



FIG 17-6 For a dying child, there is no greater comfort than the security and closeness of a parent.

When a child is dying in the hospital, the parents should be given full access to the child at all times. If the parents need to leave, they should be provided with a pager or other means of immediate communication and alerted if staff members note any change in the child that may indicate imminent death. Nurses should advocate for parents' presence in intensive care and emergency departments and attend to the parents' needs for food, drinks, comfortable chairs, blankets, and pillows.

Fear of Actual Death

Home Deaths

The majority of children receiving hospice care die at home; they often die in their own room with family, pets, and loved possessions around them. The physical process of dying can be distressing to parents because often the child slowly becomes less alert in the days before the actual death. The nurse can assist the family by providing them with information about what changes will occur as the child progresses through the dying process ([Box 17-9](#)). During this time, nursing visits often become more frequent