

Institutional Handbook of Operating Procedures
Policy 09.13.41

Section: Clinical Policies	Responsible Vice President: Executive Vice President and CEO Health System
Subject: Trauma	Responsible Entity: Nursing Administration – Women & Infants

I. Title

Child Life Specialist Referrals for Trauma Patients

II. Policy

The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) is a Level I Trauma Center committed to providing support for trauma patients and their families. A Child Life Specialist will be provided for any hospitalized child or family member, 18 years of age or younger, at UTMB Galveston, at the request of the patient’s care givers to facilitate coping with their own or family member’s injury in the Emergency Department (ED), Operating Room (OR), or inpatient units.

III. Procedures

- A. Any staff member who identifies children 18 years of age or younger that may benefit from a referral should contact the Child Life Specialist. A physician order is not required.
- B. During regular business hours, Monday- Friday 0800-1700, call the Inpatient Pediatric Med/Surg department at 409-772-2070 and request a Child Life Specialist.
- C. During non-business hours contact one of the following services by dialing UTMB’s operator by pressing ‘0’:
 - 1. On-call Chaplain Service
 - 2. On-call Care Manager
 - 3. ED Social Worker

IV. Definitions

Level I Trauma Center – A regional tertiary care center capable of providing care for patients that have suffered severe physical injury caused by an external source in a range from injury prevention through rehabilitation. This service includes 24 hour, in-house surgeon coverage for patients of all age ranges.

Child Life Specialist - A Child Life Specialist focuses on meeting the needs of children with their unique understanding of child development to help minimize the adverse effects of a child’s experience with healthcare. This interdisciplinary collaboration and focus on family centered care facilitate the family’s coping during a traumatic situation to develop a plan of care and reduce emotional consequences of a child or family member’s hospitalization. Child Life Specialists utilize play and communication with an emphasis on emotional expression to facilitate adjustment under circumstances that might otherwise prove overwhelming. With their usage of play, a Child Life Specialists can also provide emotional support for families, and encourage optimum development of children facing a broad range of challenging experiences, particularly those related to healthcare and hospitalization.

V. Additional References

Child Life Council, Committee on Hospital Care (2006). *Child Life Services*. Pediatrics, volume 118, issue 4. <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/118/4/1757>

American Trauma Society (2007). *Trauma Center Levels Explained*. ATS.
<http://www.amtrauma.org/?page=TraumaLevels>

VI. Dates Approved or Amended

<i>Originated: 07/31/2018</i>	
<i>Reviewed with Changes</i>	<i>Reviewed without Changes</i>

VII. Contact Information

Please contact the Child Life or Trauma Departments
(409) 772-3424