

Including families in product development

About Child Life on Call

Child Life on Call (CLOC) is dedicated to supporting families navigating the complex pediatric healthcare journey. Through their innovative platform, SupportSpot, CLOC provides essential resources to empower parents, improve communication, and enhance the overall healthcare experience for families and medical providers. Their mission ensures that every family—regardless of hospital capacity or access to child life services—receives the psychosocial support they need during critical medical moments.



The opportunity

- CLOC recognized an opportunity to create a digital platform that truly meets the needs of families by including their voices at every step of development.
- Research shows that when parents feel their input is taken into account, there are better outcomes for pediatric patients.

The challenge

While the benefits of including families in development were clear, CLOC encountered key challenges:

- **Diverse needs and expectations:** Families bring varied experiences and perspectives. Balancing these diverse inputs to create a cohesive product required careful planning and prioritization.
- **Time and resources:** Engaging families in a meaningful way through interviews, surveys, and usability testing demanded significant time, coordination, and flexibility. Continuous feedback processes extended development timelines and required a dedicated team.

The approach

- CLOC established a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) composed of parents with children across all spectrums of healthcare diagnoses. The primary mission of

the Council is to ensure that all tools and features of *SupportSpot* truly enhance the family experience.

- The PAC meets twice a month and is tasked with reviewing specific pieces of content or tools that are being incorporated into *SupportSpot* across four key themes: relevance, impact, compassion, and equity for the parents it serves.



The success

- ✓ The PAC serves as a guiding compass, ensuring CLOC stays aligned with its mission. An added benefit is that it enables them to rapidly define and refine their product tools to meet the needs of end users—the very people helping to shape it.

- ✓ The parents who join PAC are already trailblazers, finding innovative ways to make an impact in their child's diagnosis journey. By working with them, they have the privilege of learning from the most passionate experts.

“ I realized very quickly how little mental health support resources there are for parents, on a systemic level, on an individual level, and so I’m trying to change that.”

— **Cortney Given**

PAC Member, Child Life On Call