



Sibling Support

School Aged (6 - 11 years)

The siblings of children who have frequent or extended medical experiences need support too; they are an important part of the family support system. We believe in supporting the whole family; whether the sibling experiences the medical setting or is cared for at home, ensuring their developmental and psychosocial needs are met, sets them up for mastering their individual experience and can be a positive coping support for the hospitalized child and family.

Developmental Roadblocks for School Aged Siblings

- Fear of pain, bodily injury/mutilation
- Fear of control, loss of love, loss of respect
- Separation issues related to disruption in daily living, school and peers
- Regression in cognitive skills
- Self-esteem and self-identity are a main focus
- Exaggerated fear of death
- Enforce independence

How to Help

- Actively involve child in giving them a job/role
- Encourage socialization
- Discuss changes in physical appearance of sibling and the why
- Identify and correct misconceptions
- Promote family involvement
- Provide opportunities for self expression, validate feelings, and to ask questions
- Provide privacy and encourage a “safe” person other than the caregiver that siblings can go to for questions or to express concerns
- Support siblings language of experience and how to talk to peers
- Discourage sibling taking on “adult roles” and allow for age-appropriate experiences