

## PRESCHOOLER DEVELOPMENT

### Development Goals

Snapshot of developmental goals and preschoolers understand:

- Play:
  - pretend play is a prominent style for learning and practicing skills at this age, which typically involves a plan in mind for what the child wants to act out and uses a higher level of social skills by including peers and each playing specific roles
  
- Learning:
  - think symbolically, learn to use words and pictures to represent objects
  - begins to develop a concept of time
  - tend to be egocentric which means they cannot see from the perspective of others
  - their imagination broadens to include magical thinking and fantasy
  - understanding the body: can identify a broader range of external body parts and can name a couple of internal body parts without the understanding of their function or really conceptualizing their existence
  
- How they relate to themselves:
  - gains control of bodily functions and behaviors
  - increased autonomy (doing tasks on their own)
  - self-concept develops, meaning they begin to be able to identify their own thoughts and feelings

### Stressors

This age group experiences stress

- Fear of bodily injury or pain
- Loss of autonomy
- Negative thinking
- Illness viewed as punishment
- Loss of routine
- Separation from parents or familiar comfort items
- Common reactions: guilt, anger, aggression, regression

### How to Support or Help

Caregivers being involved and in close proximity during something stressful or painful

Provide comfort item during stressful or painful experience

Provide choices when possible

Limit restriction of their body when possible

- For example, if setting up NG tube items takes a while, allow child to play and explore on their own, and only hold in restrictive position when procedure is ready

## COPING PLAN

### Preparation Through Play

Showing your child the sequence of simple steps of what will happen when getting the NG tube placed. Create a pretend play scenario, and rehearse the steps multiple times so they can solidify their understanding.

What to say:

- "An NG tube is a small, bendy tube that goes in your nose. It helps your body to get food and medicine."

You can use a doll or stuffed animal as the "patient", and string for the NG tube.

Walk through the steps of:

- Sitting with caregiver, on their lap getting a big hug
- String goes into the nose
- Tape string onto face
- Turn around to give caregiver a big hug
- Pictures of tummy (X-Ray)
- Showing all done when getting to return to playing with favorite toy/activity

### Give Choices

Your child does not have the choice of the NG tube placement happening, but you can provide feelings of independence and control by giving choices that they actually do have - but be mindful to not give an overwhelming amount of choices

- Which comfort item do they want to hold?
- Do they want to count to 3 or caregiver to count to 3

### Positions for Comfort

Comfort positioning is a way to help the child feel comforted, while still limiting movement, as an alternative to holding them down during the NG placement. When a child is comforted they are more likely to feel safe and more calm.

Sitting on caregiver's lap with the child facing away from caregiver, so child's back is to caregiver's chest.

- Arms: caregiver giving the child a big hug from behind to support in securing the child's arms and hands.
- Legs: child's legs can also be between the caregiver's legs, or the caregiver can fold a leg over the child's leg.

The goal is to provide the child with comfort but also restrict movement without holding the child down.

# Nasogastric "NG" Tube

Preschool (3 - 5 years)

## During the Procedure

Explain what is happening, and use the same language used during the preparation play

- The nurse is measuring the tube
- The nurse is putting a sticker on your face

Remind them of their jobs and point out what they are doing well

- "You are doing such a great job giving your stuffed animal a big hug"
- "I see you using those deep breaths"

Remind of how they will know they are all done

- "Remember, you will know you are all done when you are turned around for a big hug"

## Distraction

- Light Spinner to focus on, and help draw focus up to tilt head back for positioning for NG tube
- Taking small sips of clear liquids using a straw during placement to help NG tube move easier
- Popsicle may help comfort the throat following the NG tube placement

## Remember

Crying or struggling does NOT mean the child is not coping

- This is a natural response to negative stimuli, to all of the people in the room, and to being restricted from movement.

Focus on the recovery, helping your child to calm down, understand they are safe, and provide positive praise

Talk about the experience after it is over in a positive tone

- Allow for medical play after the experience to help the child process the experience