Child Life
Specialist
IF YOU THINK
my hands ARE
FULL, YOU SHOULD
SEE MY
heart

CHILD LIFE

OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the role of a Child Life Specialist

WHAT IS A CERTIFIED CHILD LIFE SPECIALIST?

- Trained professionals who provide Trauma-Informed Care
  - Support the emotional and psychosocial needs of families experiencing stress
  - Educated and trained in the developmental impact of illness and injury
  - Help to mitigate stress, anxiety, and emotional trauma associated with medical experiences

Create a child-friendly environment
Prepare and support during procedures or surgeries
Promote family and sibling involvement
Provide medical play and teaching
Meet emotional and social needs
Help children understand their medical experience
Encourage play and normal development
CHILD LIFE

DEVELOPMENT- WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- To make an accurate and valuable assessment of a patient and family.
- Allows us to address the psychosocial needs
- One of our goals as a CCLS is to promote healthy development

ASSESSMENT PROCESS:

- Evaluating three things
  - Child Variables
  - Family Variables
  - Healthcare Variables
- Determines stress potential and child life plan

THEORY-WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- Drives child life practice
- Guides our interactions with children and families
- Allows us to analyze our observations
- Gives us solutions to the problems we face on a daily basis

PARTS of a Pediatric Patient

ChildLifeology.com

Don't forget about MY NOSE!

The hospital smells different than my home and the medicine I might need to take may smell yucky too! Help me by telling me what things might smell like so I can be prepared.

I can use MY MOUTH

to sing or count during things that I don't like. Using my mouth to blow out air will help my muscles be more relaxed.

I love to use MY HANDS

to play and playing with medical things can help me get used to them. I love to squirt paint out of a syringe!

There are so many new things in the hospital and some

LOOK SCARY!

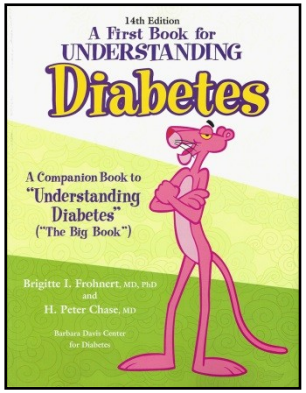
If I am having a test done, it helps to show me what the machine looks like beforehand, like that one machine that looks like a doughnut!

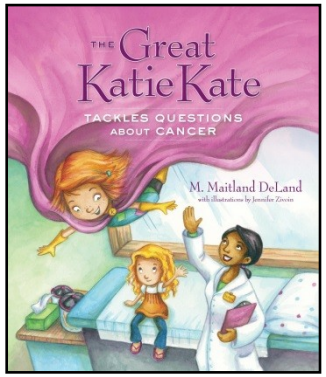
I HEAR things differently than

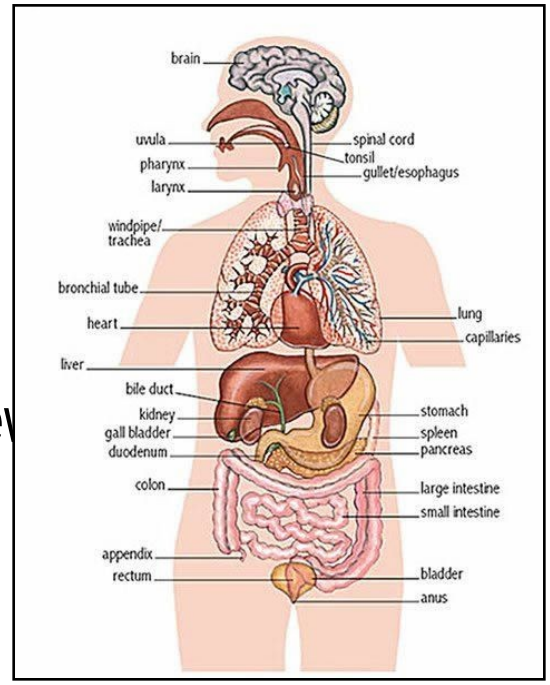
a grown up so explain things to me in ways I can understand. Like what's a cat scan and why does my cat need one?

DIAGNOSIS TEACHING

- Developmentally appropriate explanation of a diagnosis
- Addressing diagnosis questions to eliminate misconceptions
- Information about treatments, medications, possible side effects and body changes
- Education about normal body functions
- Provide age-appropriate resources on new diagnosis







SIBLING & FAMILY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

- Information regarding normal developmental milestones
- Common reactions and concerns of parents' and siblings' to hospitalization
- Examples of how to involve siblings in the hospital experience
- Diagnosis teaching to family members

PROCEDURAL PREPARATION & MEDICAL PLAY

- Utilize photos and/or medical equipment for preparation
- Developmentally appropriate information…
  - To familiarize patient and families with the sequence of events
  - Sensory information (see, hear, feel, touch, taste)
  - Medical equipment
  - Environment
  - Medical team

MEDICAL PLAY ALLOWS…

- Emotional expression
- A nurturing environment to address patients' concerns
- Opportunities for control
- Practice examples of positive coping techniques
- Communicate questions, fears, and misconceptions

PROCEDURAL SUPPORT

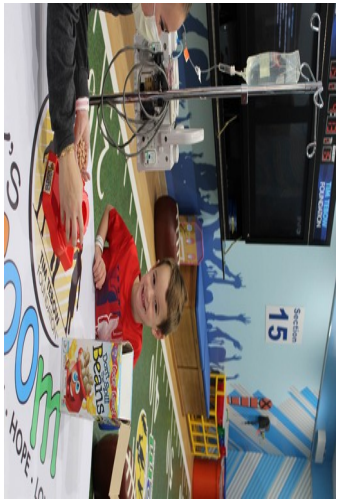
- Emotional support
- Positioning for comfort
- Positive coping techniques and distraction:
- https://youtu.be/3DejJo0la0I
- https://youtu.be/lWX1WFxiWA4

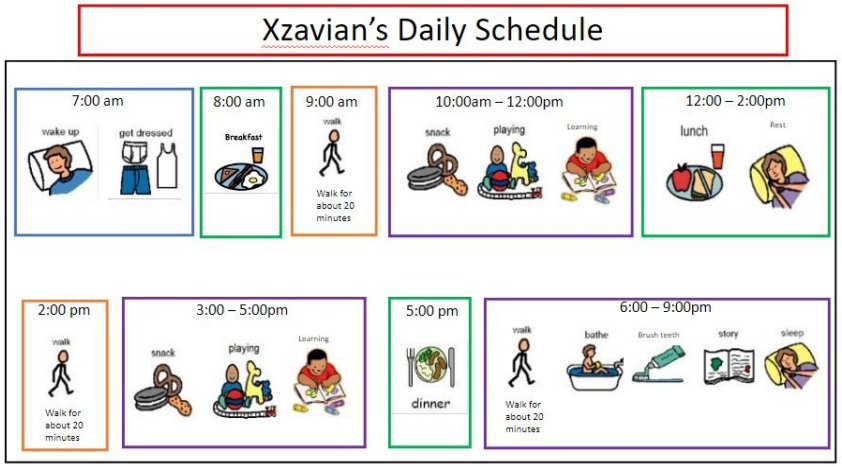
BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

- Comfort and support for patients and siblings during the death process
- Developmentally appropriate educational materials to address children and adolescents' concerns regarding death
- Resources for families after death
- Memory items for families
  - Locks of hair, handprints and footprints, keepsake box, heartbeat recording, etc.

NORMALIZATION

- A schedules and routine
- Opportunities for patients to PLAY
- Socialization among peers
- Hospital actives and programs
- Sibling visits

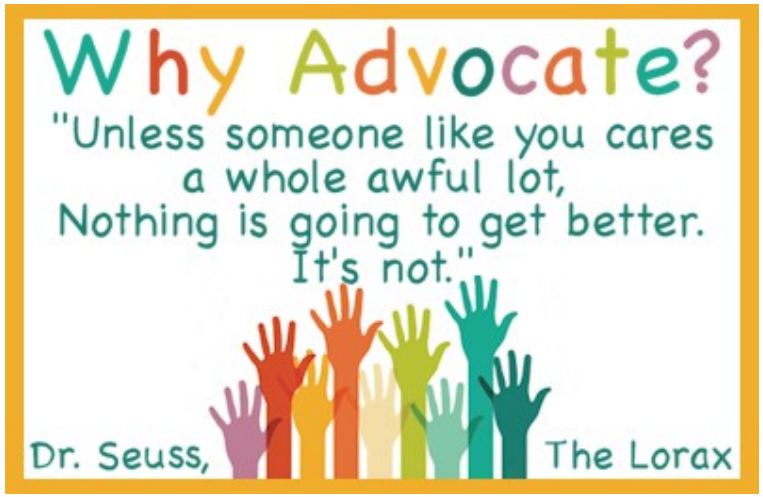




ADVOCACY

- Helping to empower patients and families to speak up and ask questions

- Being “their voice”
  - Patient
  - Family
  - Profession



OTHER RELATED PROFESSIONS FOUND IN CHILD LIFE DEPARTMENTS

- Therapeutic Play & Expressive Activities
  - Music Therapy
  - Art Therapy
  - Play Therapy
  - Recreational Therapy
  - Animal Assisted Therapy

QUESTIONS