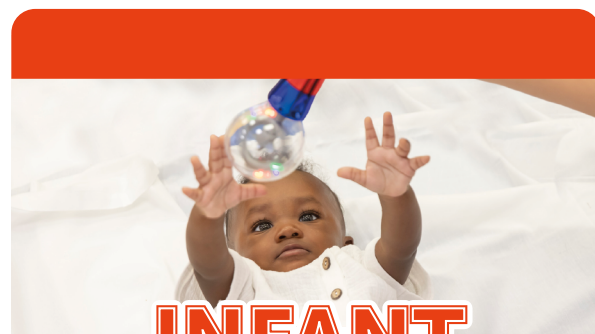


HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH A PROCEDURE

ADVICE FROM A *Child Life Specialist*



INFANT
0 – 12 Months



TODDLER
1 – 3 Years



PRESCHOOL
3 – 5 Years



SCHOOL AGE
5 – 12 Years



ADOLESCENT
12 – 18 Years

I ...
Learn about my environment through my senses (can sense how parents are feeling).
Depend on others to provide appropriate stimulation.
Feel safest with my parents.

I want ...
My parents to hold me or swaddle me, especially when things are different or scary.
To have "my" comfort items (pacifier or blanket).

Try this ...

- Parent holding during a procedure
- Swaddling
- Sweet Ease
- Avoid overstimulation (dim lights, turn off TV, speak softly, play soft music)
- Singing
- Rattle, light and sound toys

I ...
Am egocentric, I only know how to think about myself.
Focus on the "now."
Am starting to make choices.
Think change is hard.
May show regressive behaviors.

I want ...
My parents nearby.
To be in my parents embrace.
To have choices.

Try this ...

- Familiarize with medical equipment being used and allow to play with it if appropriate, or demonstrate on parents first
- Bubbles
- Easy seek-and-find books

I ...
Am a magical thinker.
Have a hard time distinguishing between fantasy and reality.
Am developing fine motor and language skills.
Need to be in control.
Am the most vulnerable to the negative experiences.

I want ...
You to use developmentally appropriate, concrete language.
Clear explanations.
Perception of control.
To make choices in my care.
To be in a comfortable position.

Try this ...

- Bubbles
- Cause and effect toys
- Play I spy using objects around the room

I ...
Can reason and compromise.
Understand events and sequence.
Am missing school and friends.
Think about my body image.

I want ...
To be included in my patient care plan.
To hear about the procedure before you start.
To make choices in my care.

Try this ...

- Engage in conversation
- Music or game on tablet
- Harder "I Spy" book

I ...
Am trying to figure out where I fit in.
Can think abstractly.
Am focused on my body image.
Am gaining independence.
Am learning from social media and television.

I want ...
Control when possible.
You to be truthful.
To be encouraged to participate in my care.
Time to ask questions.

Try this ...

- Encourage comfort items (phone, headphones)
- Stress ball
- Debrief about experience
- Pull from their "tool kit"