



Bear Hugs

Giving real bear hugs to your child and his or her teddy bear can help!



Create a photo album.

Put pictures of the child's family and friends in a photo album. This way there is a reminder of your family when you can't be with your child.

Reading can be a time to connect.

Grab a snuggle and a story whenever you get the chance. We know that you have many extra demands on your time. This might not be possible as often as you would like.

Dear Parent or Caregiver,

Please look through these materials and feel free to make changes according to your child's needs. You may wish to be with your child while he or she uses the crayons.

Your presence and loving hugs are important to your child during this time. Inside we have listed some tips and activities to help your young child.

We are here to help you and your family. Please call us if you have any questions.

MGH Clinical Social Workers
(617) 726-2643



Under 3 years



Some things to remember about young children

Children are strong and adjust to change.

They need adults to help them understand what is happening and to make them feel safe. Children at this age will notice a loved one's absence, but will not understand why. Children often will react to the stress of the adults around them.

Keep your explanations simple.

Repeat them often.

You can use words like:

- There was an accident and some one you love got hurt.
- They are very sick.
- They are at the hospital.
- The doctors and nurses are helping your loved one to get better.
- We love you. Someone will always be here to take care of you.

Children do best with a regular routine.

Children this age are very sensitive to changes. They are likely to be upset by the absence of someone they are close to and you as well, if you are spending time at the hospital. Try to keep routines the same, if possible. Predictable schedules help children feel safe.

Provide regular caregivers.

Try to limit the adults taking care of your child to a few people who he or she knows well. This might be a grandparent, a day care provider, a baby-sitter or a family friend. Be sure the caregiver knows your child's routines, favorite foods, books and toys – those things that provide comfort.

Helpful toys to have at home:



- Play Doctor's kit
- Dollhouse with family
- Art supplies: blank paper, crayons, finger-paints
- Anything that talks about feelings