



## How to help...Your Child At Home

When a child is in the hospital, it affects the family as a whole. Parents/caregivers are torn between spending time with their child in the hospital and spending time with their child(ren) at home. The child(ren) at home may need to be cared for by someone other than their parent. There are times when these child(ren), especially younger ones, have a difficult time coping due to the changes in their routines and caregivers. The staff here at UC Davis Children's Hospital recognizes the difficult position parents/caregivers are in and want to provide assistance.

Below are some suggestions to help...

- o Include your child(ren) at home by having them help make pictures, signs, or cards to decorate their sibling's hospital room.
- o If appropriate, have your child(ren) visit the hospital and sibling so the family can be together. Having an activity planned, such as watching a movie together, reading stories, or making hospital room posters is a great way to make the visit less intimidating.
- o While you are away at the hospital, encourage your child(ren) at home to hold onto an item (i.e. T-shirt, Pillow) that belongs to you to provide a sense of closeness.
- o Keep home routines as normal and predictable as possible.
- o Offer your child(ren) at home a family picture to hang on to and keep close by.
- o Tape your voice talking or reading a favorite story to your child(ren) at home.
- o Have a regular time to call home (i.e. bedtime to say good night).
- o Read a story over the phone to your child(ren).
- o Spend some quality time at home alone with your child(ren) doing a special activity.
- o Leave behind or send home little notes to let your child(ren) know you are thinking of them.
- o Acknowledge your child(ren)'s feelings and let them know you understand how difficult this situation is on them.
- o Always remind your child(ren) you love them and miss them too.