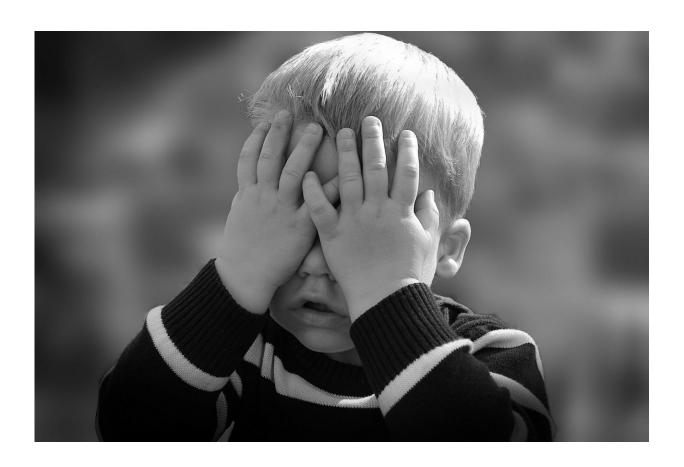


How to keep your child relaxed during a hospital stay

March 9 2020, by Jennifer Guilliams



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

During the winter months, pediatric admissions to the hospital increase due to flu and respiratory infections. In hospitals, a team of Child Life specialists help parents and kids cope with being in the hospital. Here are



some tips from them to reduce your child's fear during a scary and stressful time.

- Pack a bag. Bringing a blanket from home, as well as extra clothes, comfort items, <u>cell phone charger</u>, and your <u>child</u>'s favorite things will help them feel more at home.
- Advocate. You are the expert and know your child better than anyone. Talk to your child's care team about what qualifies as normal or abnormal behavior for your child.
- Accept help. Hospital stays affect the whole family. Take a break, allow visitors, call a friend and lean on your support system
- Self-care. Take care of yourself so you can take care of your child; don't forget to eat, sleep and take breaks throughout their stay.
- Ask questions. Speak up, keep notes, write down questions for the care team, especially if your child requires care after they leave the hospital.
- Decorate the room. Hang up artwork, pictures, cards. Involve your child in the decoration so they can make the space their own.
- Get up. Encourage your child to get out of bed and out of the room. Visit the playroom, go for a walk or participate in child life activities.
- Be honest. Explain to your child what is happening and why in a developmentally appropriate way; ask them what they think is going to happen and create a coping plan
- Do not forget siblings. Your child's hospitalization impacts everyone in the family. Siblings can sometimes feel lost or forgotten, so make sure you pay attention to their feelings.
- Stick to a routine similar to home. Your child still needs structure; consistency, and rules or boundaries are important.
- Offer choices and control when possible. Your child's choices are



valid; whether it's what movie to watch or to eat for dinner, let them have some control in a situation where they otherwise feel helpless.

• Take it one day at a time. Be patient, stay calm, be positive; identify something good that happened each day.

Provided by University of Kentucky

Citation: How to keep your child relaxed during a hospital stay (2020, March 9) retrieved 30 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-03-child-hospital.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.