

## TEEN DEVELOPMENT

### Development Goals

Snapshot of developmental goals and what teens understand:

- School:
  - peer contact and acceptance is important
  - beginning to think about their future
- Learning:
  - logical reasoning
  - can understand abstract ideas
  - understanding the body: mature understanding of body parts and organs working together within the body to help the body function
- How they relate to themselves:
  - seek opportunities for independence and privacy, as well as a distancing from caregivers
  - building a "self-identity" - who they are as an individual, what are their own values and beliefs; learning how to outwardly express who they are as a person
  - heightened awareness of body image

### Stressors

- Identity: fear of loss of identity or any hurdles which might keep them from continuing to find their individuality and identity
- Body-image: concerns around how is this going to look or make them different than their peers
- Fear of bodily injury or pain
- Concern about peer group involvement
  - are these medical needs going to keep them from interacting and engaging with peers

### How to Support or Help

- Support by helping teens identify what helps them, help give them a voice in the process
- Be mindful of including teens in medical conversations or decision-making, support them in feeling trusted and avoid treating them like a child.
- Possibly researching other teen's input on the experience
- Being honest about the process and the need for the NG tube
- Support by finding opportunity for independence through choices
- Discuss changes in physical appearance
  - such as the tube being visible on their face
  - how long it may be there
  - explore with them how they feel about having such a visible change to their appearance

## COPING PLAN

### Preparation

#### What to say:

This age understands that our bodies are made up of different parts that all work together. An NG tube can be explained as: A "long, flexible tube that goes in through the nose and down the throat, directly into the stomach." Discuss the "why." Their body might need help getting the extra nutrition or medicine. Emphasize the need, severity, how important this, is to promote buy-in and compliance.

If they have never had an NG tube before, talking about the steps of getting the NG tube helps to mentally prepare a teen for what will be happening:

- Each NG tube is specific to the individual, the team will need to use a measuring tape to measure the length needed for the teen
- Everyone's nose and throat are connected. the NG tube will be dipped in gel and threaded up the nose, down the throat, into the stomach
  - other teens have said it is helpful to use a straw to take small sips of a drink (clear liquid) while this is happening to help the tube glide down
- The tube will be secured with tape to the cheek to help it stay in place
- The tube will be tested that it is in the right place by an X-Ray (picture of the inside of your chest).

### Give Choices

Provide opportunity for control as well as independence

- Preference for a parent/caregiver to be in the room or preference to be alone during NG placement
- Check in about specific coping tools or give relevant, realistic choices
- Check if they would like to know before each step is happening or preference for no information during placement.

### Positions for Comfort

Can choose to have caregiver sitting next to teen, providing side by side support  
Sitting by themselves

- Ensure body is in comfortable position
- Leaning back against a chair or inclined bed, propped up

### Distraction

Practice rhythmic breathing through the nose

Select a focal point across the room (TV, support person)

Hold someones' hand or squeeze a stress ball

Have a towel and a bucket or bowl near by for any fluids

Take small sips of clear liquid through a straw, to help the NG tube move easier

Popsicles may help comfort the throat after the NG tube is placed