



IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE:

How family and caregivers can act during medical procedures

The words and actions of family and caregivers can influence how children experience medical procedures. Some behaviours can promote coping while others can increase distress. Use this fact sheet and the ones on [what you can do](#) and [what you can say](#), to find suggestions on ways to promote coping and a more positive experience.

To learn more about CARD, go to CardSystem.ca.



BE CALM

Foster a calm environment and be positive. If you are calm and use your normal voice, your child will pick up on this and feel that everything is going to be OK.

TRY SAYING THIS

- ✓ “Working with children is what they do here. Let’s think about what we can do while waiting.” (promotes calmness)

INSTEAD OF THIS

- ✗ “Look at this huge line-up. We’ll be here forever and there are no chairs!”(makes others nervous)

BE POSITIVE

Focus your attention on helpful things and on things that are going well. Use praise to encourage and recognize the efforts your child is making as this can help them to remember their experience in a positive way for the next time.

TRY SAYING THIS

- ✓ “You did a great job relaxing your arm, etc.” (positive focus)
- ✓ “Do you want to talk about what went well and what CARDS (coping strategies) you played? Then you can review them and be reminded for next time.” (positive focus)

INSTEAD OF THIS

- ✗ “Finally, it’s over; that was hard!” (negative focus)
- ✗ “I am so glad that’s over. It was awful. I’m not looking forward to the next time.” (negative focus)

