



Child life specialists are professionals trained in supporting children with a medical condition. They can help young patients develop coping mechanisms through developmentally appropriate play, education, and preparation. They provide guidance and information for the patient's relatives and caregivers.

Child life specialists must:

- Have a bachelor's degree in child life or a related field, such as child development, child and family studies, psychology, or early childhood education.
- Complete an internship of a least 480 hours.
- Take a national exam to get certified.

A child life specialist can play a role in comforting your child and enhancing his or her understanding of the medical environment. You may find a child life specialist as a member of a medical team in a hospital or other medical facility. Some child life specialists also work in outpatient settings, including clinics, dental offices, and more. If your child's pediatric team doesn't include a child life specialist, you may be able to request one to assist a multidisciplinary medical team.

You may also be able to find a child life specialist at another hospital or medical facility who could assist you and your family over the phone. Or try contacting your hemophilia treatment center to find child life specialists in your area. If you're unable to connect with a child life specialist, here are some tips to practice therapeutic play with your child:

- Maintain an honest, open relationship, including discussions about medical procedures.
- Answer your child's questions as well as you can; if you're unsure, let him or her know you will find out from a doctor.
- When appropriate, involve your child in medical conversations.
- Engage in therapeutic play whenever possible.

Visit bleedingdisorders.com to find an HTC near you.

