



Children's

Enhancing Pediatric Swallow Assessment

An Embedded Child Life Model

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Challenges

- Anxiety, fear, and unfamiliar environments can hinder cooperation
- Movement or distress can compromise image quality and diagnostic accuracy
- Refusal



Child Life Specialists

- Trained professionals in child development and therapeutic play.
 - Help children cope with medical procedures through preparation and emotional support.
 - Use age-appropriate language, distraction techniques, and comfort strategies.
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Our Model

- Embedded CCLS in radiology.
 - Aid in transition to the room.
 - Present for the study.
 - Aid in transition away from the room.
 - Same model for FEES.
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Benefits

- **Reduced Anxiety:** Children are calmer and more cooperative.
 - **Improved Compliance:** Easier to administer barium-coated foods and liquids.
 - **Better Positioning:** Children are more willing to sit still or follow instructions.
 - **Shorter Exam Time:** Less need for retakes due to movement or distress.
 - **Enhanced Safety:** Minimizes radiation exposure by reducing repeat imaging
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Evidence

The Value of Certified Child Life Specialists: Direct and Downstream Optimization of Pediatric Patient and Family Outcomes. Jessika Boles, PhD, CCLS et al.

- **Published by:** Association of Child Life Professionals (2020)
- **Key Findings:**
 - Child Life Specialists reduce emotional distress and improve procedural cooperation.
 - Their presence leads to better institutional outcomes, including reduced procedure time and improved patient satisfaction.
 - They support coping and developmental needs through play-based and trauma-informed interventions.

Evidence

- **Clinical Outcomes Before and After VFSS in Children ≤ 24 Months**
 - **Published in:** *Jornal Brasileiro de Pneumologia* (2024)
 - **Key Findings:**
 - VFSS combined with therapeutic feeding interventions significantly reduced respiratory morbidity.
 - Although not focused on Child Life directly, it highlights the importance of cooperation and calm behavior during VFSS—areas where Child Life support is crucial.
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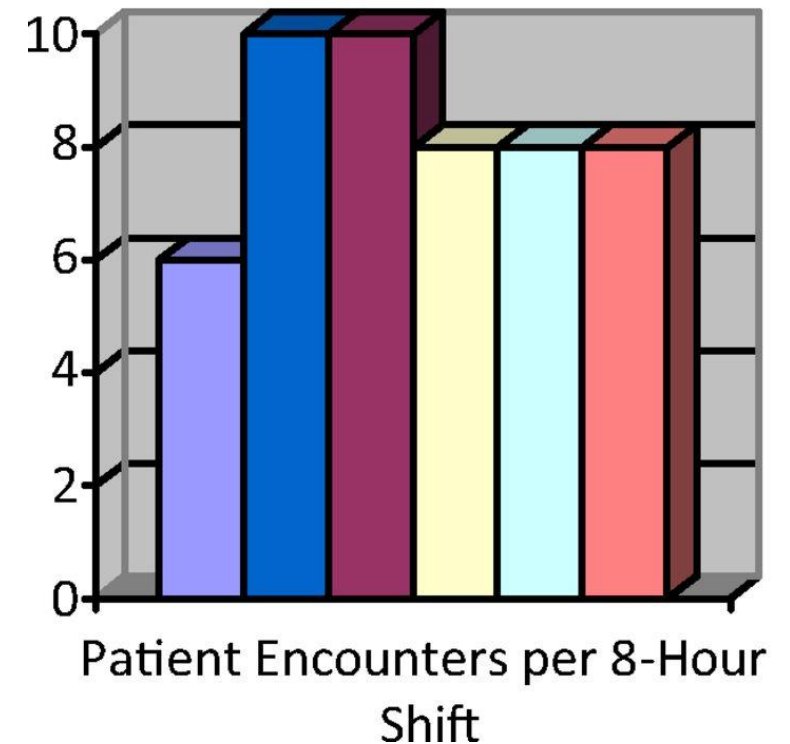
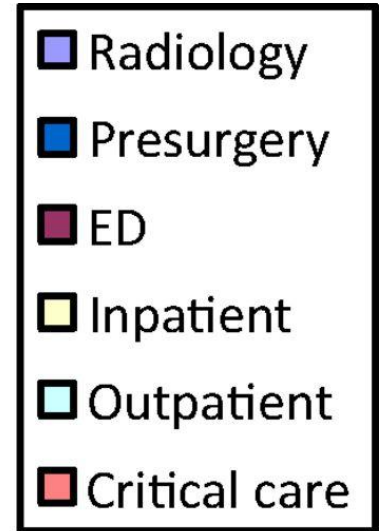
American Academy of Pediatrics



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Key Points:

- Child Life programs are essential for minimizing fear and anxiety in pediatric patients.
- They use therapeutic play and psychological preparation to enhance cooperation during medical procedures.
- Collaboration with healthcare teams improves outcomes and reduces trauma.



Words of Wisdom

- Play is the universal language for kids.
- In healthcare, when professionals engage in play, they're not just entertaining. They're building trust, reducing stress, and making care feel safe.



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