



Hospitalized Children: A Child Life Perspective

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What is Child Life? What is a CCLS?

- CCLS stands for Certified Child Life Specialist.
- We are accredited by the Association of Child Life Professionals.
- A Child Life Specialists' goal is to **decrease the amount of stress and anxiety that children and their families experience in the hospital.**
- We accomplish this through many different techniques.



History, Process, and Settings

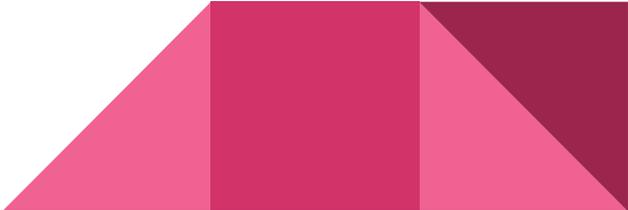
History of Child Life:

- 1922, 1st play program
- 1955, Emma Plank was asked to create a program to address the social, emotional and educational needs of hospitalized children at Cleveland City Hospital. Emma Plank served as director for the Child Life and Education Division until 1972.
- 1962, Emma Plank authored the book, *Working with Children in Hospitals*.
- 1982, Child Life Council, now known as the ACLP was formed.

Process to becoming a CCLS:

- 100 hours volunteering in a hospital with Child Life
- Bachelor's degree in a related field from an accredited institution (with 10 qualifying classes)
- 600 hour clinical internship supervised by a CCLS
- Sit and pass the nationally certified exam

Settings:

- Hospitals
 - Dentist offices
 - Courtrooms
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Education & Preparation

Why?

- It is important that children have ability to gain understanding
- Gain insight on how the child might cope and come up with a coping plan

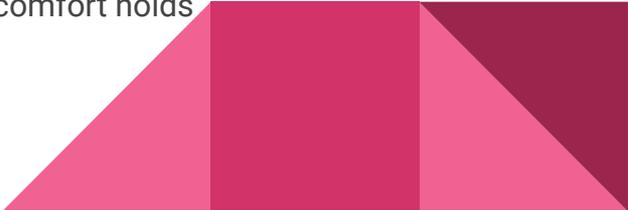
When?

- Time - how much time do you have before the procedure needs to happen
- Availability of staff - is the nurse in a trauma, is the CCLS supporting another family
- Assessment of child's distress/anxiety

What?

- Think to yourself, "What is the child going to experience?"
- Senses (smell, sight, touch, hear, taste)

How?

- Age appropriate language
 - Tools - what medical materials will you be using that you can show the child ahead of time
 - Discuss coping techniques - hold a caregivers hand, diversion, deep breathing, comfort holds
 - Offer time for questions
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Do's and Don'ts

Utilize medical play - bubbles with anesthesia mask

One Voice video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ldwPFyAuDg>



Normalization



- Playroom and teen lounge are play spaces on Inpatient Peds

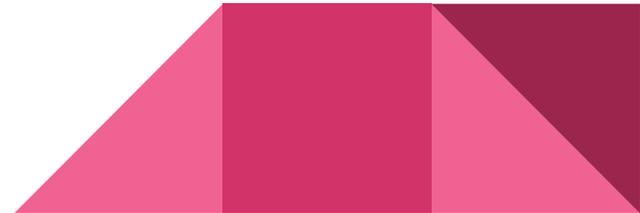
Types of play:

- Postprocedural play - opportunity for child to return to baseline
- Therapeutic/expressive play is an opportunity to process tough emotions - Toilet Paper Toss
- Non-pharmacological pain management
- Diversion
- Directive play - Tea party to increase PO intake



Support & Advocating

- 17 year old, male
- Admitted for DKA, known diabetic
- Due to Peds floor being full, patient was placed on adult unit
- Pt shared that he is “scared of needles”
- This CCLS advocated for labs to be drawn off PIV
- RN felt that since the pt is “used to needles” that it shouldn’t be a problem poking him for blood



Erikson's Developmental Stages

Infant-18mo → Trust vs. Mistrust → Need consistent caregiver to maintain secure attachment, need someone to respond to their cries in order to feel safe and supported

18mo-3y → Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt → Learning to do things on their own, need to feel successful in completing a task, but may require help from caregiver, potty training

3y-5y → Initiative vs. Guilt → Starting to take more initiative, when there is a barrier between what the child is trying to accomplish (aka if a caregiver stops them from going up to talk to one of their peers), then the child will feel guilt and not longer pursue growth

5y-13y → Industry vs. Inferiority → Feels competent in being able to complete tasks, needs positive recognition from those superior to notice their achievements

13y-18y → Identity vs. Role Confusion → Finding their role in society, craves independence while they discover who they are, thrive off of peer interactions



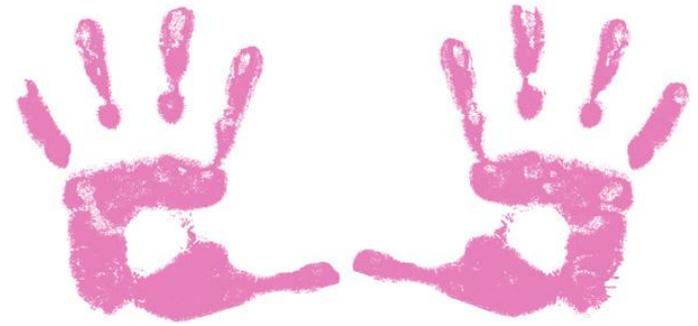
Grief & Bereavement

What is Grief?

- Grief is an emotional reaction to change.
- Grief is keen mental suffering or distress over affliction or loss.
- Grief is the normal and natural emotional reaction to loss or change of any kind.
- Grief looks different for everyone. There is no “normal” way to grieve.
- Anything outside of death is considered a symbolic loss.

Support:

- Memory making
- Talking with family on how to support children



Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

Denial - helps you get through the loss and help you cope, doesn't make sense

Anger - there are no limits to anger, under the anger is the pain

Bargaining - you'll do anything for that person to live, "If only" and "what if" statements

Depression - now your attention focuses on the present, you realize that this is your reality

Acceptance - accepting your new reality, it doesn't mean you are "okay" with it, it just means you are learning to live with this new "norm".

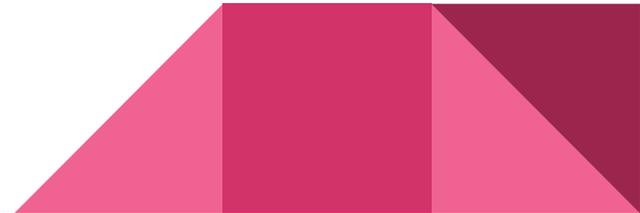
*It can be a wave! Controversy over linearity of steps.



Your Daily Practice

How can you work these things into your daily practice if you don't have a child life specialist?

- Choices
- Getting down on their level
- Eye contact
- Meet child where they are emotionally
- Explaining things before you do them
- Desensitizing items
- Developmentally appropriate language
- Be mindful about conversations at bedside
- Involving primary caregiver in all possible things



Case Studies

How would you explain an IV to a 5yo coming into the ED?

What activity would you provide to a school aged child who is on isolation?

There is a 15yo who suffered from a GSW to their leg. He has been unable to get up from bed. Thinking about Erikson's developmental stage and symbolic loss, what might be some things this patient may be experiencing and feeling?

There is a FTT infant whose mother is struggling with postpartum depression. What things are important to the baby forming a secure attachment with the mother? How can the medical team be of support?



Resources

Association of Child Life Professionals. ACLP (CLC) Historical Timeline (2018).

<https://www.childlife.org/about-aclp/history-of-aclp/aclp-historical-timeline>

Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development (2018). Retrieved from:

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/Erik-Erikson.html>

Grief: Because love never dies. Retrieved from: <https://grief.com/the-five-stages-of-grief/>

