

Welcome to Shedding Light on Child Life, a podcast associated with [childlifewithanisha.org](http://childlifewithanisha.org) by Anisha Reza. You can find content here presented through the lens of a person of color, career changer, from medicine to child life, exploring the intersection of diversity, student experiences, and psychosocial health and advocacy for children.

Well, hi, everyone. Thanks for being here. No matter how you found it, I am thankful. I'm here to start a podcast, not to be a cliché millennial, but here I am. Who would have thought? Not me. So, this came out of an idea to have a publication that focuses on supporting students and being a resource and content hub with a DEIA lens, which would be diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. So with this, you can find more information about my background and all of that in long form content on this publication. You'll find pages there for students for child life specialists, for caregivers, and for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

I'm really excited about the potential here and you can explore some of that vision on the pages I just listed. So here in this first episode, I mainly just want to introduce myself into why I'm using a podcast form to supplement the long form content you'll find on my main website. So knowing that I have the same 24 hours in a day as you, and I'm a recovering perfectionist so sometimes these episodes are going to be raw where I'm just going to really try to not pour over every little blip in the episodes and in my content but just to be able to talk to you guys about some of the real stories and the lived experiences I've had, especially with the DEIA lens, again, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Some of those stories are just going to need some of my tone of voice and the intentional pauses and probably some emotion because these are some difficult stories and things that I've carried with me in my life. And of course, being a child life specialist, emotions and our behaviors all reflect our inner worlds and help us process that. So I have a lot of these kinds of stories that I'd like to share that won't be captured in the same way as I would if I were writing a post.

So this podcast kind of supplements that form of sharing stories. So with my focus here to share my story and get it out there and to do so with a professional lens from my scope as a Child Life Specialist. I'm also going to be hopefully using my background from being in medicine. I wasn't just pre-med. literally did two years in medical school. So I have a lot of scientific background. have a lot of student experiences. I've done something like 30 semesters of higher education, which I know is insane.

But part of the reason of this whole venture here is that I am really passionate about those coming behind me, being able to benefit from my experiences, and maybe not struggle as much as I did. Due to those trials, I have endured to be where I am as a second generation immigrant of mixed Asian descent. I am definitely in a place in my life where I feel really secure in who I am and what I have to offer. So as much as I hope that this publication is a resource to you in whatever or wherever you're coming from or lived experiences you're having or challenges you're experiencing now, I hope somehow my story and my thoughts and my reflections can be an encouragement to you to advocate for yourself or feel like you aren't alone or to maybe even



feel inspired to speak up and influence those in your circles because due to our own unique, important intersecting identities, we have to use our voices that will influence those around us the most and be able to be our most authentic selves to inspire change for the next generation. So that's kind of a little background of why I'm here and why there's a podcast addition to the long form writing of my main publication.

So most of the content I'm going to be putting out at the beginning here is with this DEIA lens. And you will find on the corresponding page that I have an encouragement about approaching these topics with a curiosity and I hope you will too. I consider myself a lifelong learner and encourage you to also challenge yourself, avoid forming an opinion too quickly. I think with a lot of the topics I'd like to explore, such as the importance of a name and pronouncing it and spelling it correctly, which I'm sure a lot of people can relate to, or even cultural foods or how to ask questions of people who you don't know their background but you don't want to make them feel othered. Those are just some samples of things on my mind that I'd like to share.

But we all have a lot of deep-seated biases and misconceptions because stereotypes have to come from somewhere. So ultimately, I hope and ask that you all have a willingness to do some of the difficult work and have some self-awareness because I am working on all these things too every day because we face our biases in our daily lives. It's not just in the big moments.

I'm very open to seeing where this blog and corresponding podcasts take me. And again, you can find more information about the goals and vision I have for each section on my website, Shedding Light on Child Life, which is located at [childlifewithanisha.org](http://childlifewithanisha.org). So I hope that overall something here has caught your attention or that's why you even clicked to listen to this and part of why you're here is to learn together. So I'm hoping that in a combination of my personal experiences and my professional lens together we can create a community where we can discuss these topics and learn together.

Hopefully I'll be able to offer you some insight and information that may help you in whatever background or avenue you're looking for that information, whether that's as a parent or caregiver, professional, and definitely not just for Child Life specialists, but for any adjacent fields because this work is applicable to any professional. Because we work with a diverse patient population and diverse communities and our neighbors. So it's a necessary aspect of our work and our daily lives. So I hope that we can create a really great community here on Shedding Light with Child Life.

This podcast will mainly function as a supplement to the main publication that you can find at [childlifewithanisha.org](http://childlifewithanisha.org). So here in this introductory episode, I mainly wanted to highlight some of the things I'm looking forward to doing in terms of content. So firstly, with the diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility page, I'm hoping to have some seminars or lectures and maybe even having some collaborations on the blog or podcast here. And the hosting website I'm using is called Ghost, which was intentional because it has ability for me to include



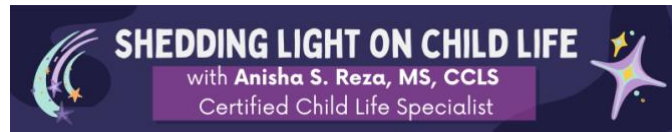
subscription tiers. So as things grow and this community grows as well, maybe I will offer workshops to have more tailored challenges for this work or vulnerable seminars or lectures or podcast episodes. So we will see how things go.

For the student side, I will also be posting things like common interview questions, samples of my personal statements from my own application experiences for medical school, for child life. There will also be subscription tiers that expand, but there are already some live on the website. So please go explore what's available to you there. If you are currently a student or coming up on an application, perhaps we can work together.

I'm also going to be posting more resource hubs for the caregiver page that will have some elements of a DEIA lens, but I'm interested in compiling some resources for caregivers that are already out there and are doing great work and to have a centralized place for them to look. I'm finding that some of my friends and family are asking more questions about things that their own children or students or whoever is around them is struggling with. And being able to have somewhere I can direct them more easily with things I've used before or vetted, I think will be a great addition to this publication.

Lastly, for the page for Child Life Specialists, I am hoping to comment on some hot topics going on in the field and have specific seminars that wouldn't quite apply to the general DEIA page, but will also be able to be tailored to our field specifically and how you can positively impact your own professional growth as a specialist and how to incorporate these ideas into your interventions perhaps I'll be able to share some of my own interventions and how my DEIA lens impacted that. There will also be more scholarly articles and evidence-based practice for your learning and specific to our scope.

But I also hope that with the lens I will be bringing that it can help impact our field and move it forward to have a true diversity inclined growth and intentionality as well as incorporating and intersecting my own passions for students as well because I would also like to make things available to any specialists who have influence with students, whether that's a supervisor, a leader, program educator, that you can have insight on the way I approached interviews as a diverse student. And diversity means a lot of things, whether it's ability, language, race, social background, etcetera. For me as a career changer, I knew I had a leg up, but I also knew that it was really important to me to kind of get a gauge on programs if they took DEIA topics seriously and it wasn't just a buzzword. So those are some of the posts you can look forward to about ways that I think we can incorporate more intentionality in how we structure student programming so that the diversity in our field can actually increase and be retained as well.



So those are just a few of the highlights. You can always look at my website for the most up-to-date information, [childlifewithanisha.org](http://childlifewithanisha.org), and subscribe if you don't want to miss any posts and you can get a newsletter for free right to your inbox. We'll see how everything grows and I'm really excited to have you along for the journey. Thanks for listening and I'll catch you next time.