



How a Child Life Specialist can help

Hospitals can be scary places for children. The surroundings are unfamiliar, there are many new people, and most children need tests and procedures, which may cause discomfort. To ease your child's fears and help you during your child's outpatient care, your doctor may refer you to a Child Life Specialist.

The Outpatient Child Life Specialist can help your child and family by:

- preparing your child for treatment or medical procedures
- helping your child learn healthy ways of coping with difficult experiences related to health care and the hospital
- helping your child accept treatment
- explaining your child's condition in a way your child can understand
- using medical play to help your child understand his or her condition and its treatment
- motivating your child to take part in his or her care
- helping your child find ways to safely express his or her feelings
- explaining your child's needs to the other members of the health care team

A Child Life Specialist:

- ✓ is a member of your child's health care team
- ✓ understands how children develop and how family members interact
- ✓ has experience in working with children of all ages, and their families

If you would like the Outpatient Child Life Specialist to help your child or family, please ask for a referral from your doctor at McMaster Children's Hospital.