

Children, particularly adolescents, are sensitive to the presence or absence of hope. Hopefulness is an internal quality that mobilizes humans into goal-directed action that may be satisfying and life sustaining. A sense of hopefulness can produce increased participation in health-seeking behaviors and an improved sense of well-being ([Ritchie, 2001](#)).

## **Health Education and Self-Care**

Health education is an intervention that promotes coping. Children need information about their condition, the therapeutic plan, and how the disease or the therapy might affect their particular situation. Children nearing puberty also need to understand the maturation process and how their chronic illness may alter this event. For example, a youngster with Crohn disease should understand that this disorder is associated with growth failure and delayed puberty, a child with diabetes needs to know that hormonal changes and increased growth needs will alter food and insulin requirements at this time, and a sexually active girl with sickle cell anemia or systemic lupus erythematosus needs to be aware of the risks of pregnancy. The information should not be given all at once but should be timed appropriately to meet their changing needs, and it should be described and repeated as often as the situation demands.

## **Responses to Parental Behavior**

Parental behavior toward the child is one of the most important factors influencing the child's adjustment. Children's perceptions of their mothers' support and maternal perceptions of the psychosocial impact of the child's chronic illness on the family were shown to be two of the greatest predictors of children's psychological adjustment ([Immelt, 2006](#)). In addition, family organization, illness-related support, and involvement of the parents influence children's adjustment to chronic illness ([Schor, 2003](#)). They often display pride and confidence in their ability to cope successfully with the challenges imposed by their disorder. Anticipatory guidance by the nurse and encouragement of normalizing practices may assist parents in facilitating positive adjustment in their children.