

Family Centred Care & Communication

This fact sheet will focus on providing emergency nurses caring for infants, children & their families with some basic information on:

- family centred care
- communication strategies and tips
- paediatric developmental milestones

Family centred care:

Family centred care is an integral part of nursing infants and children. Emergency nurses should always actively encourage and involve the child's family in decision making, procedures and the delivery of basic cares. Where possible the continuation of the child's normal cares and routines should be encouraged as this can help alleviate emotional stress for the child.

Communicating with children:

Communicating appropriately with infants and children is key to building a good rapport, gaining trust and delivering good quality family centred care. As infants and children grow, their ability to communicate and their understanding changes. Remember communication includes both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication.

Tips in children

- Approach in a calm manner and address the child by name.
- Be patient, take your time and never try to rush your nursing care. Building a rapport with infants and children can take time. Allow children the opportunity to express their concerns and fears.
- Remember your body language and where possible assume a position that is at eye level with the child.
- Use age appropriate language and ask age appropriate questions.
- Ask young children about their toys, parents, siblings, kindy or school, instead of the date, time and location.
- Be honest in your explanation of what you are going to do whilst ensuring the use of age appropriate language. Choices should only be offered if they exist.
- Play can be used as a distraction tool or for building rapport.
- Encourage caregiver participation. This can help to put the infant or child at ease whilst placing an emphasis on family centred care.

Want to learn more about how infants and children connect and communicate?

- For information on communication milestones for infants and children: [Raising Children](#)
- Red flags for communication and other developmental milestones in infants and children: [The Red Flags Early Identification Guide \(for children aged birth to five years\)](#)



Communicating with caregivers:

Caregivers can feel a wide range of emotions when presenting to the emergency department. Clear communication and active involvement of caregivers can help to relieve some of the stress, anxiety and vulnerability they may feel. Ensure medical equipment and procedures are explained using simple language and where necessary explain medical terminology. Several communication frameworks have been developed to assist with communicating with patients and families. The AIDET framework is provided below:

AIDET Framework		
A	Acknowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the patient and family. • Smile make eye contact. • Make them feel important.
I	Introduce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce yourself. • Explain processes/procedures and the role you will play.
D	Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimate time to complete procedures. • Give patients/families some idea of what's involved.
E	Explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask patients/families if they have any concerns regarding other commitments they may have during that day (eg. the need to pick up another child from school). • Listen.
T	Thank you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank patients and families for their co-operation and contributions. • Ask if there is any way you can be of assistance.

For further information:

[Effective communication with parents: for professionals](#)

References:

This Queensland Paediatric Emergency Nursing Skill Sheet was developed by the Emergency Care of Children working group (funded by the Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Advisory Panel) with the help of the following resources:

Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service. (2017a). Transition to Paediatric Practice Acute Paediatric Program. In Orientation to Paediatric Practice Module (5th ed., pp. 14–17). Queensland Health.

Studer Group. (n.d.). AIDET Patient Communication. Retrieved July 27, 2021, from <https://www.studergroup.com/aidet>



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- Providing care within the context of locally available resources, expertise, and scope of practice.
- Supporting consumer rights and informed decision making in partnership with healthcare practitioners including the right to decline intervention or ongoing management.
- Advising consumers of their choices in an environment that is culturally appropriate and which enables comfortable and confidential discussion. This includes the use of interpreter services where necessary.
- Ensuring informed consent is obtained prior to delivering care.
- Meeting all legislative requirements and professional standards.
- Applying standard precautions, and additional precautions as necessary, when delivering care.
- Documenting all care in accordance with mandatory and local requirements.

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