

Support child and assist practitioner with physical examination (for purposes of nursing assessment).

Age grouping is especially important for adolescents. Many hospitals make an effort to place teenagers on their own unit or in a separate designated section of the pediatric or general unit whenever possible.

Nursing Interventions

Preventing or Minimizing Separation

A primary nursing goal is to prevent separation, particularly in children younger than 5 years old. Many hospitals have developed a system of **family-centered care**. This philosophy of care recognizes the integral role of the family in a child's life and acknowledges the family as an essential part of the child's care and illness experience. The family is considered to be partners in the care of the child ([Smith and Conant Rees, 2000](#)). Family-centered care also supports the family by establishing priorities based on the needs and values of the family unit ([Lewandowski and Tesler, 2003](#)). Efforts to collaborate with families and encourage their involvement in the patient's care include optimizing family visitation, family-centered rounding, family presence during procedures or interventions, and opportunities for formal and informal family conferences ([Meert, Clark, and Eggly, 2013](#)). Historically hospitals have had restrictive visiting policies. Family-centered care started in pediatrics with the increased recognition of child and family separation trauma in the inpatient setting. Policies were adapted first in pediatrics to allow for rooming-in, longer visiting hours, sibling visits, and systems to allow families to accompany patients off the unit for procedures ([Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care, 2010a, 2010b](#)).

At the very least, most hospitals welcome parents at any time. Many provide facilities such as a chair or bed for at least one person per child, unit kitchen privileges, and other amenities that create a welcoming atmosphere for parents. However, not all hospitals provide such amenities, and parents' own schedules may prevent rooming-in. In such instances, strategies to minimize the effects of separation must be implemented.