

Comforting Children During Vaccination

Comfort measures can help infants and children cope with the discomfort associated with vaccination. Below are some ways to make vaccinations less stressful for parents and children.

Comforting Babies and Toddlers

When vaccinating babies and toddlers, providers can encourage parents to:

- Sing to their child.
- Tell their child a story.
- Give their child a favorite toy.
- Point out interesting objects in the exam room.



Comforting Older Children

When vaccinating older children, providers can encourage parents to:

- Hold their child's hands or give them a hug.
- Encourage their child to read to themselves or aloud.
- Ask their child to look at interactive objects in the exam room.
- Encourage their child to hold a favorite toy or play with a fidget toy.



In addition to comforting measures, comfort hold techniques allow vaccinators to administer vaccine properly and safely. Below are some suggestions on comfort hold techniques.

Comfort Hold Techniques for Infants and Toddlers

When vaccinating infants and toddlers, providers can encourage parents to:

- Hold the child on their lap.
- Place the child's arm under their armpit and apply gentle pressure with their upper arm for a secure, hug-like hold.
- Use their lower arm and hand to hold the child's other arm gently but securely.
- Anchor the child's feet firmly between their thighs or hold securely with their other hand.



Comfort Hold Techniques for Older Children

When vaccinating older children, providers can encourage parents to:

- Hold the child on their lap or have the child stand in front of them as they sit.
- Embrace the child during the process, crossing their arm in front of the child and holding the child's elbow down to prevent sudden movement.
- Anchor both of the child's legs between their thighs and cross their legs over the child's to prevent sudden movement.



Images courtesy of the Minnesota Department of Health.

Find more tips on comforting children during vaccination at <https://www.cdc.gov>