Child Life, Therapy Dogs, and Dog Bites

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Child Life

• What is a Child Life Specialist?
  – Professionals who work with patients and families
    • Encourage positive coping
    • Provide education/preparation for procedure
    • Support/distract during procedures
    • Allow for emotional expression
    • Advocate for patient and family centered care
    • Facilitate play opportunities
  – Strong educational foundation in
    • Child Development
    • Family Dynamics
    • Effects of hospitalization on pediatric patients
C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital

• Child and Family Life Program
  – Child Life: Hospital-Wide
    • 34 CCLS staff that cover inpatient units and outpatient clinics
    • Stats: approximately 30,000 patients annually
  – Child Life: ER Specific
    • 6 CCLS staff that cover 24/7 (1 of 6 nationally with this coverage)
    • Stats: approximately 10,000 patients annually
    • Listed as a respondent to all trauma activations
Making Your ER Pediatric Friendly

• Environment
• Focus on Patient and Family Centered Care
• Parental Presence and Support
• Explanation of Procedures
• Language/Demeanor
Environment

• **Research**
  
  – The design of an environment can positively or negatively impact the level of anxiety/fear a child experience in the hospital. (Norton, 2012)
  
  – Engaging spaces are invaluable in creating a positive hospital experience by combating boredom, increasing choice and control, and decreasing a sense of isolation. (Lambert et al., 2013)

• **Dedicate a small section of your waiting room as a place for kids**
  
  – Colorful walls and kid-sized furniture
  
  – Toys, books, and games

• **Make patient rooms/bays more friendly or provide distraction**
  
  – Toys, books, and games, video games
  
  – Coloring sheets
  
  – Movies in the room
Patient and Family Centered Care

Recognizes the integral role of the family and encourages mutually beneficial collaboration between the patient, family, and health care professionals

• Research:
  – Majority of families wish to be present for all aspects of care and decision-making
  – Families who are provided with PFCC are more satisfied with their care
  – Families are most knowledgeable about a patient’s goals, preferences, and values

• Parents are the experts on their children
  – If a parent expresses a concern, address it
  – Include parents and patient
Parental Presence and Support

• Research
  – Parental presence was found to decrease blood pressure, pain felt, stress, and negative behaviors. (Matziou et al., 2013)

• Welcome and encourage parents to be present for treatments and procedures
  – As with kids, parents/caregivers do better when they have a job/role
  – Allow for comfort positioning when possible
Comfort Positioning

**Comfort Positions**
Reducing stress & anxiety for children during medical procedures

- **Back to Chest Bear Hug**
  - IV
  - Blood Draw
  - Injections
  - NG Tube
  - Exam
  - Port Access

- **Chest to Chest Bear Hug**
  - IV
  - Blood Draw
  - Injections

- **Frog Hold**
  - Catheterization
  - Pelvic Exam
  - Dressing Change
  - Chest Tube Removal

- **Side Support Hold**
  - Lumbar Puncture
Explanation of Procedures

• Research
  – Preparation provides an opportunity for developing coping skills, increases sense on control, and seemingly improves experiences. (Perry et al., 2012)
  – Children who received preparation were less anxious and more cooperative before and during anesthesia. Mother’s anxiety was also reduced. (Cuzzocrea et al., 2013)

• Explain treatment/procedure/what is going to happen
  – Use senses and sequence of events as a base
  – Show actual medical equipment while explaining what that item is for

• Offer choices

• Give a job/role

• One Voice
  – https://youtu.be/2IdwPFyAuDg
Language/Demeanor

• Research
  – Children ages 2-7 think about things in very concrete terms, and often engage in magical thinking
  – In children ages 7-11, thinking becomes more logical and organized, but still very concrete
  – In stressful situations, older children and teens benefit from simple explanations

• Get down on a child’s level

• Word choice

• Speak in a regular tone, not a childish voice

• Use questions only when a choice is actually possible
  – Ex: “Are you ready to start the iv now?”

• Don’t use “we/our/us” when what it really meant is “you/I/me”
Assistance Animal

• “Any animal that works, provides assistance, or performs tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or provides emotional support that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person’s disability,”
Service Animal

- Any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.
- The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability:
  - assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation
  - alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, etc...
Emotional Support Animal

• An emotional support animal (ESA) may be an animal of any species, the use of which is supported by a qualified physician, psychiatrist or other mental health professional based upon a disability-related need.
  – Does not have to be trained to perform any particular task.
  – Do not qualify as service animals under the Americans with Disabilities Act
Therapy Animals

• A healing modality involving a patient, an animal therapist, and handler with a goal of achieving a specified therapeutic outcome.
  – Example: improvement in physical, social, emotional, & cognitive functioning

• Animal-assisted therapy is provided in a variety of settings, and may be group or individual in nature.
  – Hospitals
    • Pediatrics and adults
    • Hospice
    • Long term care
  – Schools and universities
  – Reading programs
Therapy Dog with Pediatric Patients

• Research Support
  – Pet therapy: https://youtu.be/KPknZvrHDK8
    • Promotes social interactions and behaviors
    • Increases emotional comfort and calmness
    • Decreases loneliness, anxiety, agitation, and fear
    • Provides a source of self-esteem and sense of independence
    • Decrease in stress as shown by lower heart rate and blood pressure
    • Decrease in level of pain reported
    • Facilitate a patient’s coping with hospitalization
Dog Bite Stats

National Data

- There was an 86% increase in dog bite-related hospitalization stays between 1993 and 2008 in the United States. (Holmquist et al. 2010)
- Dog bites occur every 75 seconds in the United States. Each day, over 1,000 citizens need emergency medical care to treat these injuries. (CDC, 2001)
- According to the CDC 4.5 million Americans receive dog bites each year. (2018)
  - Young children ages 5 to 9 years old are the most likely to be bitten.
  - Boys more often bitten than girls
- Majority of dog bites take place with a dog the patient knew.

C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital Data (From April 2013-March 2018)

- 383 cases presented to ER
- 65 met trauma inclusion criteria
- Injury:
  - Younger kids: more injuries to face
  - Older kids: more injuries to extremities

Specific Breeds

- American Bulldog
- Boxer
- Chocolate Lab
- Dachshund
- Doberman
- German Shepherd
- Husky Mix
- Labrador
- Pitbull
- Rottweiler
- Sheep Dog
Dog Bite Victims

- Does the patient want to see the dog?
- Do parents want patient to see the dog?
- Slow introductions are extremely important
- A visit from a dog may not be the right decision.
Patient Cues

- Does the patient approach the dog or move away?
- Does the patient smile or have worried expression?
- Does the patient watch the dog or look for their parents?
Dog Cues

- Displacement behaviors - in order to cope with distress, dogs will do something to try to alleviate it
  - Barking
  - Eliminating
  - Pacing
  - Excessive grooming
    - Licking, scratching, chewing on themselves
Working with a Therapy Dog

1. Dogs can do things human’s can not
   – Non judgmental, fully loving, completely understanding

2. Instant rapport

3. Create work into fun

4. Conversation starters

5. Increase staff morale and decrease work stress
Canine Assistants

• What is Canine Assistants?
  – Canine Assistants is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating people and dogs so they may enhance the lives of one another. They specialize in placing service dogs with people who have difficulty with mobility, epilepsy or type 1 diabetes as well as dogs in pediatric hospitals and rehabilitation facilities.

• How many dogs are placed each year?
  – Currently placing between 75 to 100 dogs annually.

• How many dogs are in training at the facility?
  – 120 at any given time.

• How many dogs have been placed since its establishment in 1991?
  – Over 2500
Denver’s Latest Movie

- Holiday Fun
  - [https://youtu.be/8TfZ3gMePlc](https://youtu.be/8TfZ3gMePlc)
References


