

# All about INFANTS (0-12 months)



## Understanding Infants Needs in Hospital from a Developmental Perspective

### As an INFANT, I am learning all about:

Me

My relationships with others

The environment

Cause & effect

### Things that can make me stressed in hospital include:

Being separated from my Parent/s or Caregiver/s

Being in pain

Not being able to engage in play (lack of stimulation)

Loud noises and sudden movements

### When I'm frightened I might:

Be or seem unsettled, fussy, cranky or clingy

Grimace, arch my back, scrunch up my face and/or cry

Disassociate or shutdown

### How You Can Help & Comfort Me

Acknowledge my feelings (whatever they might be)

Engage with me in a calm and considered way

Use comfort positioning during procedures (see handout)

Help my parent/caregiver be involved in a comforting way (e.g. talking to me, singing, cuddles, swaddling, provision of dummy, breastfeeding)

Provide my parent/caregiver with helpful information

**and if you aren't sure what helps... Please Ask My Parents!**

# All about TODDLERS (1-3 years)



## Understanding Toddlers Needs in Hospital from a Developmental Perspective

### As a TODDLER, I am learning all about:

- My emotions and other people's feelings
- Learning & using words
- Basic concepts
- Doing things by myself
- How I can meet my own needs (peak time of egocentricity)

### Things that can make me stressed in hospital include:

- Being separated from my parent/s or caregiver/s
- Fear of injury or pain
- Not being able to move
- Being out of routine

### When I'm frightened I might:

- Be uncooperative, resistive or protest (verbally and/or physically)
- Avoid engaging with you (be shy, avoid talking to you) or conversely be hyperactive
- Cling on to my parent/caregiver, meltdown or cry

### How You Can Help & Comfort Me

- Acknowledge my feelings (and let me know they are all valid)
  - Engage with me in a calm way (talk to me about things I like, play with me if I'm calm enough)
  - Give me some choice & control
  - Use comfort positioning for procedures (See Handout)
  - Help my Parent/Caregiver be involved in a comforting way (e.g. cuddles, talking to me, having my comfort items ready)
  - Provide me with brief & simple information
- and if you aren't sure what helps... Please Ask My Parents!**

# All about YOUNG CHILDREN (3-6 years)



## Understanding Young Children's Needs in Hospital from a Developmental Perspective

### As a YOUNG CHILD, I am learning all about:

- My body, mind and emotions
- The difference between emotions
- My imagination
- Understanding the world around me
- Becoming more independent

### Things that can make me stressed in hospital include:

- Separation
- Fear or loss of control or sense of own power
- Fear of bodily injury

### When I'm frightened I might:

- Show regressed behaviours
- Seem angry, act out or protest (verbally or physically)
- Show despair or want to withdraw from what is happening

### How You Can Help & Comfort Me

- Acknowledge my feelings (and let me know they are all valid)
- Engage with me in a calm way (talk to me about things I like, help me engage in something)
- Give me some choice & control
- Use comfort positioning for procedures (See Handout)
- Help my Parent/Caregiver be involved in a comforting way (e.g. cuddles, talking to me, having my comfort items ready)
- Provide me with brief & simple information
- and if you aren't sure what helps... Please Ask My Parents!

# All about SCHOOL AGE (6-12 years)



## Understanding Childrens Needs in Hospital from a Developmental Perspective

### As a SCHOOL AGE CHILD, I am learning all about:

- The world and the events that happen within it
- How I can voice my thoughts and opinions
- Cementing close friendships
- My morals and values

Life is all about family, school, friends & after-school activities

### Things that can make me stressed in hospital include:

- Separation
- Fear of loss of control
- Fear of loss of mastery
- Fear of bodily injury, intrusion and pain
- Fear of illness itself, disability and death

### When I'm frightened I might:

- Show regressed behaviours
- Be uncooperative, frustrated or withdraw
- Show incredible sadness
- Show displaced anger or hostility

### How You Can Help & Comfort Me

- Acknowledge my feelings (even the sad and angry ones)
- Engage with me in a calm way (talk to me about things I like, help me to in engage in something)
- Give me some choice & control
- Use comfort positioning for procedures (See Handout)
- Help my Parent/Caregiver be involved in a comforting way
- Provide me with brief & simple information
- Help me feel success with something
- If I'm calm enough, offer me some thinking techniques to manage e.g. breathing, counting

and if you aren't sure what helps... Please Ask My Parents!

# All about ADOLESCENTS (12+ years)



## Understanding Adolescents Needs in Hospital from a Developmental Perspective

### As an ADOLESCENT, I am learning all about:

- My identity – who I am and how I fit in the world
- Cementing my independence
- My body – how it's changing, my body image
- My relationships

### Things that can make me stressed in hospital include:

- Loss of independence and control
- Threat of change in body image
- Restriction of activities
- Loss of competence

### When I'm frightened or distressed I might:

- Show regressed behaviours
- Be uncooperative, frustrated or withdraw
- Show incredible sadness
- Show displaced anger or hostility
- Refuse treatment

### How You Can Help & Comfort Me

- Acknowledge my feelings (even the difficult ones)
- Provide opportunities for choice, control, self-expression and relationship-building
- Engage with me in a calm way (talk to me about things I like, help me to engage in something)
- If I'm calm enough, offer me some thinking techniques to manage e.g. breathing, counting

and if you aren't sure what helps... Please Ask My Parents!