



Special Event and Visitor Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in providing a Special Event for the patients at Shands Children's Hospital UF as these programs carries a special meaning for hospitalized children and adolescents. Your program should run approximately 30 minutes. Please allow additional time for preparation and clean up. Please do not include any food, beverages, or candy/ gum as part of your special event.

You or your group can provide:

- a unique and creative form of entertainment or activity
- an art or craft activity
- enthusiasm for a particular craft or hobby

Remember special events should appeal to a great variety of children and be appropriate to each age group, infant to young adult. Also, our patients come from a wide variety of religious, political and social backgrounds; we ask that the content of any presentation be religiously and politically neutral. You are expected to give your attention to the patients, not to other members of your group or staff; to be enthusiastic about the activity; and try to include ways for the patients to become actively involved.

It is the goal of Shands Children's Hospital UF to ensure the safety and privacy of the patients and families while creating a positive atmosphere for them. Activities should be conducted in a manner that is safe within the confines of the available facilities. A hospital staff member will escort you or your group. Be aware that we cannot give detailed information about patients, their problems, or prognosis.

Remember:

- You cannot take pictures or videos of the children.
- Notify the Volunteer Services Department in advance of any plans for media coverage. Special permission has to be secured through Public Relations.
- Special Event groups are limited to six (6) people.
- All members of a Special Event group must be 18 years or older.
- Children 17 years and under may not participate due to the possibility of exposing patients or themselves to various childhood illnesses. *Many of our patients' immune systems have been compromised and they are very susceptible to any illness, virus, or bacteria.*
- You will need to confirm the health of each member of the group. Everyone should be free of colds, sore throats, coughing, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, cold sores, impetigo, skin rashes, infected or draining lesions. If anyone has had or been exposed to communicable diseases (measles, mumps, chicken pox) within the last 3 weeks, they should not come to the hospital.

All Special Event visits must be approved and scheduled in advance. You and/or the group's contact person will need to complete the attached Special Event Form and submit it to Volunteer Services, two weeks or more prior to the event. If approved, your visit will be scheduled and assigned a control number. Without this number you will not be allowed to hold your event. Visitor parking is available in the garage east of the hospital. There is a \$3.00 charge per vehicle.

On the day of your event meet your escort at the designated location. A brief orientation that addresses hospital policies and procedures will be given and visitors will be asked to sign an attendance sheet to verify training.



Special Event and Visitor Guidelines

Guidelines for Visits:

- If you are bringing toys, favors, or stuffed animals to distribute there are 70 patients on the Pediatric floor. Please remember our patients range in age from newborns to 21 years. All items need to be new. We request that no used toys, games or other gifts be given or donated because of infection control reasons.
- Toys or stuffed animals with buttons and small parts should not be given to children under the age of three (3) years. Remember that infants and toddlers explore with their mouths. Toys for this age group should be appropriate for this type of exploration.
- Please do not give any type of toy weapon (guns, swords, knives, etc.)
- Because we respect the variety of religious beliefs of our patients and families, we ask that you do not include religious reading material.
- Latex balloons are not allowed in the hospital – only Mylar (foil) balloons.
- Because many of the patients are on restricted diets, please do not bring food items for patients. We suggest you bring crayons, comic books, word games, stickers, etc.

To help you prepare for your visit, we suggest that you first consider the following:

- What are your expectations?
- Reflect on the hospital environment (what you are likely to see, hear, smell) and your responses.
- Consider the diversity of ages, diagnoses, disabilities, cultures, religions, and behaviors you will likely experience.
- Confirm that you and/or all members of your group are in good health when they come to visit.
- Greet hospitalized children and adolescents as you would healthy ones. Comment on their clothes, toy or item in their room, and interests. Avoid questions such as, "What happened to you? How long have you been here? When are you going home?" Avoid comments such as "You'll be better soon" (they may not) or "We'll see you again soon" (they will look for you tomorrow).
- The appearance of a burned or disfigured patient may startle you. Be prepared to interact with them as you usually would.
- Be empathetic but do not display pity toward the children and families.
- Take special care around patients who have an intravenous apparatus or other hospital equipment.
- Please do not continue to try to interact with a frightened child. Young children are often extremely frightened by strangers or people in costume.

If you are not comfortable with visiting patients in the hospital, there are appealing alternatives that can be equally beneficial, such as: donating money to the Children's Miracle Network; donating specific items (see our website) to the Children's Hospital; or making activity or craft packets for patients.



Special Event Application

Please fill out completely

Date of Visit _____ Monday – Friday (circle one time below) Number of Visitors _____
10:30 – 11:30 AM 2:00 – 3:00 PM 3:00 – 4:00 PM (Weekends require special arrangement) MAXIMUM OF 6

Name of Individual or Group _____

Contact Person _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Zip Code _____

email _____

Please specify: _____ Bedside Visit _____ Performance, Entertainment, Arts & Crafts

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY _____

Please plan on providing materials and supplies that you will need. Please allow time for preparation and clean up.

SAFETY ISSUES: Individual/ Group needs to consider safety issues for patients regarding the type of activity & materials used. For example: scissors or other sharp tools & materials, liquids, risk of falling or tripping, size of objects & risk of swallowing and/or choking.

**No latex balloons, Mylar (foil) only. No food or drink.
All activities are subject to change due to patient availability.**

As representative of the above named organization, I have read the requirements for community individuals and groups visiting Shands Children's Hospital UF and affirm my/ my group's willingness to adhere to these guidelines. I understand that we are not to impose our religious, political or moral philosophies on the patients and families during our visit and we are to maintain patient confidentiality.

Individual or Group Representative signature Date

After this form is approved, Volunteer Services will put you on the schedule and assign a Control Number. Without it you will not be permitted to visit.

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Approved by Child Life Specialist Date

Volunteer and Community Resources Date

Control Number Employee/ Hospital ESCORT Visit LOCATION

RETURN FORM TO:
Shands Children's Hospital UF, Volunteer Services Box 100351, Gainesville, FL 32610
Attention: Child Life
FAX (352) 265-0560 Phone (352) 265-0360

Form should be submitted two (2) weeks or more prior to event or visit.