



## Child Life Code of Ethics

Child life professionals subscribe to a body of ethical principles which are in accordance with the Association of Child Life Professionals' Child Life Mission, Values, and Vision Statements and Operating Principles and which are derived primarily for the benefit and protection of infants, children, youth, and families in settings where the potential for damaging stress or trauma exists. Child life professionals (including specialists, administrators, assistants, interns and students) share as a goal: (1) maximizing the physical and emotional health as well as the social, cognitive and developmental abilities of children and youth, and (2) minimizing the potential stress and trauma that children (unless modified, children refers to infants, children and youth) and their families may experience.

Toward these ends, child life professionals recognize that they are ethically responsible to: (1) infants, children, youth, and families; (2) other professionals; (3) staff, students and volunteers who are receiving training and supervision; and (4) themselves, both personally and professionally.

It is understood that ethical behavior should not result from edict but from a personal commitment on the part of the individual as a professional. In any situation, the course of action chosen is expected to be consistent with the ethical principles either stated or implied herein.

**Principle 1**—Child Life professionals shall hold paramount the welfare of the children and families whom they serve.

**Principle 2**-- Child Life professionals shall strive to maintain objectivity, integrity and competence in fulfilling the mission, vision, values and operating principles of their profession.

**Principle 3** -- Child Life professionals shall have an obligation to serve children and families, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, economic status, values, national origin, or disability.

**Principle 4** -- Child Life professionals shall respect the privacy of children and families and shall maintain confidentiality of information concerning the children and the families with whom they work. Child Life professionals shall ensure that the transmission of verbal, written, and electronic communication is within the standards and requirements of the employer and local governing regulations. For professionals working in private practice, all written documentation must be stored in a locked and secure drawer or cabinet, and all electronic documentation must be password protected.

**Principle 5** -- Child Life professionals shall promote the competencies of the child life profession by continuous efforts to improve professional services and practices provided in the diverse settings in which they work, and in the community at large.

**Principle 6** -- Child Life professionals shall continually seek knowledge and skills that will update and enhance their understanding of all relevant issues affecting the children and families they serve.

**Principle 7** -- Child Life professionals engaged in study and research shall be guided by the conventions of scholarly inquiry and shall recognize their responsibility for ethical practice in research.

**Principle 8** -- Child Life professionals have an obligation to engage only in those areas in which they are qualified and not to represent themselves otherwise, but to make appropriate referrals with due regard for the professional competencies of other members of the health care team or of the community within which they work.

**Principle 9** -- Child Life professionals shall act with respect for the duties, competencies and needs of their professional colleagues and shall maintain the utmost integrity in all interactions with the institutions or organizations that employ them or in their private practices.

**Principle 10** -- Child Life professionals shall use integrity to assess and amend any personal relationships, social media exchanges or situations that may interfere with their professional effectiveness or objectivity, or otherwise negatively impact the children and families they serve. A minimum of two years following the conclusion of a professional role shall lapse before any personal relationship is permitted to develop with children or the members of families they serve.

**Principle 11** -- Child Life professionals shall recognize that financial gain should never take precedence over the delivery of services.

**Principle 12** -- Child Life professionals who are responsible for the supervision and training of others (i.e., staff, students, volunteers) shall assume responsibility for teaching ethical professional values and providing optimal learning experiences.

**Principle 13** -- Child Life professionals shall refrain from illegal conduct in their professional practice of child life.

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