

The module: Consultation Skill Foundation Course (CSFC)

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Week 11: Pediatrics

Lecture 1- pediatric communication skills

Lecture 2- History in pediatrics

Lecture 3- pediatric physical exam.



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Pediatric communication skills



Learning objectives:

LO.1: Difficulties about communicating with a child patient

LO.2: How can we pass these difficulties

LO.3: Requirement for communicating with children





**Treat every child as if he is the most special,
beautiful, smartest child in the world.**



For pediatricians,

Communication skills consist of:

- (i) *The ability to talk with parents*
- (ii) *The ability to communicate sufficiently well with patients and parents so as to understand their concerns, problems, and beliefs, and to elicit relevant information.*
- (iii) *The ability to explain the child's illness and its treatment.*
- (iv) *The ability to convince parents to follow a treatment plan.*
- (v) *The ability to establish a relationship with the parents and child, based on mutual respect and trust.*



HOW IS COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN DIFFERENT FROM COMMUNICATING WITH ADULTS?

Children are not just small adults: they have needs and abilities which are significantly different from those of adults



doctors face unique challenges when they try to make practical improvements in their communication with children and family members. Effective communication is more crucial, and often more complicated, than it is with adult.



LO.1 Difficulties about communicating with a child patient

- 1. The interaction involves the child, parent and physician triad.**
- 2. The different developmental stages of children require variations in approach that are quite different from techniques used in interviews with adults.**
- 3. Child fear from stranger**
- 4. Child's previous experiences**



1.LO.1 Difficulties about communicating with a child patientcont'd

5. Childish behavior or tantrums
6. Extra sympathy from the doctor
7. Some medical procedures special difficulties
8. Parents overwhelmed fears
9. Using children's own language



How can we pass these difficulties

- * Adjust to child cognitive and physical level**
- * Attention to not to talk down to children**
- * Try to get the children's confidence before touch**
- * Don't allow the child to worry**
- * Explain procedures before you do**



- * Check understanding. Repeat and clarify. Regularly check understanding**
- * Be calm even if the child began to cry**
- * Don't leave the child alone**
- * Give realistic hope. Don't lie**
- * Always be flexible to interact with children at their different stages of development**



Communicating with children has some particular requirements which include the following:

Physical environment:

Even the whole place! Child oriented.

Colored walls, Play material. Furniture “Child-oriented”, colored stethoscopes





Building rapport:

Introduce yourself, greet the patient and parents

Learn and use their preferred name.

Keep children as physically and emotionally comfortable as possible, e.g. by sitting on the ground, through play etc.

Get to the child's eye level

Try to relieve fear and anxiety as early and as much as possible

Ask about hobbies and interest before addressing medical problems



Nonverbal communications: What your face and body say are every bit as important as what your mouth says.

*** smile**

(Smiles are powerful communication tools)

If you can make the child smile first, the parents' smiles will follow soon after.



- Identify the child's and parent's main concern **(invite)**
- Use a soft voice and interrupt only when necessary **(Listen)**.
- Use noises like “um-hmm” and “I see” to encourage children to talk.
- Maintain eye contact. Repeat and clarify **summarize:** A summary is an overview of the main points or issues raised, may serve as a guide to the next steps forward.



- **Try to talk in the patient's language (Childish language)**

Don't use complex language.

eg. Instead of Say Shoot an X-ray = Take a picture

. use any tools and tricks you have to enhance communications and build trust.

This can only make your job easier

eg.

(Look in mom's throat)





References:

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**2- Teaching pediatric communication skills to medical
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**3- Communication Skills – Talking to Parents
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**4- Effective Communication in Children's Hospitals, A Handbook of
Resources for Parents, Patients, and Practitioners**

