The Child and Family Studies program equips emerging professionals to improve individual and family well-being across the lifespan through the study of:

- Human development from conception through late adulthood, with a focus on physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual domains.
- Interpersonal relationship dynamics, and improving family life through educational and preventive practices.

**CORE COURSES**

- CFS 1315  Individual and Family Relationship Development
- CFS 2355  Child Development
- CFS 2357  Adult Development
- CFS 3304  Introduction to Research
- CFS 3350  Individual and Family Financial Management
- CFS 3354  Family Life Education & Ethics
- CFS 3356  Theories of Family Development
- CFS 4358  Planning and Administration of Non-Profits
- CFS 4359  Parenting Theory and Approaches
- CFS 4191  Professional Practices in Child and Family Studies
- CFS 4390  Practicum in Child and Family Studies

**PIPER CENTER FOR FAMILY STUDIES AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

Beyond the classroom, students in the Child and Family Studies program engage in interactive learning experiences through the Piper Center. The Piper Center is a laboratory environment and NAEYC accredited child development center where students receive hands-on training in the field.

From this academic foundation, Child and Family Studies program students specialize in one of four concentrations:

- Child Development
- Pre-Occupational Therapy
- Child Life Specialist
- Family Life Education
The Child Life concentration in Child and Family Studies is designed to prepare students with the foundational understanding of children’s development in order to provide developmentally-appropriate support in clinical settings.

**CONCENTRATION-SPECIFIC COURSES**

- CFS 3362  Child Life Theory and Practice
- CFS 3358  Infant and Toddler Development
- CFS 3368  Theories and Principles of Play
- CFS 4363  Adolescent Development
- CLA 3381  Medical Terminology
- PUBH 3320  Stress Management
- PUBH 4321  Human Sexuality
- PUBH 4327  Dying and Death Education

**Recommended Courses** | Students in the Child Life concentration are encouraged to take the following courses as part of the required professional electives: CFS 3324 Children and Families with Special Needs, CFS 4367 Family Transitions, Stress, and Resilience, REL 4395 Bioethics.

**Field-Based Experience** | Students in the Child Life concentration will complete 60 hours of observation and engagement with well-children at the Piper Center for Family Studies and Child Development, and 150-hours in a community-based setting through the practicum.*

* Beyond the contact hours provided by the program, students pursuing the field of Child Life will need to complete shadowing and volunteer hours in hospitalized settings. While not a requirement for certification eligibility, students are best prepared for the internship by completing the following field-based experiences: 100+ hours volunteering in clinical settings with hospitalized children, 50+ hours working with well children, and completion of a 100-150 hour Child Life practicum.

For more information, please see the Child Life Eligibility Handout.
**STEP ONE | Assess Your Interests**

- See a **career advisor** in the Baylor Career Center. They have many resources and assessments that can help you identify your interests and strengths.

- Take the **introductory CFS classes**: CFS 1315 Development of Individual and Family Relationships, CFS 2355 Child Development, and CFS 2357 Adult Development.

- Conduct an **informational interview** with a professional in a field/position to see what skills and strengths are needed.

**STEP TWO | Make Connections**

- Attend relevant **student organization meetings** to meet faculty, students, and professionals from related areas!

- Attend a **conference or workshop** to make professional connections and learn the latest information in the field, such as the annual Texas Occupational Therapy Association annual conference (https://www.tota.org/conference).

- Take discipline-specific courses to build knowledge, such as 3358 Infant & Toddler Development, 3368 Theories and Principles of Play, and 3362 Child Life Theories BEFORE you apply for a child life practicum.

**STEP THREE | Build Skills**

- **Volunteer** at a camp, non-profit, church, or school, such as Camp John Marc or McLane Children’s Hospital. Please note that many child life practicums require 50-100 hours of clinical experience to apply.

- Develop leadership skills by taking on volunteer leadership positions through student organizations, churches or non-profits, and research opportunities with CFS professors.

- Take the **required pre-requisite courses** for the practicum class, including 2355 Child Development, 3356 Theories of Family Development, 4359 Parenting Theory and Approaches, & 4191 Professional Practices. Please note that CFS 4191 is ONLY offered in the fall semester.

**STEP FOUR | Apply For A Practicum**

- Research **practicum opportunities** through the 4191 course. See the practicum coordinator for pre-approved placements, including research-based practicum opportunities.

- Visit the Baylor Career Center to **polish up your resume** and try your hand at a mock interview!

- **Gather important documents** such as letters of recommendation from supervisors, professors, and/or other career professionals, and verification of volunteer hours (when needed).