



## Preparing Your Child for a Visit to NSMC North Shore Children's Hospital

### What to bring:

- Personal hygiene supplies
- A comfort item from home (stuffed animal, blanket, etc.)
- Your own blankets, pillows, and clothing if you prefer (don't forget pajamas!)
- Any medications your child is presently taking
- School assignments and other activities your child may feel up to
- Glasses, contacts, hearing aids, etc.
- Money \$ (parents will need to purchase meals)

### How to support your child through a hospitalization:

- Be HONEST when explaining to your child what is going to happen.
- Answer only the questions your child is asking, simply and directly (too much information can be overwhelming.)
  - Encourage your child to ask questions and participate in his/her treatment.
  - Provide your child with simple and realistic choices to give your child a sense of control.
  - Reassure and praise your child frequently.
  - Share information with treatment staff about your child's interests, previous medical experiences and coping behaviors.
    - Room in with your child, if at all possible. This can help reduce stress from separation.
    - Know that pain is different for each child. Do not tell your child, "It won't hurt." Your child may feel some pain. Phrases such as "this may sting or pinch" are more honest and will not minimize pain. (Your child is entitled to adequate pain management. Be sure to communicate with your medical staff about the needs of your child.)
  - Finally, although it is difficult, try to relax. Your children take their cues from you and will pick up on your anxiety.