

# CHILD AND FAMILY STUDIES

## What can I do with this major?

### AREAS

### EMPLOYERS

### STRATEGIES

#### PRE-SCHOOL/DAY CARE

Teaching  
Parent-Child Education  
Administration:  
    Curriculum Development  
    Training  
    Management

Private, public, franchise and corporate day care centers  
Pre-schools  
Montessori schools  
Religious organizations  
Extended school programs  
Recreation programs  
Health clubs  
Private homes  
Family day care  
Federal, state and local government:  
    Department of Health and Human Services  
    Head Start

Obtain experience working with children through volunteer, intern or part-time positions.  
Demonstrate patience, creativity and the ability to work well with people of various backgrounds.  
Develop strong communications skills to deal effectively with students, staff and parents.  
Acquire appropriate certification, such as Child Development Associate (CDA) or Pre-K licensure for some pre-school settings. Certification varies by state.  
Note that some private employers seek staff whose religious values match their organizations' missions.

#### EDUCATION

Teaching:  
    Home Economics  
    Family and Consumer Sciences  
Curriculum Development  
Research  
Counseling  
Administration  
College Student Affairs

Public and private schools (K-12)  
Public pre-school programs (Head Start)  
Private pre-school programs  
Montessori schools  
Adult education programs  
Extension offices  
Colleges and universities

Develop excellent interpersonal, public speaking and writing skills.  
Learn to work well with different types of people.  
Gain experience working with a target age group through mentoring, tutoring or volunteering with a school-based organization.  
Serve as a peer mentor, resident assistant or student advisor to cultivate leadership and communication skills.  
Join student chapters of national teaching organizations.  
Acquire appropriate certification for public school (and some private school) teaching positions, which varies by state.  
Obtain graduate degree for counseling, student affairs and administrative positions.  
A master's degree may be sufficient for teaching at community or two-year institutions.  
Pursue a Ph.D. for college and university teaching and research opportunities.

## AREAS

## EMPLOYERS

## STRATEGIES

### SOCIAL SERVICES

Case Management  
Counseling  
Advocacy  
Program Development  
Community Education  
Volunteer Coordination  
Administration  
Research  
Evaluation  
Fundraising  
Public Relations  
Grant Writing

Community centers  
Youth services agencies/ programs  
Family services agencies/ programs (financial, family planning, health and wellness, marriage, vocational, food/housing assistance, military family support)  
Senior citizens programs  
Nursing homes  
Assisted living facilities  
Rehabilitation organizations  
Group homes  
Half-way houses  
Mediation centers  
Consulting firms  
Consumer protection agencies  
Adoption agencies  
Federal, state and local government including:  
    Department of Health and Human Services:  
        Administration on Aging  
        Administration for Children and Families  
        Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration  
        Health Resources & Services Administration  
    Department of Veterans Affairs  
    Department of Justice:  
        Probation and parole offices  
        Correctional facilities

Exhibit a desire to help others, along with communication and organizational skills.  
Seek experience as a volunteer, intern or paid employee with social service or non-profit organizations.  
Become familiar with government and community resources available for those in need.  
Develop a wide range of skills such as presenting, grant writing and fundraising, as professionals in nonprofit organizations may fill multiple roles in their positions.  
Learn to work well with different types of people from varying socioeconomic, racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds.  
Supplement curriculum with courses in social work, sociology or psychology.  
Pursue additional coursework to specialize in an area or with a certain population such as addiction, gerontology, child welfare, etc.  
Consider earning Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) credential through the National Council on Family Relations.  
Become familiar with government hiring procedures.  
Obtain a master's degree and appropriate licensure in mental health counseling, social work or rehabilitation counseling to provide therapy.  
Earn a graduate degree for greater access to administrative positions.

## AREAS

### ADVOCACY

Domestic and International Advocacy  
Humanitarian Services, i.e. human rights, family planning, world health, disaster relief  
Development:  
Economic  
Community  
Housing  
Policy Development  
Program Administration  
Fundraising/Development  
Volunteer Coordination  
Grant Writing

## EMPLOYERS

Community action agencies  
Nonprofit organizations  
Private voluntary organizations  
Faith based organizations (FBO's) and churches  
International aid and relief organizations  
NGO's (Non-governmental Organizations), i.e.  
Action Aid, Oxfam, International Red Cross  
Federal government agencies with  
International focus: Peace Corps, USAID,  
Foreign Service (State Department)  
Community assistance focus: Housing and  
Urban Development, Department of Health  
and Human Services  
State and local government agencies

## STRATEGIES

Demonstrate strong desire to help others.  
Volunteer at social service agencies to gain experience and demonstrate interest.  
Participate in campus "alternative break" trips or church-led mission trips to gain experience assisting groups in need.  
Pursue leadership roles in campus and community advocacy organizations, and learn how to motivate individuals and groups.  
Develop excellent research, writing, communication and organizational skills; fundraising experience may be helpful for some positions.  
Complete an internship with a government organization in area of interest.  
Research federal, state and local job application procedures.

### HEALTHCARE

Hospital Based Family Support/Child Life Services (provide emotional support, educate children and families, identify resources, coordinate events)  
Health, Nutrition, Safety Education  
Advocacy

Hospitals  
Doctors' offices  
Healthcare facilities  
Specialized camps/schools  
Hospice programs  
Funeral homes  
Social service organizations  
Public health programs  
Federal, state and local government including:  
Department of Health and Human Services:  
Administration on Aging  
Administration for Children and Families  
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration  
Health Resources & Services Administration

Volunteer in a healthcare setting such as a hospital or specialized children's camp.  
Develop a high comfort level working in clinical environments with children and families under stress.  
Acquire strong communication skills, and plan to work on interdisciplinary teams of doctors, nurses, counselors, etc. who provide care to children.  
Obtain Child Life Specialist certification through the Child Life Council, and be willing to relocate for greater access to positions in children's hospitals.  
Prepare to work nights, weekends and holidays in some healthcare settings.  
Earn a master's degree in social work, counseling, nutrition, public health or related area for increased opportunities.

## AREAS

## EMPLOYERS

## STRATEGIES

### **BUSINESS**

Market Research  
Product Testing  
Product Development  
Management  
Sales  
Customer Service

Manufacturing companies of children's clothes, toys, furniture and food  
Consumer protection agencies  
Department and retail stores  
Social service organizations with business components, i.e. tax assistance, financial planning

Demonstrate initiative, attention to detail, organization and problem-solving skills.  
Learn to communicate effectively with a wide-range of people. Consider taking interpersonal communication and public speaking classes.  
Earn a business minor or supplement program with courses such as accounting, management, finance, etc. to increase understanding of business theory.  
Obtain sales/retail experience with companies catering to children's needs.  
Join business or retail student organizations and secure leadership positions.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Research  
Curriculum/Resource Development  
Journalism  
Writing  
Editing  
Public Relations

Organizations geared toward children and families including:  
Book publishers  
Radio and TV stations  
Newspapers  
Magazines  
Social service organizations  
Manufacturers  
Consumer protection agencies  
Professional associations

Develop excellent grammar and writing skills.  
Learn to think critically and research effectively.  
Take elective courses in the communications field such as journalism, broadcasting, public relations and advertising, or earn a minor in one area of interest.  
Obtain experience with a college newspaper, yearbook, alumni publication or with local radio or television stations.  
Compile a portfolio of writing samples, ad campaigns and other relevant work, especially those that have been published.  
Develop desktop publishing, webpage design and other computer skills. Online communication is increasing, while print is declining.  
Pursue an active role, preferably leadership, in journalism organizations.  
Prepare to work in deadline-oriented environments and to withstand criticism.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

- A Bachelor's degree is sufficient for entry-level positions.
- Advanced degrees are essential for clinical and therapeutic counseling positions.
- The Child and Family Studies major can serve as preparation for students pursuing advanced training in other areas such as healthcare, i.e. pediatric nursing, family medicine; law, i.e. family law, elder law, child advocacy; and ministry, i.e. youth ministry, pastoral counseling. Research admissions requirements and take pre-requisite courses for programs of interest.
- A Master's degree or Ph.D. is often needed for administrative and supervisory positions.
- A Ph.D. is required for most college teaching and advanced research positions.
- Additional or specialized training qualifies one for higher paying opportunities and positions of greater responsibility.
- Obtain part-time, summer, internship or volunteer experience in child care, schools, hospitals, camps, or overseas programs or in advocacy or service-oriented programs addressing alcoholism, drug abuse, family violence, aging, poverty, disabilities, etc.
- Obtain certification for specialized areas including Child Life Specialist or Family Life Educator.