

Alberta's Health Regions and Voluntary Organizations and the Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA)

This classification specification identifies representative duties and responsibilities, and is intended to assist in the determination of the appropriate classification level within each discipline. Some duties and responsibilities may overlap between class levels. The classification specification is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of all duties performed.

Classification Title: **Child Life Specialist**

Date Updated: **May 20, 2008**

Job Summary:

The Child Life Specialist assists children and adolescents from diverse populations to cope with the impact of hospitalization. This position plans, develops, implements, coordinates and evaluates developmental and normalization activities, including therapeutic play programs, in order to further the social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth of children and adolescents.

Key Responsibilities and Typical Duties:

Core Duties

- Observes children and adolescents to determine the developmental appropriateness of behavior, coping, parent/child relationships to use as a basis for child life treatment plans or referral activities.
- Assesses, researches, plans, implements and evaluates appropriate play and developmental activities/interventions for children and families (both individual and in group settings).
- Provides therapeutic play programs designed to reduce stress, help clients cope with hospitalization, promote development and independence.
- Helps prepare children for diagnostic, medical and surgical procedures through hospital play, demonstrations and discussions.
- Introduces coping strategies and techniques to assist children and families during procedures.
- Accompanies child/adolescent to medical procedures and facilitates coping strategies.
- Provides diversion experiences and facilitates special events.

Other Related Duties

- Provides bereavement support to clients and their families as part of a multidisciplinary team.
- Provides family support and education including emotional support and development of parenting skills.
- Provides input into policies and procedures, program needs and service delivery options.
- May participate in research initiatives as required.

Other Related Duties (con't)

- Advocates for the needs of the child and family.
- Selects, orders, evaluates and maintains equipment, toys and supplies for use in the program.

Leadership

- Coordinates and facilitates in-service training and ongoing education for staff, families and volunteers.
- Orients, supervises and evaluates students and volunteers, as assigned.

Decision-Making

- Independently makes decisions regarding patient progress and adapts interventions and treatment plans as appropriate.

Knowledge:

Education

- Bachelor's Degree in Child Life, Education, Psychology or other related field.

Working Conditions:

Physical Demands

- Required to stand, sit on the floor, carry and lift clients.
- Carries, pushes and lifts medical equipment, strollers and wheelchairs.
- Assumes awkward positions.

Work Environment

- Works in facility settings.
- Periodically works in labs/diagnostic clinics and critical care areas.
- Exposure to biohazardous materials.
- Travel in all weather/road conditions.