Rights based standards for children undergoing clinical procedures

These statements offer guidance to health professionals on the best way to support me having a procedure. A procedure can be when you need to have a test, investigation or treatment or when you are examined or seen by a health professional.

This is framed by my rights as a child* to make sure my short and long-term physical, emotional and psychological well-being are the most important things that are considered when making choices and decisions for my procedure. This guidance recognises that my rights should be respected regardless of my age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, ability or any other status.

Communicating with me
- You will communicate with me directly in a caring, clear and supportive way.
- You will communicate with me in a way I can understand.
- You will ask me and my parents/carers how I want to share my ideas.
- You will help my parents/carers to let me have time to share my ideas.
- You will help my parents/carers to support my rights.

Making choices and decisions with me
- You will help me be involved in choices about my procedure even when I am not able to make big decisions on my own.
- You will actively support me to share my ideas and choices, before, during and after my procedure.
- You will offer me choices and options to help me manage my procedure. These options might include things to distract me, things to help me relax, sources of comfort, who stays with me, pain medicine and the best position for me to be in for my procedure.
- You will pay attention to my views, choices and expressions of refusal and you will take them seriously.
- You will act on my choices and decisions whenever possible.
Sharing information with me and helping me prepare

+ You will give me easy to understand and honest information to make sure I am prepared for my procedure.
+ You will help me understand what is happening and give me time to ask questions if I want.
+ You will give my parents/carers information to ensure they are aware and prepared for my procedure, understand what is happening, and have the chance to ask questions.

Acting in a way where my well-being comes first

+ You will think about what is best for me in all decisions and actions before, during and after my procedure.
+ You will make sure that what is best for me comes first before what is best for my parents, the health professionals and the hospital or clinic.
+ You will talk with me about what is best for me before my procedure starts.
+ You will consider how it will make me feel if you do not listen when I say or show I mean ‘stop’ or ‘no’.
+ You will help me to feel calm and listened to during my procedure and should stop (if it is safe to do so) if I say or show I mean ‘stop’ or ‘no’.
+ You will support me to take a break if I become upset during a procedure to help everyone rethink how to help me have my procedure.

Holding me

+ If you are holding me, this must be supportive holding. Supportive holding helps me keep still and feel calm, safe and settled during a procedure. If a hold is supportive I will have agreed to being held and to my procedure.
+ You will stop holding me if I ask you to.
+ You will ask me how I would like to be held and who I would like to hold me.
+ If someone (no matter who that is) is holding me against my will then it is a restraining hold.
+ You will not hold me against my will or expect my parent/parents or carer to hold me against my will to get a procedure done unless the person in charge of my care decides it is an emergency.
+ You will support me after my procedure to help me understand my experience. If I have been held against my will you should offer me follow-up support from a health professional.

Documenting my procedure

+ You will record key points about my procedure and any holding used in my health records.
+ You will record what helped me and what did not help me as this will be useful for any future procedures.

*These Rights-based standards for children undergoing clinical procedures are framed by the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child which are a list of rights which apply to every child under the age of 18.