



# SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD DURING MEDICAL PROCEDURES

Medical procedures can be stressful for children. Here are some things you can do to help your child cope:

- Be honest.
- Identify one person to speak to your child in a calm, quiet voice.
- Identify a position that is comfortable for you and your child.
- Provide choices where choices exist:
  - “Would you rather look at the book or blow bubbles?” instead of “Are you ready for your IV now?”
- Use specific phrases:
  - “You are doing a great job taking deep breaths” instead of “Good job.”
  - “This may take as long as your favorite cartoon” instead of “We are almost done.”
- Avoid phrases such as “You’re OK,” “Don’t cry” and “Be a big girl/boy.”
- Avoid apologizing for the procedure.
- Teach your child healthy coping strategies to increase confidence and control (*see list below*).

## COPING STRATEGIES TO HELP YOUR CHILD

### INFANTS (0-1 year)

Holding  
Speaking in a soft voice  
Patting  
Music/singing  
Pacifier  
Teething toys/rings  
Rattles  
Light-up toys  
Sweet-Ease

### TODDLERS (1-3 years)

Holding  
Speaking in a calm voice  
Music/singing  
Nursery rhymes  
Pop-up/sound books  
Look-and-find books  
(*beginner levels*)  
Light-up toys  
Bubbles  
Pinwheels  
Kazoo/horn  
ViewMaster

### PRESCHOOLERS (3-5 years)

Speaking in a calm voice  
Music/singing  
Pop-up/sound books  
Look-and-find books  
Bubbles  
Pinwheels  
Counting  
Talking about favorite things  
Kazoo/horn  
ViewMaster

### SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN (6-11 years)

Speaking in a calm voice  
Music  
Talking about favorite things  
Squeezing a ball  
Magic wand  
Taking slow, deep breaths  
Electronics (*phone, handheld device*)  
I-Spy books

### ADOLESCENTS (12-18 years)

Music  
Electronics (*phone, handheld device*)  
Taking slow, deep breaths  
Squeezing a ball  
Talking about a favorite place, activity or thing  
Relaxing muscles