

# 2024 DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD WINNER:

## Lucy Raab, MA, CCLS

Barbie Rudder, MA, CCLS, Child Life Manager,  
Children's Mercy, Kansas City

"Amassed a body of work" perfectly describes Lucy Raab's over 25-year career as a dedicated child life specialist, advocate, and leader. Her passion for emotionally safe, patient- and family-centered care for all pediatric patients is well known. Before Emotional Safety was an official initiative, Lucy spent decades teaching and advocating for every patient to have the opportunity to do what she called "the Big Three:" normalize, mobilize, and socialize.

Lucy spent the first nine years of her career at Children's Mercy Kansas City intently focused on direct patient care, helping patients with rehabilitation, renal, and orthopedic diagnoses understand and cope with the hospital setting. She simultaneously served for eight of these years as the primary child life internship coordinator. Lucy started on her formal leadership path as a Child Life Supervisor for seven years before becoming the Assistant Director of Child Life at Children's Mercy in 2015, the role in which she currently serves. In this role, Lucy trains, educates, and coaches an ever-changing team of over 40 child life specialists and students.

Lucy has been a true leader in all positions in which she has served - from frontline care to formal leadership. She "talks the talk" and "walks



the walk” by weaving foundational child life principles and current evidence-based practices into her daily interventions and wide-reaching initiatives. For example, as one of five key leaders, Lucy was instrumental in deploying the Comfort Promise at Children’s Mercy, a bundle of four evidence-based strategies to reduce or eliminate pain caused by needle sticks and to help prevent long-term negative psychological effects of trauma during these painful needle procedures.

In 2021, Lucy received the Excellence in Leadership- Allied Health Award at Children’s Mercy, given annually to one Allied Health leader who embodies strong decision-making, sound communication skills, and the ability to manage and facilitate change. Awardees are nominated by colleagues and selected by other leaders, a true testament to how others value Lucy’s ability to achieve high levels of employee engagement and

establishing a core role for child life specialists as part of the ever-evolving behavioral health team and system at Children’s Mercy.

Lucy is honest, transparent, and accountable. Multidisciplinary coworkers often seek her out when they need something done efficiently and well. Staff members regularly take advantage of Lucy’s “open-door” policy, frequently popping in for support and guidance. Lucy is a role model to others, consistently demonstrating grace, patience, and integrity. She has a strong work ethic, takes a collaborative approach to problem-solving, and is persistent in doing what is right. Lucy holds herself accountable, is open and honest in her interactions with others, and has courageous conversations. At the same time, Lucy is empathetic and models trauma-informed care and psychologically safe practices, often saying things like “I totally understand where you are

*“She is not only a cheerleader for the patients and families she serves, but also for the employees and students she leads daily. I consider myself lucky to be a witness to the incredible work that Lucy has accomplished throughout her career”*

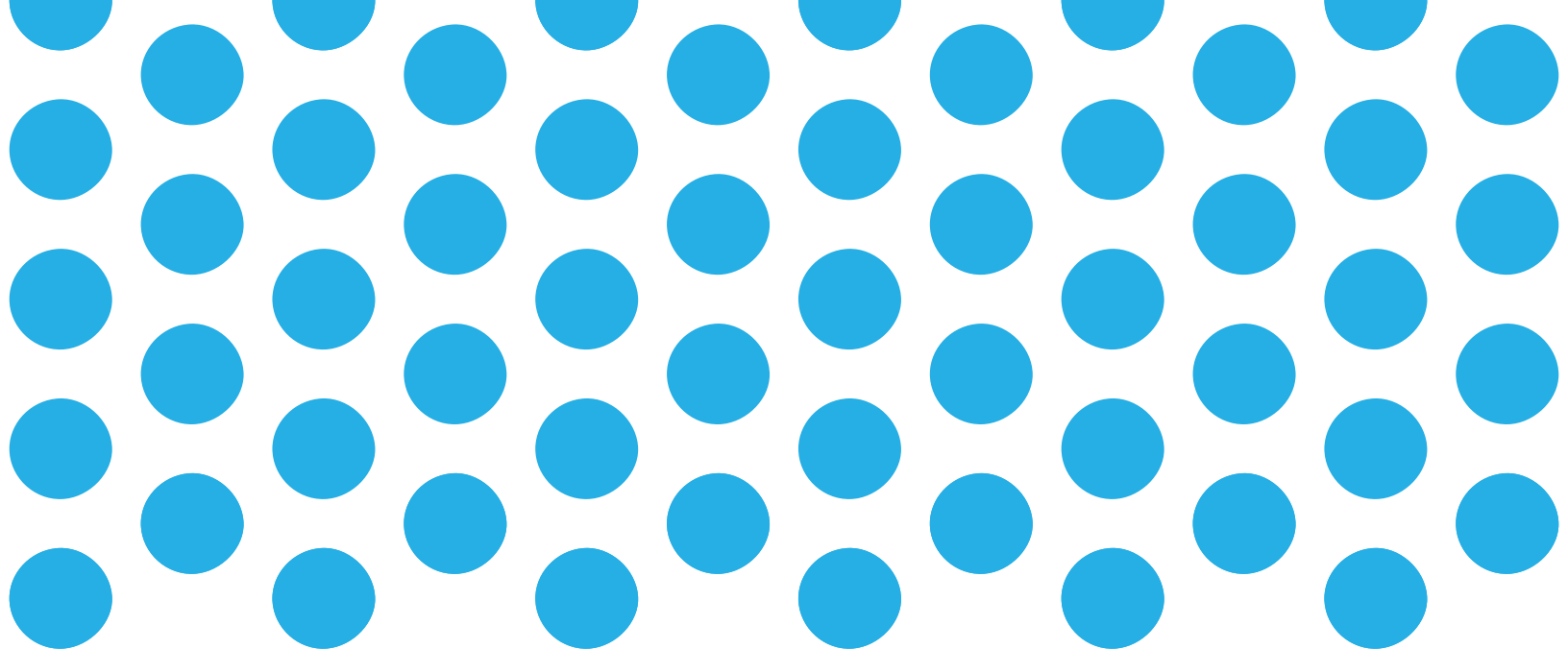
patient care outcomes that exceed the established benchmarks. An example of the work that led to Lucy receiving this award was how she translated vision to action in operationalizing ways for a large hospital system to incorporate all four Emotional Safety Pillars into large-scale, mass vaccination clinics, some of which were specifically designed for children with sensory needs and autism. Lucy collaborated with others of various disciplines, perspectives, and knowledge levels, helping them to see the vision of an emotionally safe vaccine environment and carry it to fruition.

With her inspirational leadership, Lucy continues to provide impactful interventions at the bedside. She brings her contagious laugh and play-focused, personalized interventions to children with the highest stress potentials and most challenging circumstances. In alignment with this work at the bedside, Lucy has been instrumental in

coming from” or “I can see why they might think that.” By listening with empathy, Lucy creates an inclusive environment that values different perspectives. She leverages the wisdom of others to make decisions and thus accomplish better, big-picture results.

Lucy is a visionary, a practical visionary. She is skilled at helping her team and coworkers see that being at their best helps the hospital be at its best, thereby allowing each patient and family to have the best possible experience. Lucy displays a daily commitment to shaping the culture in which she works. She has an ability to see the small picture right in front of her as well as the larger picture and goals and to motivate others to bring the two together.

Lucy’s legacy is evident in interactions with countless students and child life specialists who have benefited from her guidance, expertise, and



wisdom. One key legacy is Lucy's passion for play! Lucy will be the first to suggest play as a tool and often reminds others, "Play is our foundation." On any given day, you may find Lucy doing bedside crafts with loose parts, promoting health care play for a child with vaccine fears, encouraging a patient with behavioral health needs to play with shaving cream to cope during a procedure, or orchestrating an extravagant Taylor Swift-themed birthday party in a playroom. Lucy embraces and promotes the "magic" of play every day.

Lucy's influence in the realm of ethics in child life practice is also noteworthy. Lucy served as ACLP Ethics Committee Chair from 2016 to 2018. In 2018, Lucy graduated from the Bioethics Certificate Program at Children's Mercy – a challenging, international program. In 2019, Lucy presented an ACLP Webinar, Ethical Foundations in Child Life Practice, and in 2021, Lucy co-authored the book Making Ethical Decisions in Child Life Practice. Lucy turns practice into action, thereby leaving a legacy that will continue to impact the emotionally safe care of pediatric patients.

Lucy's contributions to the greater child life profession are numerous, and her resume abounds with examples of her impactful influence. To date, Lucy has served on nine ACLP committees

and served on the ACLP Board of Directors. Lucy began volunteering with ACLP more than 20 years ago with the Child Life Certifying Committee, now the Child Life Certification Commission (CLCC). She began as an item writer and reviewer, participated in exam assembly for many years, and later served as the CLCC Chair. Currently, Lucy serves as a member of the CLCC Appeals Committee.

Lucy is also an accomplished presenter who has shared her knowledge locally, regionally, and nationally, including presentations at multiple annual Child Life Conferences. Her presentations are varied in topic, including the psychosocial care of children, emotional safety, and best practices in providing comfort measures for pediatric patients. Lucy published an ACLP Bulletin article in 2020, "V is for Venipuncture: Child Life Empowering Parents to Be Partners at the Bedside." This publication centered around a quality improvement project and is a notable example of Lucy's drive to impact the care of pediatric patients on a broader scale.

Lucy has led a career full of distinguished service with no end in sight. Due to her influence, countless numbers of us will continue to empower patients and families to "normalize, mobilize, and socialize". And we will do so with a promise of comfort and the "magic" of play.