



# Vaccinator Quick Guide to Comfort Kits and Pain/Anxiety Management Strategies

## Please DO:

Ask when the kids get to you if they filled out a Poke /Game Plan or explored the Comfort Kit, and what strategies they'd like to use. Check out the training videos to be ready to support the strategies.

Emphasize that they have some choice and control as much as is appropriate (which arm for the vaccine, what comfort position do they want to use, what do they want to use for distraction, would they like to use Buzzy Bee, etc). Choice is power, and it reduces anxiety for the child.

Pay attention to how you are feeling: stress is contagious but so is calm! Your positive energy makes a big impact on the experience.

Distract: encourage them to pay attention to other things like toy, game or video. Talking with them about other things like hobbies or interests keeps their mind away from their anxiety. This is a great time to make jokes and use humor!

Give them a choice of looking at the injection or looking away. For some, looking actually lets them feel more in control while for others it works best to have them focus on something else.

Validate any feelings they have, especially if they are upset or nervous, and then redirect to the fact that there are things that help (i.e. "It's totally normal to feel that way...the great news is that we have some great ways to help you feel better while you get your poke!")

Give the parents/caregivers something to do: it helps them stay calm (and calms the child). They can hold a hand, have them sit on the lap, hold up a video, etc.

Redirect language if there they say things like "They always get upset with shots" with something like "It sounds like it has been hard in the past but we have great ways to make it better now."

Offer lots of praise for any good coping: "Great job making a plan that works for you!" "Nice choice on the video to watch!"

Right after the poke, recap for for the child and parent what you noticed was helpful for them. This reinforces good coping, and helps them understand HOW they can create an even better experience next time ("Wow, it seemed like watching that video really helped!"). Have them check off what worked for them on after vaccine card in the Comfort Kits