

Eric's Daily Schedule	
7:30 AM – Breakfast, morning bath	3:00 PM – Tutor (M, W, F)
9:00 – Medications, dressing change	– Study time (T, Th)
11:00 – Physical therapy	4:00 – Physical therapy
12:00 PM – Lunch	5:30 – Dinner
	9:00 – Medications, dressing change
	9:15 – Bedtime

FIG 19-6 Time structuring is an effective strategy for normalizing the hospital environment and increasing the child's sense of control.

Encouraging Independence

The dependent role of the hospitalized patient imposes tremendous feelings of loss on older children. Principal interventions should focus on respect for individuality and the opportunity for decision making. Although these sound simple, their efficacy lies with nurses who are flexible and tolerant. It is also important for the nurse to empower the patient while not feeling threatened by a sense of lessened control.

Enabling children's control involves helping them maintain independence and promoting the concept of self-care. **Self-care** refers to the practice of activities that individuals personally initiate and perform on their own behalf in maintaining life, health, and well-being (Orem, 2001). Although self-care is limited by the child's age and physical condition, most children beyond infancy can perform some activities with little or no help. Whenever possible, these activities are encouraged in the hospital. Other approaches include jointly planning care, time structuring, wearing street clothes, making choices in food selections and bedtime, continuing school activities, and rooming with an appropriate age mate.

Promoting Understanding

Loss of control can occur from feelings of having too little influence on one's destiny or from sensing overwhelming control or power over fate. Although preschoolers' cognitive abilities predispose them most to magical thinking and delusions of power, all children are vulnerable to misinterpreting causes for stresses, such as illness