Child Life Services
A child’s work is play
Hospitals can be a confusing environment for a child. Child Life/Child Development Services seeks to ease that fear by familiarizing young children, adolescents and their families with the hospital experience.

For more than four decades, UCLA’s Child Life/Child Development Services has been a pioneer and national model for how to appropriately address the social, emotional and developmental needs of each child and his or her family in a culturally sensitive manner. Our team attends to the unique needs of pediatric patients — especially the critically and chronically ill — by collaborating with other healthcare team members to help achieve a balance between the medical and psychosocial needs of the child and family.
“Child Life — A happy place full of smiles, laughter and fun. A time without doctors, needles or nurses.”

— Juan, age 8
Child Life Specialists

Child Life Specialists are part of an interdisciplinary, family-centered model of care. They focus on the social, emotional and developmental needs of hospitalized children by communicating accurate and age-specific information, identifying potential stressors, and planning and practicing coping strategies.

They also help family members understand their child’s response to treatment, promote parent/child play sessions and share strategies for comforting their children during medical procedures. Each patient’s Child Life Specialist provides a sense of stability and continuity of care each and every visit.

Each member of our professional staff holds a bachelor’s or master’s degree in child life/child development, education and/or psychology, and is professionally certified and affiliated with the Child Life Council.
“I’ve been coming here since I was five. Since day one, Child Life has helped me through procedures when I’m scared. When I’m in the hospital, Child Life helps me get through everything. When I get bored or scared, they help me.”

— Alyssa, age 16
Services Offered

• Pre-hospitalization visits for children and their families

• Developmental preparation for medical procedures, support during procedures and post-procedural medical play

• Therapeutic intervention — including music therapy, dance therapy and medical play

• Expert consultation for caregivers and medical team members regarding children’s development

• Consultation with caregivers, siblings and children of adult patients about the impact of illness on the child and family

• Supervision of Playroom, Teen Lounge, Family Resource Room and outpatient play areas

• Access to interactive gaming resources and laptop computers

• Special events that entertain and engage children and families

• Assistance in transitioning from hospital to home and/or school following an illness

• Facilitation of programs for parents of pediatric patients
Music Therapy

Our board-certified music therapist uses music expression, musical imagery and recording to help children who have been in the hospital for extended periods to cope with limited social and emotional stimulation and to reduce anxiety.

Dance/Movement Therapy

Our board-certified dance movement therapist engages medically fragile children in movement therapy, which supports physical development, anxiety reduction and creative expression. Small group and bedside sessions are scheduled to meet the child’s psychological, emotional and physical needs.
The Carlson Home and Hospital School program provides school services in the hospital for children in kindergarten through high school when hospitalized for 10 or more days. The hospital teacher follows the curriculum of the Los Angeles Unified School District and the education standards established by the state of California. Individualized lesson plans address the language and math academic requirements for each student. Grades received through this program become part of the students’ records at their home schools.
Family Resource Room

Through the programs and services provided at our Family Resource Room, caregivers may network with other parents, engage in support groups, or participate in educational or creative arts seminars. A volunteer Resource Room librarian is available to share information on child development, medical conditions and community resources, and to connect families with similar challenges.

In addition, caregivers may borrow laptops for limited periods of time to be used while visiting children in their rooms. Printing, faxing, copying services and light refreshments are available to families participating in Resource Room activities.
Child Life Internships

Child Life/Child Development Services provides educational and training opportunities to undergraduate and graduate students pursuing careers that support the social and emotional development of medically fragile children. For more information, visit www.uclahealth.org/childlife.

Volunteers

Community volunteers provide an extra touch to our patients and families by coordinating special events, arts-and-crafts and other projects. And they are available to play a video game, read a story or simply sit at a child’s bedside to provide comfort and companionship.
Community Partners

We are proud to join with the following community partners:

• Mattel Children’s Foundation
• UCLA Athletics
• Flashes of Hope
• Lollipop Theatre Network
• The Art of Elysium

• Discovery Arts
• Painted Turtle
• Help a Hospital
• Coach Art

Make a Gift

If you would like to make a gift to Child Life/Child Development Services, please visit www.uclahealth.org/childlife.

You can also mail your check, payable to The UCLA Foundation, to:

Child Life/Child Development Services
Mattel Children’s Hospital UCLA
757 Westwood Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90095

Your gift is an investment that will directly touch the lives of children and their families.

Thank you for your support!
Child Life/Child Development Services
UCLA Health System
E-mail: childlife@mednet.ucla.edu

Mattel Children’s Hospital UCLA
757 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90095
(310) 267-9440

Witherbee Children’s Health Center at UCLA
200 UCLA Medical Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90095
(310) 794-9759

Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center and Orthopaedic Hospital
1225 15th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404
(310) 319-3238