

Behaviors that help increase patient satisfaction in the emergency department

- Make eye contact and introduce yourself (and level of training: Hi, I am Dr. Smith, a senior resident) to the parent/patient and everyone in the room. Know who everyone in the room is – parents, grandparents, soccer coach.
- Address the patient by name
- Apologize for the wait
- Order treatment to relieve patient discomfort as soon as possible
- Sit down during the patient interview (they will not feel like you are rushing). There is a stool under every sink in the PED for you to sit on.
- During your physical exam, it can be helpful to point out normal findings to reassure the patient/family
- Explain what you are thinking, what tests/x-rays/consultants you are ordering and why, and estimate how long it will take to reach a diagnosis (we can't always control how long it takes to get results back from the lab or how long it takes to get radiologic studies)
- Find out what the parent/patient/other relative is most concerned about and make sure to address it. They may be worried about something that is not immediately obvious by the stated chief complaint. This includes concerns raised by the PCP who may have referred the patient.
- Keep families informed when there are delays
- Explain why you arrived at the diagnosis (if you don't have a definite diagnosis, let them know what problems you have ruled out)
- Explain the recovery course and warning signs to watch for
- Ask if they have any questions or if they need clarification – it is especially important for the family to have a chance to ask questions of their doctor at discharge time.
- Ask if there is anything else you can do. Pay attention to the needs of families to eat, drink, rest during long PED stays.