

# CHILD LIFE SPECIALISTS: HELPING KIDS COPE



**Shriners**  
Children's™  
Ohio

## WHO?

Certified Child Life Specialists (CCLS) are professionals who provide developmentally appropriate education, support and preparation for children and their families.

## WHY?

Child life interventions have been proven to reduce stress and anxiety related to illness, injury, trauma and loss. (ACLP 2022)

## WHERE?

Child life specialists are traditionally seen working in a medical setting such as a hospital. Child life teams work in a variety of units with a hospital such as the emergency room, same day surgery, clinics and inpatient units. There are child life teams in other community settings as well.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Choose providers and organizations that include child life specialists. Ask for this resource in settings and situations your child would benefit from this type of care and support.

## HOW TO FIND MORE INFORMATION:

For more information about the child life profession, check out the Association of Child Life Professionals' website at [childlife.org](http://childlife.org).

To learn more about the specialty care provided at Shriners Children's Ohio, go to [shrinersohio.org](http://shrinersohio.org).

## ASSESSMENT

Child life specialists provide therapeutic interventions that are guided by a child's abilities, developmental level, coping preferences and support needs.

## EDUCATION

Child life specialists provide tools, resources, and interventions to help children and families understand what they are experiencing in a way that is appropriate for their developmental level.

## PREPARATION

Child life specialists strive to reduce anxiety that can come from surprises and the unknown by providing easy to understand details about what to expect. They empower children with information, choices, and support for coping to navigate experiences that otherwise may cause fear.

## PLAY

Activities and games that are familiar and fun for a child can normalize an otherwise not-so-normal or familiar environment. Play is also used by child life as a avenue for teaching about events and procedures. Using the comfort of play promotes positive coping.

## ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

Child life specialists work together on care teams with the purpose of ensuring that children and families get the level of support they need.

