



# SUMMARY OF THE 2012 CHILD LIFE PROFESSION COMPENSATION SURVEY RESULTS

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## CHILD LIFE COMPENSATION SURVEY

In 2012, the Child Life Council (CLC) sponsored a large-scale survey of practicing child life specialists to understand the positions held, how much is earned, and the types of benefits received.

CLC engaged Association Research, Inc., an independent research company to conduct a salary survey. More than 4,800 child life professionals in the U.S. and Canada were contacted to participate in the study. The response rate to the Web-based survey was excellent—41.7%—based on 2,037 responses. Of this group, 93.3% worked in the U.S. and 6.6% in Canada. Almost 80% were in full-time positions. The confidential Web-based survey gathered individual and institutional demographic data along with the salary and benefits data as self-reported by the respondents. In addition, directors and child life specialists with leadership responsibilities were asked to provide institutional salary and wage range data. They also reported organizational level detailed benefits for health insurance and maternity leave, and professional development costs.

Three distinct positions are reflected in the summary of survey results:

- Manager/Director/Leader of Child Life Program
- Child Life Specialist with Leadership Responsibilities
- Child Life Specialist

A profile of each position, with a summary of results, is presented on the following pages. As the vast majority of respondents to the survey were U.S.-based and full time, only individuals in those categories were used to create the detailed profiles. In addition, there is a summary table of full-time salaries in Canada.

## Explanation of Terminology

The salary table for each position uses statistical measures to describe the whole range of salaries. The mean and median values are the most familiar and commonly used benchmarks. The *mean* (average) is the total of all salaries divided by the number of individual entries reported. The disadvantage of the mean value is that it can be distorted by unusually high or low numbers, whereas the median (mid-point) figure is not influenced by extreme values. The *median* value is the salary right in the middle, after all salaries are arranged from the lowest to highest. Half of all the values are lower than the median and half are higher. In addition to mean and median values, salary quartiles are displayed. The first quartile, for example, is higher than 25% of all others reported, but lower than the remaining 75%. The third quartile is higher than 75% of the field, but lower than the remaining 25%.

Each salary table also shows how salary levels vary by education, location, and experience. The crosstab for education displays the difference between individuals with a Bachelor's and those with a Master's degree. For location, U.S. Census Districts are used. A final table summarizing benefits offered by job position is included.

### **Executive Report on Child Life Salaries and Compensation Available**

Detailed statistical tables and analysis are available in the *2012 Child Life Compensation Study*, published by CLC. This inclusive report provides an analysis of salaries and benefits for part-time employees, and contains a separate section covering salaries and benefits for respondents working in Canada. The detailed Salary tables have additional breakouts for gender, credentials, community size, institution or organization type, number of pediatric beds, as well as number of people supervised. To obtain the *Compensation Study*, please visit [www.childlife.org](http://www.childlife.org).

Child Life Council, Inc.  
11821 Parklawn Drive, Suite 310  
Rockville, MD 20852  
[www.childlife.org](http://www.childlife.org)

# MANAGER/DIRECTOR/LEADER OF CHILD LIFE PROGRAM

## Position Description:

This individual should be designated as the head of the child life program with responsibilities that can include:

- Managing the department budget, salaries, and staffing
- Evaluating staff, department needs, and overall contributions to organization
- Advocating for needs of department and organization
- Authorizing and encouraging fundraising and special events for the program and organization

## Demographic Highlights - United States, Full-Time:

Average Age	44
Master's Degree as Highest Education	60%
Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS)	96%
Average Years as Child Life Specialist	17
Average Number of Pediatric Hospital Beds	169
Average Number of People Supervised	13
Children's Hospital within Hospital	42%
Children's Hospital (freestanding)	34%
Metro Area with 1 Million Population or More	49%

## Annual Salary as of September 1, 2012

### Manager/Director/Leader of Child Life Program

		Annual Salary as of September 1, 2012					2011-2012 Salary Change
		Number of Respondents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
<b>United States Full-Time</b>							
All Full-time Respondents		159	71,487	56,000	69,311	83,928	2.3%
Highest Education	Bachelor's Degree	59	64,076	50,898	61,000	73,689	2.3%
	Master's Degree	95	76,053	59,000	72,800	90,000	2.5%
US Census Districts	New England	7	71,218	60,000	71,427	79,000	3.2%
	Middle Atlantic	39	77,061	56,000	71,739	90,000	1.8%
	South Atlantic	25	60,639	48,477	61,000	72,489	2.5%
	East South Central	10	66,216	50,742	63,575	78,875	2.2%
	West South Central	21	71,305	57,060	68,640	87,932	2.6%
	East North Central	23	73,131	50,359	69,311	89,315	2.9%
	West North Central	9	65,183	55,856	63,876	77,500	2.0%
	Mountain	10	67,439	55,112	66,500	78,357	4.8%
	Pacific	15	82,931	73,689	80,000	93,642	4.1%
Years as Child Life Professional	Less than 4 years	5	44,594	37,484	48,000	50,000	11.5%
	4 - 9 years	24	54,501	45,828	50,449	57,738	2.4%
	9 years or more	117	75,077	60,000	72,000	85,899	2.2%

# CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST WITH LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

## Position Description:

This individual should meet the same requirements as a child life specialist with the addition of administrative/supervisory responsibilities. This description does not include management of volunteers or interns; only supervision of paid staff is included. Responsibilities can include:

- Supervision/clinical supervision of department staff members
- Coordinating child life internship program
- Formal mentorship of junior child life specialists
- Grant writing and fund development responsibilities
- New program development
- Clinical education responsibilities

## Demographic Highlights - United States, Full-Time:

Average Age	36
Bachelor's Degree as Highest Education	52%
Master's Degree as Highest Education	47%
Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS)	99%
Average Years as Child Life Specialist	11
Average Number of Pediatric Hospital Beds	187
Average Number of People Supervised	3
Children's Hospital within Hospital	35%
Children's Hospital (freestanding)	43%
Metro Area with 1 Million Population or More	40%

## Annual Salary as of September 1, 2012

### Child Life Specialist with Leadership Responsibilities

		Annual Salary as of September 1, 2012					2011-2012 Salary Change
		Number of Respon- dents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
<b>United States Full-Time</b>							
All Full-time Respondents		331	49,509	41,000	48,610	55,000	2.5%
Highest Education	Bachelor's Degree	173	47,187	39,322	45,552	52,858	2.6%
	Master's Degree	155	52,230	44,720	50,918	58,000	2.5%
Credentials	CCLS	328	49,517	41,000	48,370	55,000	2.6%
US Census Districts	New England	26	56,485	44,107	53,594	63,834	2.1%
	Middle Atlantic	68	49,631	44,741	49,288	54,060	2.1%
	South Atlantic	58	45,425	38,837	43,000	50,250	2.1%
	East South Central	7	45,943	39,408	46,488	49,641	.3%
	West South Central	36	46,084	39,261	46,062	52,375	3.0%
	East North Central	44	48,431	42,160	49,898	53,000	2.9%
	West North Central	34	46,531	36,419	48,370	51,393	2.8%
	Mountain	19	44,844	39,187	43,035	50,000	2.6%
Pacific	39	60,606	52,000	59,738	67,400	3.4%	
Years as Child Life Professional	Less than 4 years	43	39,428	34,000	38,000	42,432	4.5%
	4 - 9 years	133	46,547	40,000	46,000	52,000	2.9%
	9 years or more	151	54,987	47,000	52,350	60,778	2.2%

# CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST

## Position Description:

This individual typically has earned certification as a child life specialist. Minimal education requirements are at the bachelor's degree level, along with successful completion of a child life internship. Responsibilities may include:

- Applying growth and development theory and practice to work with children and youth
- Applying evidence-based practice concepts, including play, preparation and assessment
- Facilitating and evaluating daily interactions and interventions with patients and staff
- Managing unit-based volunteers
- Organizing special events and community visits
- Managing support groups and other regularly scheduled events

## Demographic Highlights – United States, Full Time:

Average Age	31
Bachelor's Degree as Highest Education	64%
Master's Degree as Highest Education	34%
Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS)	98%
Average Years as Child Life Specialist	6
Average Number of Pediatric Hospital Beds	208
Children's Hospital within Hospital	35%
Children's Hospital (freestanding)	51%
Metro Area with 1 Million Population or More	39%

## Annual Salary as of September 1, 2012

### Child Life Specialist

		Annual Salary as of September 1, 2012					2011-2012 Salary Change
		Number of Respondents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
<b>United States Full-Time</b>							
All Full-time Respondents		823	42,720	36,754	41,184	47,157	2.5%
Highest Education	Bachelor's Degree	526	41,334	35,825	40,000	45,770	2.5%
	Master's Degree	282	44,985	38,505	44,000	50,000	2.5%
	Other	11	46,544	41,978	44,429	46,592	2.3%
US Census Districts	New England	53	42,775	39,427	42,848	46,296	1.9%
	Middle Atlantic	141	44,475	40,000	44,070	48,000	2.0%
	South Atlantic	144	39,265	34,948	37,991	43,378	2.9%
	East South Central	43	37,162	33,550	36,000	39,832	4.4%
	West South Central	120	41,311	35,984	40,000	45,000	2.2%
	East North Central	130	41,278	36,475	40,386	45,000	2.7%
	West North Central	60	43,155	37,519	41,000	51,125	2.1%
	Mountain	69	43,611	37,315	41,974	48,263	2.3%
Pacific	61	55,164	49,960	52,500	60,216	3.0%	
Years as Child Life Professional	Less than 4 years	352	39,046	34,469	38,000	43,000	2.5%
	4 - 9 years	308	43,321	38,090	42,147	48,000	2.6%
	9 years or more	151	50,250	44,217	49,920	55,575	2.1%

## Summary of Benefits Eligible for by Current Position

	Manager/ Director/ Leader of Child Life Program		Child Life Specialist with Leadership Responsibilities		Child Life Specialist	
	Percent	Number of Respondents	Percent	Number of Respondents	Percent	Number of Respondents
<b>United States Full-Time</b>						
Annual Bonus	48.4%	77	35.6%	118	42.9%	353
Childcare on site	23.9%	38	19.3%	64	20.7%	170
Childcare allowance	11.9%	19	13.3%	44	15.1%	124
Flexible Spending Plan	76.7%	122	78.9%	261	84.0%	691
PTO or Traditional Leave	87.4%	139	87.9%	291	98.5%	811
Employer Contribution to Retirement Plan	81.1%	129	81.0%	268	92.8%	764
Dental	88.1%	140	87.9%	291	97.8%	805
Vision Care	86.8%	138	83.7%	277	94.2%	775
Group Life Insurance	84.9%	135	81.9%	271	89.3%	735
Health Club Membership	40.9%	65	39.3%	130	45.1%	371
Long-Term Care	56.0%	89	58.0%	192	60.8%	500
Long-Term Disability	79.9%	127	79.8%	264	86.9%	715
Short-Term Disability	83.6%	133	81.3%	269	90.2%	742
Eldercare Benefits	22.6%	36	24.8%	82	27.9%	230
Tuition Reimbursement	75.5%	120	77.3%	256	85.8%	706
Professional Association Dues Reimbursement	30.2%	48	21.1%	70	25.2%	207

## Salary Highlights – Canada, Full Time:

### Annual Salary by Job Description - Full-Time Canada

		Annual Salary as of September 1, 2012					2011-2012 Salary Change
		Number of Respondents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
Job Position	Manager/Director/Leader of Child Life Program	6	72,676	56,960	74,305	89,042	2.2%
	Child Life Specialist with Leadership Responsibilities	15	62,312	57,525	61,838	67,236	3.2%
	Child Life Specialist	46	62,038	56,946	63,700	65,933	2.1%

### Annual Salary by Province and Job Description - Full-Time Canada

				Annual Salary as of September 1, 2012					2011-2012 Salary Change
				Number of Respondents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
Job Position	Child Life Specialist with Leadership Responsibilities	Province	Ontario	8	61,141	55,631	61,919	66,495	1.0%
			Alberta	5	79,597	72,288	80,499	86,454	6.8%
	Child Life Specialist	Province	British Columbia	8	63,084	61,225	64,616	65,978	.0%
			Ontario	26	58,313	54,425	60,206	64,625	.7%