**CHILD LIFE ASSESSMENTS
DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY INTEGRATION
THERAPEUTIC PLAY INTERVENTIONS
RAPPORT BUILDING," (ASSOCIATION OF CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONALS, 2013.)**

The FHF child life practicum student will gain skills related to child life assessment through observational learning, discussions, implementing play-based activities, and verbal and written assignments. They will have opportunities to establish rapport building skills throughout the duration of the practicum experience with interactions among campers, families, volunteers, and staff members. They will introduce therapeutic play interventions among children 8-17 years old, and collaborate with psychosocial, medical, operations, and other camp team members. Additionally, they will complete a variety of verbal and written assignments that will include child life assessments and the integration of developmental theory.

STANDARD 6

THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM LEARNING EXPERIENCES INCLUDE ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS THAT ALLOW THE CHILD LIFE PRACTICUM STUDENT TO BEGIN TO APPLY AND INTEGRATE KNOWLEDGE AND THEORY APPLICATION FOR FUTURE CLINICAL PRACTICE AND HELP TO INITIATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY OF CHILD LIFE PRACTICE. THESE LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD INCLUDE:

**JOURNALING
EDUCATIONAL IN-SERVICES AND DISCUSSIONS
SPECIFIC AND STRUCTURED READINGS, (ASSOCIATION OF CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONALS, 2013.)**

The child life practicum student will have the opportunity to complete a variety of learning assignments prior to, during, and after camp sessions are completed. The student will receive in-services and discussions on relevant topics from various team members, complete weekly journal assignments, reading assignments, and other educational assignments deemed beneficial by the supervising CCLS. These assignments will include but are not limited to; article reviews, goal establishment, journaling, developmental assessments, internship KSA linking, mock interviews, practicum-level final project, and other assignments deemed appropriate by the supervising CCLS.

Any questions can be directed to Rebecca Gordon, MA, CCLS at rebecca@flyinghorsefarms.org