

Parental Presence at Induction of Anesthesia

At The Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center, WE SUPPORT Parental Presence during Induction of Anesthesia (PPIA). The beneficial effects of PPIA on decreasing preoperative anxiety among parents and children is well established. However, there are certain circumstances when PPIA is not particularly helpful and can be an impediment to providing safe care to pediatric patients. The final decision on whether a parent may accompany a child into the operating room shall be made by the Attending Pediatric Anesthesiologist in consultation with the rest of the care team. Only one parent or guardian may accompany the child into the operating room.

Exceptions which must be observed come under the following broad categories:

- Infants < 9 months of age
- Children > 12 years of age
- A child who has been adequately premedicated
- A child who is extremely ill and is to undergo emergency surgery
- A child with suspected difficult airway
- Inappropriate dynamics observed between the parent and the child
- Language barrier and/or parent reluctance

THESE EXCEPTIONS ARE RELATIVE and the final decision must rest with the assigned attending anesthesiologist.

If the child's condition changes or the parent's presence is in any way distracting or disruptive to the induction of anesthesia, the anesthesia care team has the right to ask the parent to leave the operating room. In any case, the parent will be directed to leave the operating room immediately after induction of anesthesia. Insisting on staying longer is neither allowed nor advisable, and can potentially distract the anesthesia team from concentrating and caring for the child.

It is advisable that surgeons and child life specialists oblige parents and guardians within these parameters, so as to avoid any sort of conflict and apprehension among parents and caregivers prior to surgery.