



SUMMARY OF THE 2008 CHILD LIFE PROFESSION COMPENSATION SURVEY RESULTS



CHILD LIFE COMPENSATION SURVEY

In 2008, 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 3,600 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 — 44.8% — based on 1,631 responses. Of this group, 94.4% worked in the U.S. and the balance in Canada. Eighty percent 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.

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

- Director/Manager/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. There is a separate 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 degree 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.

Detailed statistical tables and analysis are available in the *Executive Report on Child Life Salaries and Compensation*, published by CLC in July 2008. 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, number of FTE professional staff in the department, as well as number of people supervised. Visit www.childlife.org for more information.

DIRECTOR/MANAGER/LEADER OF CHILD LIFE PROGRAM

Position Description: This individual should be a Certified Child Life Specialist with academic preparation at the master's degree level, including all expertise in the areas listed under child life specialist. Responsibilities may 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

AVERAGE AGE	43
MASTER'S DEGREE AS HIGHEST EDUCATION	63%
CERTIFIED CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST (CCLS)	92%
AVERAGE YEARS AS CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONAL	16
AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL BEDS	139
AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE SUPERVISED	11
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL WITHIN HOSPITAL	43%
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL (FREESTANDING)	31%
LARGE CITY/SUBURB	55%

Annual Salary as of January 1, 2008

Director/Manager/Leader of Child Life Program

		Annual Salary as of January 2008					2007-2008 Salary Change
		Number of Respon- dents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
United States Full-Time							
All Full-time Respondents		155	63,417	53,227	60,000	71,885	4.1%
Highest Education	Bachelor's Degree	56	55,857	44,244	56,000	65,788	4.0%
	Master's Degree	97	67,594	56,000	63,000	76,232	4.2%
U.S. Census District	New England	8	60,645	53,406	60,400	67,132	4.0%
	Middle Atlantic	38	66,694	56,000	60,000	76,042	5.3%
	South Atlantic	28	58,336	51,250	56,767	68,593	3.2%
	East S. Central	9	57,781	39,000	58,240	70,000	3.0%
	West S. Central	17	60,384	47,907	57,800	70,800	4.2%
	East N. Central	16	63,627	44,712	59,299	81,750	4.1%
	West N. Central	10	57,145	43,192	63,030	69,831	5.0%
	Mountain	6	58,178	53,531	56,368	64,378	9.6%
	Pacific	20	73,430	62,000	73,247	88,500	4.6%
Years as Child Life Professional	4 - 9 years	38	54,936	46,500	56,000	62,125	5.9%
	9 years or more	105	67,443	55,359	64,106	76,232	3.8%

CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST WITH LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

Position Description: This individual should meet the same requirements as a child life specialist, with additional experience, education and/or responsibilities as designated by each child life program.

Responsibilities may include:

- *Supervising child life internship program*
- *Organizing child life volunteer program, job shadows and practicum students*
- *Mentoring junior child life specialists*
- *Grant writing and new program development*
- *Clinical supervision and educator roles*

DEMOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

AVERAGE AGE	35
BACHELOR'S DEGREE AS HIGHEST EDUCATION	63%
MASTER'S DEGREE	37%
CERTIFIED CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST (CCLS)	96%
AVERAGE YEARS AS CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONAL	9
AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL BEDS	169
AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE SUPERVISED	2
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL WITHIN HOSPITAL	40%
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL (FREESTANDING)	42%
LARGE CITY/SUBURB	60%

Annual Salary as of January 1, 2008

Child Life Specialist with Leadership Responsibilities

		Annual Salary as of January 2008					2007-2008 Salary Change
		Number of Respondents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
United States Full-Time							
All Full-time Respondents		377	44,185	37,515	42,500	49,960	4.2%
Highest Education	Bachelor's Degree	236	42,383	36,058	41,196	47,382	4.2%
	Master's Degree	141	47,199	40,000	46,000	52,825	4.2%
U.S. Census District	New England	27	47,450	40,000	44,500	52,000	4.0%
	Middle Atlantic	54	45,802	40,000	44,500	50,250	3.5%
	South Atlantic	76	41,544	34,403	39,915	44,967	4.6%
	East S. Central	15	37,273	32,000	35,662	43,000	2.5%
	West S. Central	60	41,145	35,988	40,305	44,439	4.2%
	East N. Central	41	42,664	38,000	43,000	47,420	3.7%
	West N. Central	34	41,975	33,272	41,000	49,250	4.2%
	Mountain	21	46,455	38,979	43,825	52,074	4.3%
Pacific	49	52,370	46,796	52,000	58,526	4.3%	
Years as Child Life Professional	3 years or less	79	40,009	33,134	37,960	43,000	4.5%
	4 - 9 years	171	43,088	38,000	42,000	47,840	4.1%
	9 years or more	122	48,810	41,725	48,827	54,105	4.1%

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 completion of a child life internship. Responsibilities can include:

- *Understanding of growth and development theory and practice*
- *Understanding and utilization of evidence-based practice concepts, including play, preparation and assessment*
- *Facilitating daily interactions and interventions with patients and staff*
- *Managing unit based volunteers*
- *Organizing special events and special guests*
- *Managing support groups and other regularly scheduled events*

DEMOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

AVERAGE AGE	31
BACHELOR'S DEGREE AS HIGHEST EDUCATION	65%
MASTER'S DEGREE	34%
CERTIFIED CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST (CCLS)	92%
AVERAGE YEARS AS CHILD LIFE PROFESSIONAL	5
AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL BEDS	196
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL WITHIN HOSPITAL	33%
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL (FREESTANDING)	53%
LARGE CITY/SUBURB	62%

Annual Salary as of January 1, 2008

Child Life Specialist

		Annual Salary as of January 2008					2007-2008 Salary Change
		Number of Respon- dents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
United States Full-Time							
All Full-time Respondents		572	39,775	35,000	39,000	43,134	3.6%
Highest Education	Bachelor's Degree	372	38,870	34,028	38,000	42,137	3.6%
	Master's Degree	199	41,479	36,565	41,000	45,760	3.7%
U.S. Census District	New England	43	41,765	38,700	42,000	45,000	4.6%
	Middle Atlantic	78	41,369	38,000	41,000	44,175	3.4%
	South Atlantic	104	36,253	31,954	35,576	40,000	3.2%
	East S. Central	32	35,672	30,961	34,910	40,775	3.6%
	West S. Central	75	38,896	33,925	38,000	42,952	4.1%
	East N. Central	94	39,262	35,547	37,599	42,520	3.7%
	West N. Central	57	38,314	32,953	37,440	41,839	3.5%
	Mountain	38	42,719	37,360	41,519	45,822	3.2%
	Pacific	49	47,571	41,756	47,590	51,500	4.0%
Years as Child Life Professional	3 years or less	284	37,513	33,168	37,012	41,000	3.4%
	4 - 9 years	168	41,724	37,487	41,319	45,950	4.0%
	9 years or more	81	46,097	41,009	45,000	50,055	3.5%

Annual Salary by Job Description - Full-time Canada

	Annual Salary as of January 2008 (Canadian \$)					2007-2008 Salary Change
	Number of Respon- dents	Mean	First Quartile 25%	Median 50%	Third Quartile 75%	Median
Manager/Director/Leader of Child Life Program	5	62,140	52,000	60,000	73,349	3.4%
Child Life Specialist with Leadership Responsibilities	11	57,805	55,000	56,550	59,000	3.6%
Child Life Specialist	29	55,817	52,000	55,000	59,755	3.5%

Summary of benefits offered by current position

United States Full-Time	Job Position					
	Manager/Director/ Leader of Child Life Program		Child Life Specialis with Leadership Responsibilities		Child Life Specialis	
	Percent	Number of Respon- dents	Percent	Number of Respon- dents	Percent	Number of Respon- dents
Bonus	34.4%	54	29.5%	112	28.2%	163
Cafeteria Plan	27.4%	43	22.4%	85	19.9%	115
Childcare Facilities	35.0%	55	31.1%	118	31.4%	182
Childcare Allowance	14.0%	22	15.8%	60	16.4%	95
Dental	92.4%	145	96.1%	365	94.5%	547
Flexible Spending Plan	82.8%	130	82.4%	313	82.2%	476
Group Life	78.3%	123	74.2%	282	62.5%	362
Health Care Plans	95.5%	150	96.1%	365	94.5%	547
Health Club Membership	39.5%	62	44.5%	169	40.9%	237
Long-Term Care	47.1%	74	51.6%	196	48.4%	280
Long-Term Disability	83.4%	131	82.9%	315	81.5%	472
Short-Term Disability	84.1%	132	86.1%	327	84.5%	489
Maternity Benefits	75.2%	118	73.9%	281	68.7%	398
Paid Vacation	94.3%	148	94.2%	358	92.6%	536
Parking	54.8%	86	52.9%	201	56.6%	328
403(b)/401(k) Retirement Plan	91.1%	143	93.7%	356	92.9%	538
Retiree Medical	28.7%	45	30.5%	116	25.6%	148
Sick Leave	93.0%	146	83.9%	319	86.2%	499
Vision Care	86.0%	135	88.2%	335	84.6%	490
Tuition Reimbursement	84.7%	133	85.8%	326	85.7%	496
Professional Development	86.0%	135	80.8%	307	81.9%	474
Professional Association Dues Reimbursement	36.9%	58	23.2%	88	20.4%	118

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U.S. CENSUS REGIONS

