

# Support For Children Receiving the COVID-19 Vaccine

Brooke Baffa & Becca Mitsos  
Ann & Robert H. Lurie  
Children's Hospital of Chicago  
November 7 and 8, 2021



# Who We Are

- Certified Child Life Specialists
  - First responders for emotional support
  - Licensed clinicians who provide in-the-moment and evidence-based emotional support to children in a medical environment
  - Clinically trained in developmental impact of illness and injury.
  - Goal of care is to:
    - Help children and families cope
    - Prevent or mitigate the harmful impacts of trauma in medical environments
    - Elevate children and families voices and choices
    - Bridge the gap between being a kid and the medical environment

# Goals for Today's Presentation

- Honest Preparation
- Supportive Verbiage
- Safe Positioning
- Developmental and Sensory Needs

# Honest Preparation

- Honesty
  - What to say if a child says, “Does it hurt?”
  - Calm is a super power.
- Accuracy
  - What will happen first, next, and last?
  - No surprises
- Age-appropriate choices
  - Which arm?
  - Where do they want to look?
  - What do they want to hear?
  - What do they want to squeeze?

# Supportive Verbiage

Instead of This...	Try This!
"It's okay, it's okay!"	"It's normal to feel nervous. I'm going to tell you every step, and there are no surprises."
"Don't be scared!" , "There's nothing to be scared of!"	<p>"Can you tell me what is making you feel scared"</p> <p>"I understand why you feel nervous. I am here to help you."</p>
"Almost done, almost done!"	<p>"I need to place a band-aid on. As soon as it is on your arm, I can step away."</p> <p>"Let's try counting to 30 together."</p>
"Don't look, look away, look over there!"	<p>"Would you like to watch or look away?"</p> <p>"Does it help you to watch the poke?"</p>
"Be brave!" "Be a big kid!" "Be strong!"	<p>"You are doing a really good job holding still."</p> <p>"Thanks for helping me by being so cooperative."</p>
<p>"You won't feel anything!"</p> <p>"It's feels like a mosquito bite!"</p>	<p>"Most kids say it feels uncomfortable for about 30 seconds- usually a small pinch and some pressure. You can tell me what it feels like when we're done."</p>

# Positioning for Comfort

## Chest to Chest



### ◀ Chest-to-chest

- Best for small children who need distraction and prefer not to watch procedure
- Allow the child to straddle parent or staff and have a secure “hug”

# Positioning for Comfort

## Side Sitting



### Side sitting

- Great for older children who may want to watch while feeling secure
- Use when child can't straddle parent or staff

# Positioning for Comfort

## Back-to-Chest



### Back-to-chest

- Helpful position for port procedures
- Safe and comforting position with child's feet secure in parent's legs
- Great for older children who want independence, but need to be held



# Escalated Reactions

- Don't hold on to joints (anything that bends)
- C-grip – pushing with curve of hand rather than pressing in with fingers
- Least restrictive way – bear hug, use their body to brace them (holding an arm against their torso)
- Limit the # of people having to hold – for any kid that's struggling, particularly autism/sensory kids
- If they physically relax, let go

# Other Examples



# Developmental Delays and Sensory Needs

- Compassionate boundaries go a long way.
- What can I do to communicate?
- What can I do to accommodate?
- What is calming to your child when your child is upset?
- When was the last time your child had a poke?
- What has helped in the past?
- Is there anything you have with you that may help?

## To Wrap Up:

- “Feelings are for feeling, not for fixing.”
- This is a tough thing for everyone involved. You aren't a bad provider if a child cries.
- Crying is communicating. It is okay to cry. It's human to be upset, and it's human to be upset by someone else, especially a child, being upset.

# QR Code for Resources

