

Group & Entertainment Volunteer Program

Are you interested in helping to provide entertainment at Golisano Children's Hospital? Here at Golisano Children's Hospital it is our mission to promote developmentally supportive opportunities through play for patients and families to improve their coping and understanding of their hospital experience. We value play as a tool for self-expression, socialization, developmental growth, creativity, and fun. We are able to meet this mission with the help of creative, passionate and dedicated volunteers.

What is a special group activity?

Special group activities are individual experiences that provide patients different opportunities to be creative and interactive. A lot of our everyday programs give patients many craft and play opportunities; therefore, we encourage your creativity and welcome memorable and unique activities for our patients. This is your time to share your talents and skills with our patients and families!

What is special entertainment?

Special entertainment such as a puppet show, a musical performance or a celebrity visit can bring pleasure to a hospitalized child and his or her family. If accepted, your visit will be scheduled in an inpatient or outpatient area.

All applications will be reviewed for appropriateness of activity, size, ages of the visiting group and scheduling availability. Completion of an application does not guarantee acceptance or scheduling of a visit, however we will do everything possible to accommodate your request. All community visits made to patients will be screened and approved in advance by the Child Life Department. Consideration will be given to those events that are:

- Highly entertaining, educational and/or therapeutic
- Unique (we can only accommodate so many similar acts)
- Appropriate for various ages (primarily preschool children through adolescence)
- Physically and emotionally safe (non-threatening, non-violent, etc.)
- Appropriate for the medical conditions of the children (small groups, not too loud)
- Religiously and politically neutral

Special group activity and entertainment ideas:

- Visual Art, Graffiti art, sculpting
- Musical, Dance or Theatrical Performances
- Magic
- Themed Parties
- Some other special talent you want to share with others

Planning your visit

1. Because space is limited in the activity areas, we ask that only people directly involved in the activity or performance come. We can accommodate groups up to 5 people max. Exceptions may be made for performance groups only.
2. All participants must be at least 14 years of age for weekday visits, and 18 years of age for weekend visits. Groups including participants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by an adult.
3. Weekend visits will be restricted to performing groups and groups who have visited the hospital previously.
4. Volunteers are required to bring all necessary supplies for the activity they will facilitate. As it is often difficult for staff to identify exactly how many children will participate, please be prepared to have enough supplies for approximately 25 children.
5. With limited space in parking and activity areas, please be mindful of the size and amount of equipment needed.
6. For infection control, and because of our children being sick, all participants must be in good health for the past 72 hours.
7. In order to respect the privacy of our patients, we ask that you refrain from asking questions about their diagnosis or condition.
8. Confidentiality policies dictate that no pictures or videos be taken of the patients.
9. While we do not provide media coverage, you may request it and the Child Life department will review for consideration.

Day of visit

1. Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled time of the performance.
2. Enter through the parking garage into the Main Lobby. Stop at the information desk and ask for your Child Life Representative to escort you to the floor.
3. Parking garage validation stickers may be provided by the Child Life Department upon request (max 2 per group).
4. Please keep the length of your performance appropriate and realize that the children will come and go throughout. Most activities/performances average 1 – 2 hours.
5. Although we would like the activities to be entertaining for various ages, we ask for you to tailor your activity to at least two of these age groups: infant/toddler, preschool, school age and adolescents.
6. Dress business casual if not in costume. Please wear closed toe shoes.
7. Although not expected, you can check with staff in advance about appropriate gifts, prizes and favors to share.
8. We will not be responsible for any injury or loss of personal items while you are visiting.
9. Child Life staff will be with you during your visit and will be happy to answer your questions as long as we are respecting patient confidentiality.

General tips

1. A hospital can be a very stressful place for children. Young children may be shy or fearful of strangers, which may be heightened by being in the hospital. Approach children slowly and do not force them to actively participate - some do best simply by observing.
2. Greet the children as you would normally. Introduce yourself and ask their first name, age, and special interests. Avoid questions that ask about their personal information and medical history/condition.
3. Please make sure that you are emotionally and mentally prepared for your visit. Try to interact with the children as you would a healthy child.