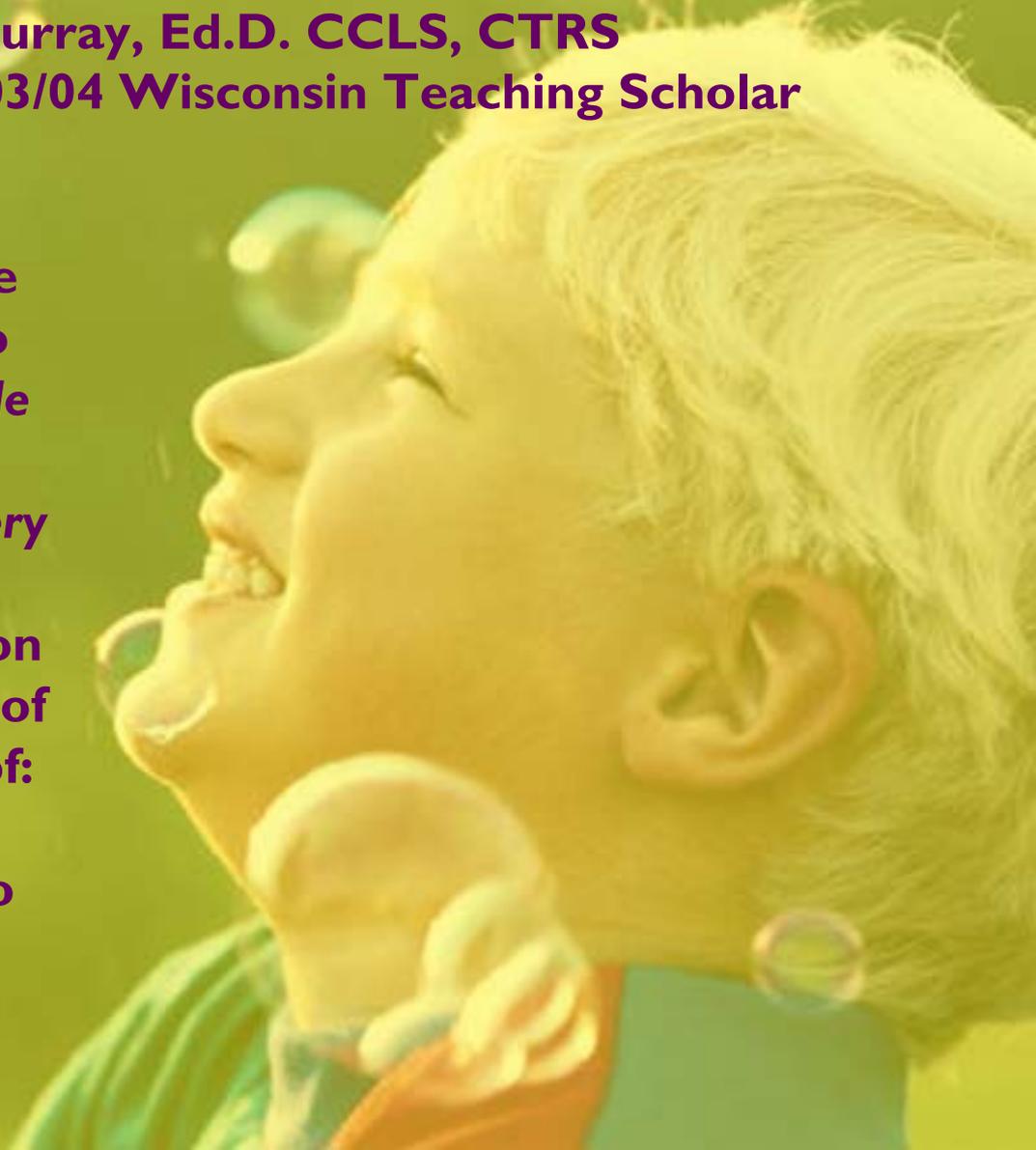


Benefits of a Professional Development Grant: Learning To Think Like a Child Life Specialist

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Many classroom professors are searching for effective ways to change *from a transmission mode of instruction to a focus on improving the learning and mastery of content* by students. The **LEARNING** paradigm focuses on the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning process in terms of: “What do students know and understand? What can they do with this new information?” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2000)





Background:

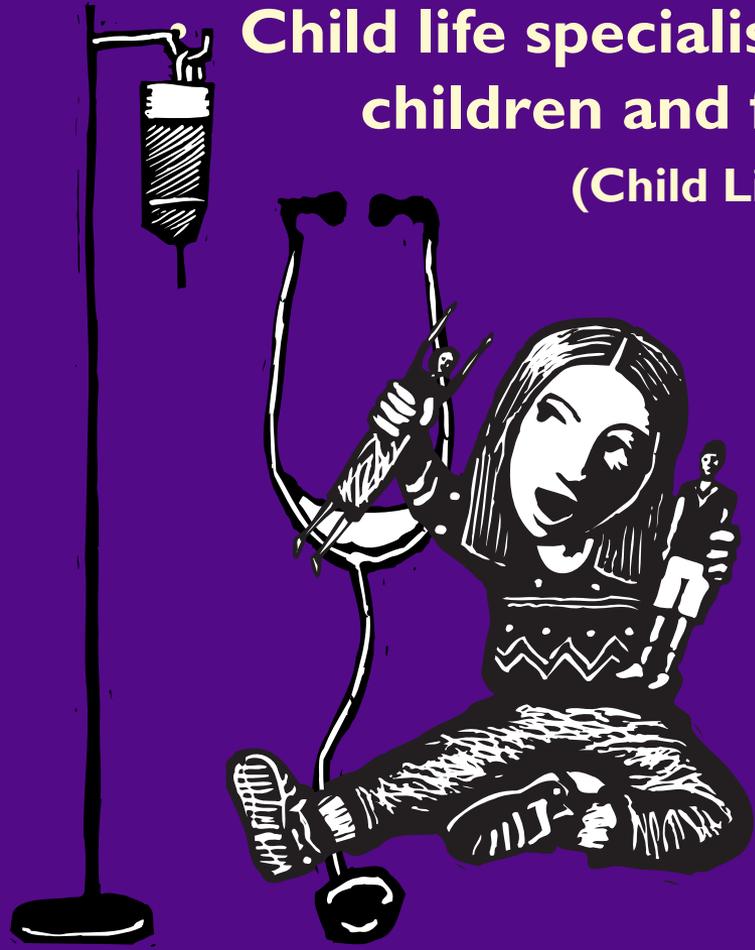
2005 Professional Development Grant

- Complete a 12-week Child Life Internship in a pediatric hospital Summer 2005
- Pass the Child Life certification examination to legitimate teaching child life coursework as a Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS)
- Develop two Child Life courses applying 'backwards design' (Grant & Wiggins, 2000) to expand majors opportunities for pediatric practice. Shift my perspective from 'teaching' to 'how students learn'
- Teach each course annually as interdisciplinary electives



What does it mean to be a Certified Child Life Specialist?

Child life specialists promote the power of play to help children and families cope with medical events
(Child Life Council Strategic Plan, 2005)





Begin with the learning question:

What does it mean to **THINK* like a CCLS?

Assess, Plan, Implement, Evaluate: Process of Health Professions

- A** *THINK* like an **assessor** who uncovers the pediatric patient's coping style and developmental needs
- P** *THINK* like a **planner** who gathers the right resource at the right time to reduce the child/family's anxiety
- I** *THINK* like an **implementer/facilitator** of medical play and family-centered **interventions** so the child/family understands what is happening during hospital stays
- E** *THINK* like an **evaluator** who measures and reports effectiveness of interventions, justifies existing services as evidence-based practice, and promotes new services

*“Taking Learning Seriously” by Lee Schulman (1999), President Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching and Learning



Identify and Design Engaging Lessons About ...

- **Big ideas that have enduring value beyond the classroom** (How to help your own children cope with pain or master medical events when you become a parent)
- **Performance skills that reside at the heart of the discipline** (Learning to facilitate medical play with teaching dolls)
- **Concepts that need 'uncoverage' of abstract or often misunderstood ideas** (Using minimally threatening language to talk to children about health care experiences e.g., refer to an injection as “warm” or “stinging” rather than “a burning sensation”)
- **Central beliefs that offer potential for engaging students** (Shadowing a child life specialist in outpatient surgery by being present for anaesthesia induction and writing a reflective report about your experience)

Wiggins & McTighe (2000) Understanding By Design



How do netgeneration students prefer to LEARN in a child life course?

- They learn better through discovery and doing than by being told [Use active learning such as designing/rehearsing medical play sessions]
- They are connected hypercommunicators with fast response times who multitask simultaneously moving quickly [Publish a class CD-ROM of learners' medical play sessions to use during internship and beyond]
- They are social with a preference to work and learn in teams, crave interactivity, and may need to be encouraged to stop experiencing and spend time reflecting) [Require written reflections of service learning shared as a class book with oral presentation of experience]
- They are very achievement oriented and want parameters, rules, priorities, and procedures. They like to know what it will take to achieve a goal and prefer structure to ambiguity [Use rubrics to structure and contain assignments]

<http://www.educause.edu/educatingthenetgen>



How is learning engagement fostered? ... with a syllabus that specifies session learning goals

Session 9	Preparing Children and Families For Health Care Experiences and Providing Procedure Support and Comfort Positioning; Facilitate Preparation with a Script
Tuesday	October 28
Classroom Activity	Learning Goal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation Sneak-A-Peek/Bear Facts about MRI [Videos] • Preparation and Procedure Support Lecture [Quiz 8] • Explanation of Using a Photo Preparation Book • Preparation Sessions and Observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Observe a virtual tour to empathize with fears ✓ Cultivate excitement for your future child life role ✓ Develop ability to follow directions and instructions ✓ Gain self-knowledge of performance skill in preparation
Assignments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Design PowerPoint Presentation of Modality ☐ Complete true/false take-home Children's Humor (Scarlett et. al., Ch 5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improve ability to use time effectively ✓ Develop ability to concentrate and synthesize information

... and service learning that matters

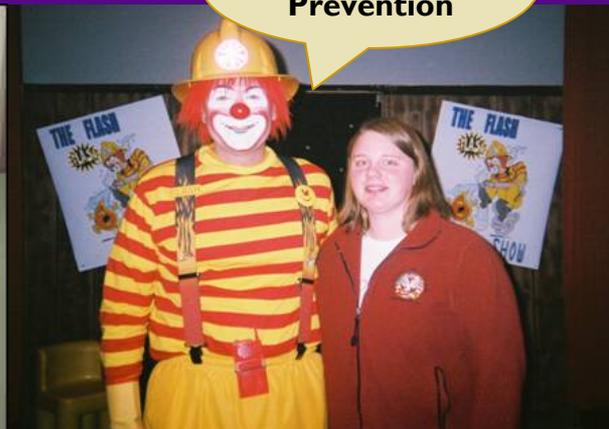
Teddy Bear Clinic



Sibling Support



Burn Prevention



Carseat Safety





Benefits of My Professional Development Grant

For UW-L Students

- Expanded career opportunities in pediatrics
- Cultivated interdisciplinary learning experiences
- Promoted learning engagement with real-world clinical experiences (e.g., Gundersen Lutheran Flu Shot Clinic)

For the RMTR Department

- Developed electives in pediatrics as a population/setting
- Increased enrollment of majors and brought collegial recognition to Child Life as a discovery health care profession

For My Growth As the Grant Recipient

- Shifted my focus from transmission mode of teaching to improving students' learning (what they know and can do)
- Applied the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) to course design as best practice strategies
- Re-enchanted me to *profess* the power of play as course instructor



References

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- Child Life Council www.childlife.org
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