

Patient Values at SickKids

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At SickKids, every patient is, first and foremost, a person – an infant, child, or youth, with needs, feelings, and lived experience from inside and outside of the hospital. Recognizing and protecting what matters most to patients ensures that all children, youth, and families receive care that is compassionate, inclusive, and centered around their individual needs and experiences.

These values are not fixed; they evolve with each stage of growth and development. While infants depend entirely on others to meet their physical and emotional needs, children begin to express preferences and engage in their care, and adolescents seek autonomy, understanding, and partnership in decision-making.

Every infant, child, and teen deserves care that sees them as a whole person, not just a patient. These values form the foundation of that care.

SickKids patients value:



Having their basic needs met

This looks like:

- Access to food and hydration
- Proper sleep and rest
- Safe environments, warmth and temperature control
- Comfort, proper pain management, and protection from harm and unnecessary procedures
- Access to outdoor space



Emotional support & support systems

This looks like:

- Caregiver/family presence and support
- Access to social and peer support
- Space to express feelings, choices, and identity
- Respect, trust, privacy, and freedom of expression and individuality



Developmental support & stimulation

This looks like:

- Healthcare that supports growth and development
- Opportunities for play, recreation and digital access
- Access to education
- Alone time and personal space



Active participation in their care

This looks like:

- Involvement in decision-making
- The right to say “no” without fear or pressure
- Clear expectations about care, and complete and clear information about medical status and treatments
- Participation in transition-planning
- Autonomy in decision-making, including informed consent and refusal
- Care that prioritizes collaboration



Opportunities for socialization & connection

This looks like:

- Nurturing interactions
- Opportunities to form friendships and connect with other patients
- Kind and trustworthy providers
- Access to family, friends and social connections

