

Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center Child Life Program

CHOOSING TOYS FOR HOSPITALIZED PATIENTS:

Frequently asked questions:

Why do children need toys in the hospital?

It can be very stressful for children and their parents to have to stay in a hospital. Familiar toys and projects help children to feel more comfortable and make the day shorter and more interesting. Hospitalized Children need special toys that reduce stress and engage their attention in colorful, musical and soothing ways. Children feel better and heal faster when they are able to play and relax.

Can I bring my gently used toys?

Because some hospitalized children may have allergies or other sensitivities to toys that have already been played with in our community, we cannot accept gently used toys. New toys (unwrapped for the first time in the hospital playroom) insure that all children will be allowed to play with them.

Are there any other guidelines I should follow?

Toys made of strong, safe plastic are the safest and easiest to keep clean. Children who are stressed need calming and soothing toys. Please do not bring toys with violent themes or toys that shoot or launch missiles, cars or planes. Please refrain from plush toys (stuffed animals, etc.) because it is hard to make sure they remain clean until given.

What about books?

Children love books and so do we. We suggest books with short stories, especially picture books. Just like toys, all books must be brand new. For infants and toddlers board books (books with cardboard covers and pages) are always appreciated.

What toys do you need most?

Whether children are receiving toys as gifts for birthdays or holidays, or whether they are playing with borrowed toys from our playroom collection, we try to provide the same developmentally appropriate, safe, well made toys. The list below suggests toys that are very useful to a therapeutic playroom. The list is divided into categories: Infant, Toddler, and Pre-School/ School Age/ Tween and Teen. The list is meant only as a guide. We also welcome your ideas, other favorite brand names and quality toys. If you have any questions about toy brands or themes, please call us at (631) 376-3717.

Should I wrap my gifts?

We prefer that you do not wrap gifts. That way we can see gifts and match the best gift to each child. If you wish, you can include gift bags in your donation. If you feel you must wrap your gifts, please use clear cellophane as used in gift baskets.

PLAYROOM TOYS FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

Infants and young toddlers need play and distraction when they are in the hospital. Toys for hospital playrooms and to lend at bedside should be plastic (so they can be cleaned easily between uses, durable (made by manufacturers who are responsible for the quality and safety of their product) and developmentally appropriate (designed by companies that are interested in promoting learning and are educated to the different needs and abilities of small children.) Toys that roll, invite visual discrimination, make soothing and delightful sounds or music and promote problem solving are very useful in therapeutic playrooms and programs.

All items must be sturdy plastic so that they can be washed. Plush and cloth toys should be avoided because we cannot clean them.

GIFT SUGGESTIONS

To help you decide what toys are best for children of different age groups, some ideas for toys are listed below. While you are not limited to the items on this list, we ask that you refrain from toys with sharp edges, toys with glass or very fragile parts, weapons and war toys. For infants and toddlers toys should not have small parts that could present a risk of choking.

Toys for infants (birth – 12 months)

Rattles	Squeak toys
Baby clothes and socks	Infant Soother/Rainforest
Shapes puzzle box	Board books
Infant activity centers	Busy Boxes
Toys with lights and sounds	Electronic/push button toys
Sippy cups	Blocks and sorting toys

Toys for Toddlers (12 – 36 months)

Musical/ push button books	Popular Character toys (like Dora, Disney)
Fisher Price toys	Toy appliances (play phone, radio, etc.)
Transportation vehicles	Pop-up toys
V-tech toys	Pounding toys
Snap and lock beads	

Toys for Pre-School Age Children

Pretend play toys	Farm animals
Little Tikes	Fisher Price Toys
Plastic food sets	Wood Puzzles
Garages/cars	Dolls
Disney toys	Play Dough
Popular character toys	Early Childhood puzzles
V-Tech Toys	Super hero and Action figure toys

Toys for School Aged Children

Puzzles Board Games Latest computer linked toy
Dolls Matchbox cars Transformers and Action Figures
Art kits Snap Together Model kits
Bead kits Super Hero Toys Latest movie theme toys
Computer games Magic kits Board Games
Barbie dolls and similar fashion dolls
Newest fad themed games (Angry Birds, for example)
Latest puzzle toy Star Wars or latest adventure theme toys
Battery controlled and operated cars
Building toys- Lego and other brands
Popular toys with famous themes (Disney, Movie, Classic)

Items for “Tweens”

Nail polish/make up sets Fun Tees, socks or slippers
Intricate craft kit Current popular movie theme items
Model sets Intricate puzzles and hand held games
Building Sets for older kits(Lego, etc.) Handheld game systems
Comedy/Adventure DVDs, G or PG ratings Popular books
iTunes gift cards Sports themed items
Sports, movie and fashion magazines
Art supplies or Kits

Items for Adolescence

Adolescent DVD’s G or PG only *iTunes* gift cards
Games for Playstation II and Xbox 360 (general audience and teen only)
Nail polish/make up sets Inexpensive bracelets, necklaces
Adolescent clothing – sports items, slippers, T-shirts
Intricate craft kit Brain teasers and skill puzzles
Twilight and other Current Popular movie theme items Model sets
Intricate puzzles and hand held games Journals
Building Sets for older kits.(Lego, etc.) MP3 Players
Sports themed items Handheld game systems
Art supplies or Kits Comedy/Adventure DVDs, PG or PG-13 ratings
Magazines Popular books, special interest books
UNO cards;playing cards Sudoku, Crossword, word search books

PLEASE AVOID:

Please refrain from war toys or toys that shoot missiles, water or any other substance. Please use your judgment regarding small parts (which can be easily lost in busy hospital environments) and other items that may break easily. All toys should be plastic for easy cleaning.

Other Suggestions

Gift Certificates (in \$ 5 or \$10 dollar amounts) *Gift certificates enable us to shop for holidays, birthdays, provide necessary toys for children in the playroom, and special gifts that lift spirits and support children with special needs. Gift certificates are easy to store and readily available for any need and any developmental level. Gift certificates from the following stores (or from a local store of your choosing) will make a child's stay better, even after the holidays are gone.*

*Babies 'R' Us
Wal-mart
Kohl's
Target*

*Barnes & Noble
Toys 'R' Us
iTunes
Michael's (Arts and Craft)*

BIG ITEMS

WE are always in need of items which serve the children while they are hospitalized. Currently we are needing:

Portable DVD Players
Portable Netbooks
Playroom Computer and 3 in one printer (plus extra inks)
Digital (Snapshot) Camera
iPAD or other tablet

Any further questions or ideas, please feel free to call us at (631) 376-3717.

**Thank you,
The Child Life Program**

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