

# Let's talk about...

## Helping Your School-Age Child in the Hospital

**B**e honest with your child about what is happening. Try to keep a normal daily schedule. Bring things from home, like favorite toys or blankets, to help them feel more comfortable and in control.

### How Kids This Age Think:

- They are curious and want to learn.
- They like to do things on their own.

### What Causes Stress:

- Being away from family and friends.
- Feeling like they have no say in what happens.
- Pain, needles, or getting hurt.
- Worrying about being sick for a long time.

### How They Might React:

- Acting like a younger child.
- Not wanting to follow rules.
- Staying quiet or pulling away from others.
- Feeling sad, angry, or frustrated.



### Ways to Provide Support:

- **Be Honest:** Explain medical steps using simple words.
- **Give Choices:** Let them pick between two realistic options so they feel in charge.
- **Use the Five Senses:** Explain what they will see, hear, or smell (etc.) during medical experiences.
- **Clear Up Confusion:** Ask them why they think they are in the hospital. Kids often blame themselves, so remind them it is not their fault.
- **Stay Connected:** Help them stay connected to family and peers. Use video calls so they can talk to their friends.
- **Use Distractions:** Things like music, art, deep breathing, movies (etc.) can help take their mind off the stress.

For more information or to connect with a Child Life Specialist, please visit: <http://ucdavis.health/childlife>