

**PEDIATRIC PROCEDURAL  
ANXIETY/DISTRESS:  
RESOURCES FOR CAREGIVERS**

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# BACKGROUND

## Observations

Direct observation

Reports from caregiver(s)

Reports from team

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## Patient Responses

Verbal

Physical



# BACKGROUND



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## Why It Matters

### Age and Development

- More adverse reaction than adults
- Less ability to communicate the pain/fear
- Do not understand the need for a procedure
- Less ability to self-regulate

### Long-term Effects

- Most life-long phobias develop before 10 years old

### Safety

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Nordgård, R., & Låg, T., 2021; Brown et al., 2018;  
Canbulat et al., 2014; DSM-V, 2017

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- Develop a resource with suggestions for families to address reduce patient anxiety level.
    - Tips for before, during, and after a visit
  - Help patients build a skill set to reduce experience of anxiety and fear and gain the ability to safely receive an injection, swab, etc.

# AIM

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



# Method

Step 1



**Quality  
Improvement  
Meeting**

Step 2



**Literature  
Review**

Step 3



**Patients, Parents,  
and Providers**

# QUALITY IMPROVEMENT TEAM



## Caregivers' Role?

Do caregivers' level of anxiety  
affect that of their children?

Could we help caregivers reduce  
their children's anxiety level?



# LITERATURE REVIEW

## INFLUENCE OF CAREGIVERS

### Caregiver Anxiety

Preprocedural anxiety may lead to children's procedural anxiety.



### Caregiver Awareness

Increase awareness of their anxiety's impact.



### Child's Anxiety

Procedural anxiety can increase procedural pain.



### Help Child

Parents able to manage their anxiety would not increase their child's anxiety.

# **INFLUENCE OF CAREGIVERS**



## **Caregiver attitude toward healthcare**

Caregivers with more favorable attitudes toward healthcare have children with higher knowledge of procedures suggesting more preparation beforehand.

## **Child's level of anxiety**

Children whose parents prepare them with both knowledge of procedure and overall positive attitudes toward healthcare experience less anxiety and distress.

Rodriguez et al., 2012



# INFLUENCE OF CAREGIVERS

## Comments

Avoid:

- reassuring comments
- apologies
- empathy
- criticism or threats

Offer positive statements:

- "You are brave."
- "I am proud of you."
- "You are doing great."

## Language Used

Straightforward

Age-appropriate

Does not include anxiety-producing words (pain, hurt, shot)

Krausse et al., 2016; Blount et al., 2006

# LITERATURE REVIEW

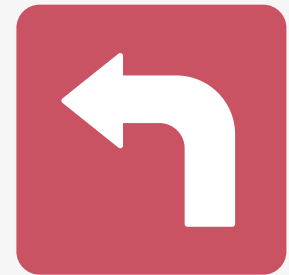
## Preparation/Education

Preparation prior to visit or in clinic



## Distraction

Diverting attention during  
procedure



# OTHER INTERVENTIONS

Aydin et al., 2016; Birnie et al., 2018; Canbulat et al., 2014; Inal et al., 2012;  
Krauss et al., 2016; Nordgård, R., & Låg, T. 2021;

# **OTHER INTERVENTIONS**

## **Modeling and Rehearsal**

Act out/practice procedure with patient or through play



## **Behavior Modification**

Focus on celebrating/rewarding child, not comforting



Burns-Nadar et al., 2013; Krauss et al., 2016; Kyriankidis et al., 2021; Rashid et al., 2021



## Help Your Child Have a Smooth Visit

### Getting Ready

- Be honest and describe what will occur at the visit.
- Let your child know what to expect and what is expected of them.
- Use age-appropriate, non-threatening language.  
Example: say "pinch" or "pressure" in place of "shot" or "hurt."
- Play: model (act out) procedure with toys and let them act it out.
- Prepare a special bag with toys, books, stuffed animals, or device your child can use during the visit.



### During Visit

- Bring bag with toy/activity.
- Have a stuffed animal, blanket, or favorite item for your child to hold.
- Offer your lap to sit in or your hand to hold.
- Distract your child with conversation, a story, video, or play.
- Normalize common fears and reactions.



### After Visit

- Celebrate! Praise your child with words, a hug, or a high five.
- Remind your child why the medical care is important (they will feel better or not get sick).
- Congratulate your child for helping care for their health and safety.
- You may choose to give your child a sticker or other item you bring as a reward.



# Additional Steps



Translate Resource



Coach Caregivers



Uniform Approach  
from Team



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*Thank You*

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