

Child Life in the Emergency Department & Trauma



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What is a Child Life Specialist

Child Life Specialist are development experts who work to ensure that life remains as normal as possible for children in health care settings and other challenging environments.

They promote effective coping through play, self-expression activities, and age-appropriate medical preparation and education. As Advocates of family-centered care, Child Life Specialists work in partnership with doctors, nurses, social workers and others to meet the unique emotional, developmental and cultural needs of each child and family.

Child Life Services and Interventions



- Procedure Preparation
 - Medical Play
 - Coping Techniques
 - Distraction
 - Psychosocial Support
 - Comfort Items
 - Comfort Positioning
 - Normalization Play
 - Expressive Play & Activities
 - Family Centered Care
 - Parent & Sibling Support
 - Advocacy
 - Bereavement Support
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Preparation

Why is preparation helpful for a child?

- Decreases fear and anxiety.
- Increases cooperation with medical team.
- Clarifies misconceptions.
- Promotes long-term coping to medical challenges.



Preparation Tips

Explain *what* will happen

- Modeling or demonstration
- Sensory feedback

Explain *why* it is happening

- The purpose of the procedure, exam, imaging, medication, etc.

Examples:

- It will feel: cold, soft, like a tight hug
- It will take the same amount of time as: watching a cartoon/show, brushing your teeth, singing the ABC's, etc.
- “Some kids tell me it tastes: chalky, minty, like a penny, etc.”
- Model or demonstrate: adults or stuffed animals make great models!



Medical Play

Medical play is play with a medical theme. It uses real or toy medical equipment, and often dolls or teddy bears. These items allow children to learn about medical procedures, equipment, and the healthcare environment in a way that won't scare them.



Why is medical play important?

Medical play helps children work through their feelings, fears, or worries about health care experiences. During medical play, children can be “in charge” and make choices.



Coping Strategies

Pain Management Tools

- Oral Sucrose & Pacifier
- Breast Feeding
- Numbing (LET, LMX, Cold Spray, J-Tip, etc.)
- Buzzy Bee



Distraction

Comfort Positioning

Breathing Techniques (Examples)

Guided Imagery

ONE Voice



Developmental Support and Distraction

- Breathing Techniques
- Bubbles
- iPad
- Light up/Glitter wand
- Fidget Items
- Diversional Conversation
- Music/Singing
- ISPY
- Game



Common Stressors and Misconceptions



Word	It's Not...	In the hospital, it is:
IV	A plant	Medicine straw
Flush	The toilet	To give your body a drink of water
Leads	Take you somewhere	Stickers on your chest to listen to your heart beat
Take your vitals		See how warm your body is, how fast your blood is moving in your body, how strong your heart is.

Why YOU should call Child Life

Research confirms the negative effects that traumatic healthcare experiences have on children. Using our training in child development Child Life Specialists provide psychosocial support to children and families in the health care setting.

The goal is to minimize fear and trauma helping each family cope more effectively.

Child Life in the Trauma Bay

- Environment
 - Modified vs Full
- Positioning
 - Parental Presence
- Preparation
- Comfort measures
 - Oral Sucrose
 - Pacifier
 - Soothing touch
 - Stress ball

Child Life and Adult Patients

- Bereavement and end of life support
 - Resources
 - Language
 - Memory making



Tips for Working with Pediatric Patients

- Get on their level
- Appropriate language and terminology and tone
- Meet them where they are at
- Truthfulness
- Options when appropriate
- Do not apologize for procedures
- Validate/reinforce
- ONE Voice

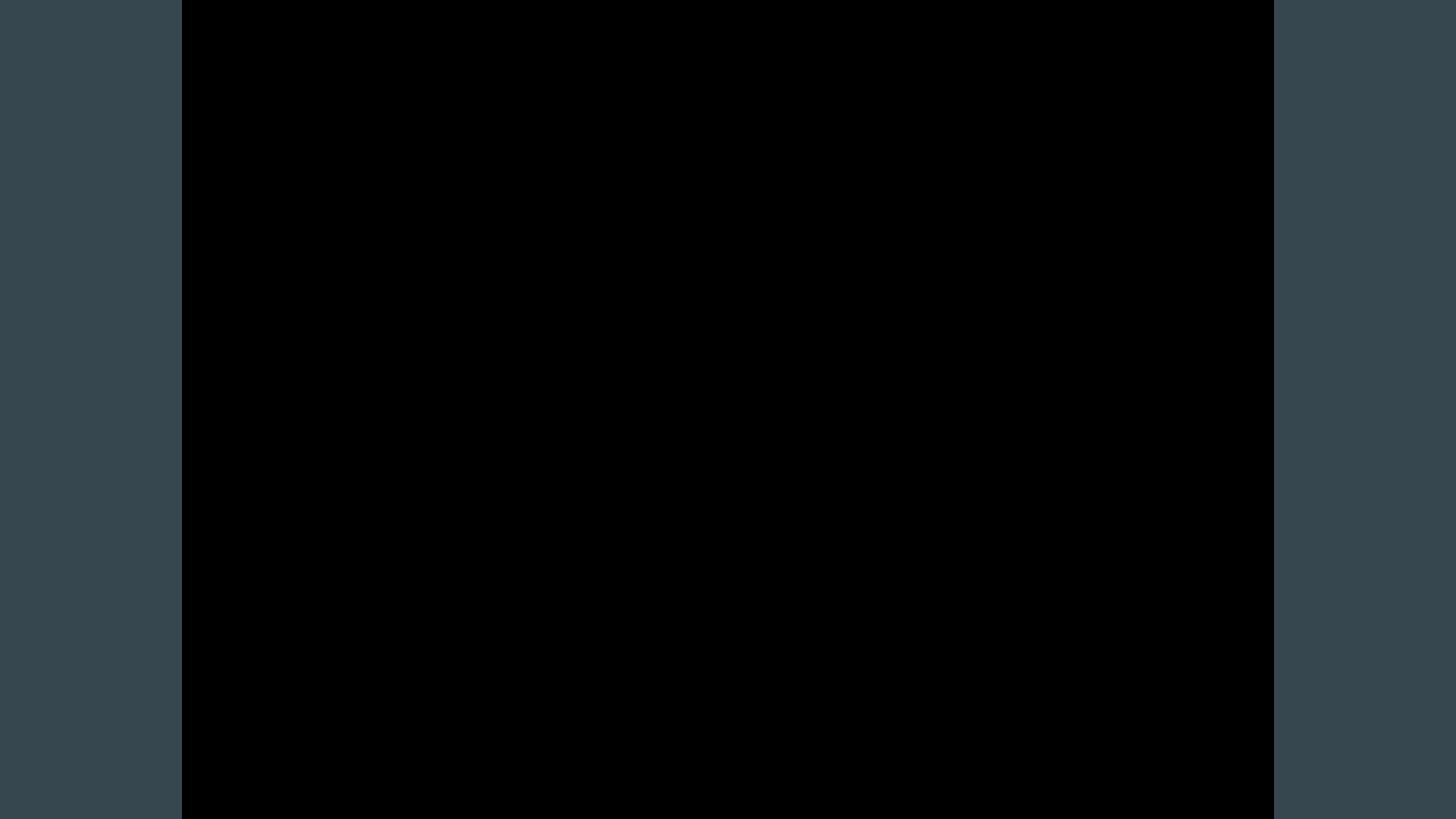
The CDC says the more people that yell “you’re fine!!!” during a procedure the better the chances the patient will be fine.

@theipadlady

Areas of Coverage at DCH

- Clinics & Sedation 7th floor
- Peds ED
- NICU
- PICU 8N
- Outpatient Surgery 8S
- Medical 9N
- Surgical 9S
- Neuro Step-Down 10N
- Inpatient Hem/Onc 10S
- Hem/Onc Clinic 10C

Coming soon 7 days a week 7am-2am



Questions

Thank you!

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References

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