

Winthrop's Child Life Program

Hospitalization can be a very frightening experience for a child of any age. That's where Winthrop-University Hospital's Child Life Program comes into play.

The program was created to address the unique emotional and developmental needs of children, as well as their families, helping them cope with the anxiety hospitalization can cause. All children, whether just days old or in their teens, can benefit greatly from contact with one of Winthrop's Child Life Specialists and trained volunteers.



Who are Child Life Specialists?

The Child Life Specialist is a person trained in child development and in meeting the special needs of children who are ill. Through play, education, and support, Child Life Specialists build a special, trusting relationship with the pediatric patient while helping them understand and adjust to hospitalization through age-appropriate explanations.

You may find one of Winthrop's Child Life Specialists at a patient's bedside, in the Emergency Room, at Winthrop's Cancer Center for Kids and at the Pediatric Specialty Center, holding a child's hand during a medical procedure, calming the fears of anxious parents, or planning fun-filled activities for the kids. Contact with a Child Life Specialist is almost always guaranteed to take away a child's tears, fears and loneliness.



Through Play Comes Understanding

Play is often used as a method of healing, helping to explain medical procedures on a level the child can understand, in their own terms.

Through the use of "surgical dolls", photo preparation books, and medical kits, Child Life Specialists help educate children about the hospital and many of the procedures they will encounter during their stay, making an I.V. or an operation a little less daunting. This interaction gives the young patient a chance to express his or her feelings, ask questions and understand the entire hospital experience.

The Child Life Playroom

The playroom is a designated "safe haven," a place children can call their own away from tests, needles and treatments. The playroom serves as a social setting—where kids can just be kids. Pediatric patients can interact freely with other children and

participate in supervised activities such as painting, drawing and reading. Video and computer games, as well as the playroom's extensive library of donated movies, are also fun outlets for the kids during their hospital stay. In addition, children who are unable to go to the child life playroom are visited at bedside by a Child Life Specialist.

Special visits from guests including sports celebrities, and weekly clown visits

help to brighten the days of the patients. Activities such as dinner and a movie, arts and crafts projects, and programs for siblings and parents also make for a more positive experience.

Child Life Aims To...

- Help the child overcome fear and anxiety.
- Alleviate the long and short-term emotional effects of hospitalization.
- Transform hospitalization from a potentially frightening experience into a positive one that promotes the child's growth and development.
- Provide the family with emotional support as well as answers to questions, serving as a link between the hospital and home.
- Improve the child's and family's understanding of medical procedures through education and medical play.
- Provide the hospitalized child with a sense of control over a seemingly uncontrollable situation.

How You Can Help

Please join our effort to keep Child Life flourishing so that Winthrop can continue to provide the most compassionate care for all children.

I would like to thank the pediatric staff and support the Child Life Program at Winthrop-University Hospital by contributing \$_____.

My contribution is in honor of/in memory of _____.

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Or please send your check, payable to
Winthrop-University Hospital, Child Life Program

Office of Development
Winthrop-University Hospital
290 Old Country Road, Mineola, NY 11501

or visit www.winthrop.org/donate

For more information on giving opportunities call
the Office of Development at (516) 663-3398.

Contribution are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.



Child Life Program

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