



***Volunteer Services***  
CHILDREN'S NATIONAL MEDICAL CENTER  
111 MICHIGAN AVENUE, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20010  
PHONE 202-476-2062 FAX 202-476-3784

### **GUIDELINES FOR ATRIUM EVENTS**

Thank you for your interest in hosting an Atrium Event at Children's National Medical Center. Events must be booked directly through Volunteer Services; please contact us to schedule a time after reviewing these guidelines.

Volunteer Services regularly works with its community partners to provide patients and families with opportunities to engage in fun, interactive activities while visiting the hospital. Examples of past activities and events held in the hospital atrium include arts & crafts projects, game day/night, movie day/night, carnival day and a variety of artistic performances. Activities generally run two hours and performances should be approximately 30-45 minutes in length. The best days and times to hold an event in the atrium are:

**Weekdays:** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday mornings between the hours of 10am & 3pm  
OR evenings after 6pm

**Weekends:** Between the hours of 1pm-4pm

These times are recommended to avoid conflict with the patient care schedule

**In order to protect the privacy of our patients, questions about the child's condition should never be asked. Comments such as "I hope you get better" or "You'll be well for your birthday," are sometimes untrue and better left unsaid.** Keep in mind that the goal of hospital-based special events is to help patients and families take their minds off of the stresses surrounding a child's medical condition. Volunteer Services staff will be happy to provide you with suggested conversation topics to help break the ice. Additionally, one should never insist that a child participate. A patient may be disoriented or just not feel well.

Please note that it is required that **ALL** media and press coverage, including press releases, fliers, postcards, invitations, etc., be approved by the hospital's PR and Marketing Department (202-476-4500). Additionally, Volunteer Services staff must be made aware of all media coverage and/or press materials related to the event.

To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all, please adhere to the following guidelines when planning, designing and implementing your event:

- **ALL EVENTS MUST BE VOID OF RELIGIOUS, CONTROVERSIAL AND FRIGHTENING CONTENT.** Our patient population is richly diverse and is made up of children who come from a variety of cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, all events must be void of religious content. Additionally, content should under no circumstances explore the topics of loss, death, separation, abandonment, mutilation, illness, medical procedures and personnel, or cruelty. Characters and costumes must not be frightening or provocative. Please remember that medication and the stress of illness and hospitalization can greatly magnify children's fears.
- **EVENTS MUST NOT INCLUDE THE USE OF ANY POTENTIALLY HARMFUL MATERIALS SUCH AS LATEX (i.e. latex balloons), HEAT (i.e. hot irons, glue guns, etc.) FIRE, CANDLES, OR SHARP OBJECTS.**
- **ALL MEMBERS OF THE GROUP MUST BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE.**
- **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES USED FOR PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES MUST BE NON-TOXIC.**
- **A LIST OF MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES BEING USED IN AN UPCOMING EVENT MUST BE APPROVED BY A VOLUNTEER SERVICES STAFF MEMBER PRIOR TO THE EVENT.**
- **DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD, DRINKS OR CANDY IS NEVER PERMITTED.**

- **PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE MINDFUL OF THE PATIENTS' ABILITIES AND SHOULD NOT INVOLVE CONTESTS OR COMPETITIONS.**
- **DISTRIBUTION OF ANY GIFT OR FAVOR IS NOT PERMITTED WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.**
- **PERFORMANCES** Below are a few tips to help better engage your audience:
  - Keep in mind your audience age ranges from pre-school to adolescent
  - Use abbreviated versions of stories or songs
  - Ask open-ended questions
- **LIVE ANIMALS IN PERFORMANCES ARE GENERALLY NOT PERMITTED. HOWEVER, EXCEPTIONS HAVE BEEN MADE. THE DEPARTMENT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE THROUGH VOLUNTEER SERVICES REVIEWS EACH REQUEST ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS.**

**GENERAL HOSPITAL VISITATION NOTES**

**IMMUNIZATION**

Visitors who have been exposed to contagious diseases, i.e. chicken pox, measles, mumps, hepatitis, or have had any flu-like symptoms, i.e., vomiting, fever, diarrhea, within the past four weeks are asked not to visit the hospital.

**PARKING/METRO**

Volunteer Services will be happy to provide your group with free parking at the hospital. However, due to construction in our garage available spaces are limited so carpooling is highly encouraged. Please contact Volunteer Services the day before your event to notify the number of anticipated cars that will be parking onsite.

There is a free shuttle from the Brookland/CUA Metro Station (Red Line) to Children's National Medical Center; a shuttle schedule is available upon request. The delivery of large equipment and props must be coordinated with Volunteer Services.

**IDENTIFICATION**

Due to hospital security all guests must have a valid picture ID upon entering the premises.

**CONFIRMATION:**

Please sign and fax to 202-476-3784 to confirm that you have read and understand the contents of this document:

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Signature

Date