



**volunteer  
handbook**



## **WELCOME TO IMADI**

This handbook is intended to provide you with an understanding of our organization's mission, an overview of our clients and services, as well as our policies and expectations for volunteer conduct.

We strive to create an environment in which imadi's participants can interact in a safe, appropriate, halakhic (Jewish law), and meaningful way. As a member of imadi's community, you are expected to contribute positively to this atmosphere and this handbook has been developed as a tool to help foster its implementation.

To achieve these goals, you are expected to adhere to the standards set forth in this manual.

## THE MISSION

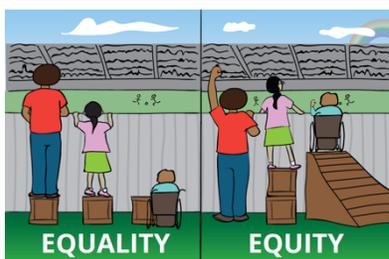
We create an empowered network of support for families facing a complex pediatric health diagnosis living in Maryland, Washington D.C., and Northern Virginia.

*What does that mean?* We support children who have life-threatening illnesses and children who are experiencing a lifelong medical condition. Some of our clients are “sick” and others have “special needs”. They’re not the same

## HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*You do not volunteer for imadi... you are imadi.* There is a myriad of ways you can use your individual talents, skills, and passion to positively impact the life of a child facing a complex pediatric health diagnosis. Here are just some of the epic forums of engagement that you can participate in:

- **MONTHLY ACTIVITIES.** Each month, imadi arranges incredible events for our families and you are encouraged to attend.
- **HOSPITAL PROGRAMS.** We partner with hospitals and arrange creative activities for their pediatric patients.
- **THE IMADI ORCHESTRA.** Do you play an instrument? Join our “traveling band” and play music for homebound and hospital-bound children.
- **JOIN A POD.** Cetologists (scientists who study whales) refer to a social group of whales that travel, play, and rest together as a “pod”. You can join one of our various-sized pods and foster a personal relationship with some of our incredible clients. Pods come in various shapes and sizes. You can be paired one-on-one, or together with your friends too.



*Why don't we call it a Big Brother & Big Sister program anymore?* At imadi we believe in equity over equality, and therefore chose a name that makes everyone feel equal. You're not their “big” and they are not your “little”. We are all equal. You're all just chillin' in a pod... together.

# CODE OF CONDUCT WITH CHILDREN

Whenever we are interacting with children, we look to promote open and trustworthy relationships. Professional and healthy interpersonal boundaries between you and imadi's clients must be understood and always be observed. Inappropriate conduct and interactions between you and a child can cause harm to a child's development and well-being, and shall never occur. **As a member of imadi's community, you are required to read the imadi Code of Conduct with Children.**

**GENERAL GUIDELINES** The following general guidelines define appropriate behavior and the appropriate boundaries between members of imadi's community. **As a representative of imadi, you may not...**

1. Engage in any type of behavior that gives the appearance of impropriety.
2. Be alone 1:1 with a client in a non-public space with a closed or locked door.
3. Address clients by inappropriate nicknames.
4. Lavish attention on a particular imadi client, including giving excessive gifts.
5. Converse with an imadi client about their sexual lives, past or present.
6. Provide to an imadi client any alcohol or drugs, vaping tools or cigarettes.
7. Perform a bathroom assistance or help a client change clothing unless directed by a supervisor.
8. Treat an imadi client like your "friend", and therefore you never should be engaging in peer-like behavior with them. We are their role models, not peers.

**PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES** It is our responsibility to model healthy and safe interactions with our clients. You may not engage in any prolonged physical contact with an imadi client except to protect or safeguard them in immediate physical danger.

- Affectionate short hugs or high fives are allowed.
- You may never discipline an imadi client in any physical manner.
- Patting of the buttocks with a hand or object, even is prohibited.
- Sitting on someone's lap, giving a massage, tickling, wrestling, or giving "chills" is prohibited.
- We do not provide "shoulder-rides"; consider placing the child on an elevated chair instead.

**COMMUNICATION** The way we communicate with our friends and our clients matter. As a member of imadi's community, it is essential that you are always mindful of how, when, and what you are communicating. Words can heal, and words can hurt. **Remember that...**

- Sharing personal information about your life to a client is considered inappropriate. Communication should always be imadi-related and never be hidden from their parents.
- You may not direct an imadi client to keep a secret from their parent.
- All electronic communications between you and a client should take place before 11:00 PM.
- We provide a designated phone number (*we call her "Karen", because she's... a Karen.*) to monitor all conversations between you and a client. Include Karen in all communications.
- When communicating with an imadi client, you must not (a) delete any text conversations; (b) enable auto-delete when communicating via text, calls, or video chat.
- You *may* communicate by video chat while in a private space as long as you are observable and fully clothed. You may *not* communicate by video chat while in a bedroom or bathroom.

## ABUSE PREVENTION

Our organization strictly complies with Maryland laws requiring reporting suspected child abuse to civil authorities. We take any and all allegations of any form of abuse seriously, and adhere to all mandated reporting requirements. If you ever feel unsafe at an imadi program, or witness any behaviors that you are concerning, please inform your supervisor immediately.

## HIPAA PRIVACY RULE

The HIPAA Privacy Rule is a national standard to protect individuals' medical records and other individually identifiable health information. **As a member of imadi's community, you are privy to private medical information that you are responsible to safeguard and respect.**

- Do not share the last names of imadi's clients with your family and friends
- Do not post on your personal social media handle any pictures that can identify an imadi client without express permission from your supervisor.

What does imadi consider to be private and protected information? Any information about a child or their family, including (but not limited to) their last name, diagnosis, home address, or financial status.

## HYGIENE

Many of imadi's clients have compromised immune systems and are susceptible to infections. For their safety, please follow these guidelines:

1. **Wash your hands.** Use either soap or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer prior to entering any home or hospital room.
2. **Stay away.** Do not visit patients if you have a skin infection, sore throat, fever, exhibit any cold-like symptoms, or if you have been exposed to any contagious disease.
3. **Get vaccinated.** volunteers should receive all vaccinations recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

We are committed to creating a drug-free, healthy, and safe environment for our community. You may not use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs when participating in an imadi activity. Smoking at any imadi event is prohibited, including the use e-cigarettes & vaporizers.

## SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

While we know you are passionate about supporting families in imadi community, it is important to us that you correctly prioritize the responsibilities in your life too. If you are currently a student in high school, it is imadi's policy that:

- Never leave school without prior permission from a school administrator and your parents.
- If you are from a single-gender school, you only attend activities designated for a single-gender.

## USE OF OFFICE SPACE

The use of imadi's office spaces as a safe and fun place to engage in imadi activities are encouraged. All activities and visitations are supervised must be pre-approved by an imadi staff member.

## DRESS CODE

We expect members of the imadi to dress in a way that is both respectful of our organization's mission and sensitive to the various families we support. As a member of the imadi community, it is your responsibility to be mindful of the clients you are engaging with, and to determine what dresswear is appropriate for them. Cleanliness, neatness, and modesty should be the general guidelines followed in making your clothing choices. *The following specific guidelines should always be abided by:*

- No exposed midriff or back.
- All shirts must have sleeves (cap-sleeves are permitted).
- Mesh tops, see-through tops, sleeveless sports jerseys and tank top shirts are inappropriate, as are tops which have an immodestly low neckline.
- No vulgar, obscene, offensive, or suggestive words, pictures, or graphics should be worn on any clothing or jewelry. Inappropriate topics including alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs, sexual innuendo or connotation, or profanity (words or pictures) should not appear on clothing.
- [Clothing depicting the name or logo of the Pittsburgh Steelers is prohibited.](#)
- Undergarments should not be visible.

## GENERAL POLICIES

1. You cannot create unsanctioned social media handles on behalf of imadi.
2. When delivered a meal to a family, please ensure that the food is Kosher certified
3. There should be no contact with clients using technology during Shabbat
4. Before playing any music with a client, consult with their parents concerning what type of music they are comfortable with their child listening to.