

Age	Stressors and Issues	What Parents Can Do To Support
Infants (0 – 12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separation from parent Sensitivity to parental anxiety Building trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold and comfort your baby – seeing, feeling and smelling you is just what your baby needs. Use calm, soothing voices. Pay attention to cues. Bring familiar objects (toys, pacifier, blanket). Swaddle your baby.
Toddler (12 months – 2 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separation anxiety Stranger anxiety Inability to verbalize fears Loss of control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide comfort positioning. Offer choices where available. Maintain as much routine as possible. Reward positive behaviors. Allow for lots of play, independence and exploration. Bring comfort items to appointments. Tell them what to expect in simple, concrete terms.
Preschool (3 – 5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Magical thoughts/ misconceptions Thinking of the experience as punishment Establishing sense of self Attachment to safety items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide comfort positioning. Give honest preparation using hands-on tools. Speak in concrete and simple terms. Offer choices where possible and opportunities for success (no matter how small). Give them choices for coping (blowing bubbles, counting, squeezing hands). Use age-appropriate distraction/alternative focus techniques.
School Age (6 – 12 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of bodily harm Ability to verbalize fears Forced dependence Threatened sense of competence Self-consciousness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide comfort positioning. Provide detailed preparation. Validate their feelings. Give opportunities for them to make choices. Teach/coach through coping techniques (deep breathing/guided imagery). Provide consistent praise and reinforcement. Be aware of possible feelings of self-consciousness and offer privacy where possible.
Adolescents (12+ years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body image issues Self-concept issues Fear of pain Loss of independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide honest preparation. Involve them in decision-making. Maximize their privacy. Offer choice of parent involvement. Validate their feelings. Teach and coach through coping techniques. Encourage sharing of emotions (journaling, art, music).

