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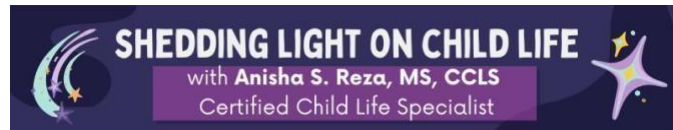
Summer 2023 Pre-Internship Personal Statement [with redactions]

After a few months at [...] a shy but personable young man named Spud clapped for the first time as I said goodbye. It was at this moment when my understanding of the power of connection intensified my dedication to serve patients. When I began reading fantastical stories and fables weekly to some residents, it was hard to ignore the absence of the typical pointing and laughter that accompanies story time. The majority of the patients have cerebral palsy and despite a lack of verbal communication, I witnessed the team cultivate relationships with their patients to such an extent that they recognize many subtle cues about the children's needs. The patients may have family who might not want or be able to care for them, but the healthcare team makes the center their home from administering their medication to fixing their hair. This team has reinforced how healthcare is a holistic integration of long-term medical intervention and personal engagement.

[...] These children pretend to cook a meal for me at the kitchenette one moment and tell me detailed information about their chemotherapy regimen the next. Witnessing these patient populations provided a reminder of the power of not being defeated but in overcoming environmental challenges. These children exhibit a quiet resilience, not denying their trials nor letting those setbacks define them. Being part of these teams encouraged me to find a way to best serve children in an impactful way. I could have never predicted that I would have had the obstacles I did during my career path, but it also makes me more certain than ever about my career goals: to serve my community, interact closely with patients and their families, and mentor students like me who volunteer in child life units.

While volunteering with the Child Life department at [...], I applied what I learned in a Pediatric Psychology course from my undergraduate studies in Child Development that emphasized maintaining the identity of the child first rather than as a sick patient. In this leading hospital for pediatric burn care, young patients create a diverse and global environment that requires [...]. The children exhibited an incredible ability to help us to forget why they were there, even with the visible bandaging. Like Luisa who included me so effortlessly in her music therapy session despite a language barrier, these patients embodied [...]. The Child Life department allows families and the recovering patients to address deep concerns and lifestyle changes together with the hospital team to create a holistic healthcare experience. [...].

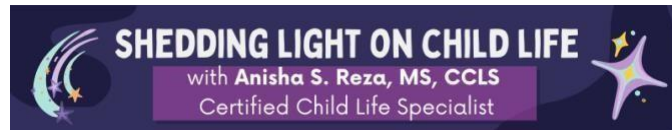
[...]



[...] Despite my initial discontent with the interruptions in my journey, I find solace in the fact that these recent trials do not define me but contribute to molding me into the child life specialist I hope to become.

While I had previously been focused on a potential career in pediatrics and have had to reevaluate career options that could best integrate my passions and skills, I now see how all my experiences leading up to and during my time as a medical student will inform my potential future as a CCLS. [...] Just as I will meet patients and their families who are being tested by unforeseen circumstances while in an unfamiliar environment, I hope I can [...].

[...] I cannot imagine a career more fitting that integrates my knowledge, experiences, and trials in an incredibly rewarding and redemptive way. [...]. By staying true to my goals to serve patients and their families, I see Child Life as a field full of opportunities to better my community through service. I know that the obstacles I endured will equip me to better serve others like the resilient children I have come to know.



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Fall 2023 Internship Readiness Application Samples [with redactions]

At time of my application, there was a 150-word limit for all entries unless otherwise noted.

Child Life Volunteer, Description of role and responsibility

(KSAs used: 2.01, 3.01, 3.02)

I provided positive, healthcare adult interactions for pediatric patients by enhancing their sense of [...] through normalizing, child-directed play and arts. I supported CCLSs in [...]. Whether [...], I saw how developmentally appropriate activities promoted coping and emotional regulation. By being engaged and prepared for what the child was processing through play, I saw how a child's spirit can never fully fade. Children can learn from these interactions to [...]. From [...], the child life team advocates for patients with [...] to [...].

Emergency Room Medical Scribe and Trainer, Description of role and responsibility

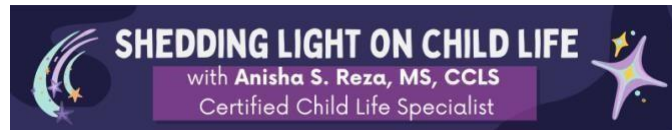
(KSAs used: 1.05, 2.05, 3.04, 3.05)

I provided high quality documentation for healthcare providers and actively advanced emergency room workflow. Complementing [...] hours of shadowing medical professionals, I saw how important building quick rapport and effective communication are for family-centered care during trauma. I gained insight into healthcare disparities in my community while working intimately with providers on a multidisciplinary team. [...] By being open to feedback and flexible to team needs, [...]. With [...] respect surrounding professional boundaries, child life specialists can advocate for their patients as [...].

Hospice Patient Care Volunteer, Description of role and responsibility

(KSAs used: 1.01, 1.04, 2.02, 2.03)

I did not have any prior experience with palliative care; thus, providing company as part of patients' end-of-life care was an incredibly intimate privilege. While I [...], I ultimately strived to support the patient and family during an emotionally taxing time for them. [...] Being trusted in the homes and lives of patients and their families coping with anticipatory grief, it was critical that I consider [...] as described by family systems theory. [...], I highly value the experience I had of building therapeutic relationships with families with [...].



Tutoring selected for experience that demonstrates your work with children outside of a healthcare setting. Provide a specific example of how you engaged with a child (or children) in a developmentally appropriate way. Include assessment of development.

(KSAs used: 1.01, 1.03, 2.01, 3.01, 3.03, 3.05)

The skills I gained from supporting tutees in their specific [...] are applicable to scope of child life practice in [...]. For example, one of my adolescent students was convinced he had exhausted all options to improve his ACT writing score. However, by providing alternatives and [...], he was able to improve. According to stress and coping theories, I saw [...]. I was able to address [...] which is vital during adolescence. Especially with [...], I can use these skills as an intern to [...]. Professional development webinars and organizations like [...] have helped me make extrapolations between my experiences and how they apply to the scope of child life practice.

Which element from the Internship Readiness KSAs do you most want to grow/learn more about during your internship?

(KSAs used: 1.04, 2.02, 3.02, 3.03)

I hope to expand upon my experience as a hospice volunteer in how to provide coping support and creative outlets for children and families experiencing grief. At a grief camp, I co-led a group of bereaved school-age children in mindfulness, legacy building, and crafts. One child declined to share anything about herself or her loss during activities. While other adults pressured her to answer questions and eventually turned their attention to the more vocal children, I joined her active play, expressed interest in her gymnastics, and created a comfortable environment for her. Soon afterwards, she shared with me about her older brother she lost. By going at her pace, following her developmental needs, and acknowledging her personality, I was able to learn more about how she was processing this loss. I hope to learn more about how to use a therapeutic relationship to support children processing loss through play.

For more samples and less redactions in the above examples, consider purchase of the “Child Life Application Cycle Package” to gain access.