Making health care a positive experience for patients and families

For more information, please contact us:
Child Life Services
Boston Children’s Hospital
300 Longwood Avenue, Fegan 049
Boston, MA 02115
Office: 617-355-6551
Fax: 617-730-0640
bostonchildrens.org/childlife

Child Life Council
Boston Children’s Hospital child life specialists are certified through the national Child Life Council. For more information, visit childlife.org.

Child Life Services
Making health care a positive experience for patients and families

Boston Children’s Hospital
Until every child is well™
Who we are
Here at Boston Children’s Hospital, our child life specialists are important members of the health care team.
Child life specialists enhance patients’ emotional, social and cognitive growth during a hospital visit, taking into consideration each child’s family, culture and stage of development. They use developmental interventions and play to help patients and families adjust to and understand their health care experiences.
Our child life specialists are specially trained to work with children in medical settings. Each holds either a bachelor’s or master’s degree in child life, child development or a related field, has successfully completed a supervised clinical internship, and maintains professional certification through the national Child Life Council.

What we do
Child life specialists:
- Promote patients’ development by normalizing daily routines, activities and environment
- Educate and prepare patients and families about the health care experience in an approach that meets their individual needs
- Encourage developmentally appropriate activities and play
- Help patients enhance their coping skills when dealing with fear, pain, anxiety and separation from family, friends and their familiar environments
- Provide consultation to the health care team regarding patients’ developmental and psychosocial issues
- Provide individualized support before, during and after medical procedures
- Facilitate medical play in individual and group settings
- Promote family-centered care by offering information, advocacy and guidance
- Educate hospital staff about child development and related issues
- Initiate tutoring support for patients missing school due to hospitalization
- Celebrate milestones including birthdays and holidays
- Supervise and train student interns and volunteers

Where we work
Our child life specialists work in both inpatient and intensive care units. They also assist patients in specialty areas, such as the Emergency Department, Dialysis Unit and various outpatient primary care clinics on the main hospital campus and in Boston Children’s satellite locations. The child life team also collaborates with special programs dedicated to helping hospitalized children, including the Big Apple Circus Clown Care Unit, the Music Therapy Program and the Hole in the Wall Camp Hospital Outreach Program.