WORDS SHAPE OUR EXPERIENCE

HELPFUL LANGUAGE

The words we use as healthcare providers and parents determine how children experience medical procedures. By changing up our language, we can create more comfort and calm. Start here: instead of "you have to get a shot", try "you get to have magic medicine that helps keep you healthy and strong." Then try these out and see what happens.

Instead of this:	Say this:
Pain	• discomfort • bother • uncomfortable feeling • unpleasant experience
Shot or needle	• Put some medicine in your arm/leg • Poke • Prick • Pinch
There is going to be a shot, and it is probably going to sting.	• Would it be alright if this poke didn't bother you? • I can show you some ways to help yourself feel much more comfortable.
I know this is going to hurt but...	• I wonder if you are going to let it bother you a lot, bother you just a little, or not bother you at all. • There could be a little pinch but you are the boss of your body and your brain, so we can find great ways to help it not bother you.
Get ready for the ouch on the count of three...	• You can notice the poke it you want, or you can just ignore it altogether... either way, it doesn't need to bother you... • I'm really good at this so you don't need to pay attention to me if you don't want to. What would you like to pay attention to? Mum? A video?

Meg Foundation
EMPOWERING FAMILIES TO PREVENT AND RELIEVE PAIN

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