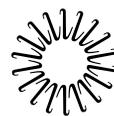


# Children's Handbook



**Bradley Hospital**  
*A Lifespan Partner*

Welcome to Bradley Hospital's Children's Inpatient Unit. We realize that admitting your child to the hospital is a difficult and stressful time for you and your family. It is our earnest wish that despite the current difficulty your child might be facing, we can help you and your family to get things back on track and to feel a renewed sense of hope for your child's future.

We have prepared this handbook to help you become better acquainted with the program, the staff, and the services we provide. We want you to better understand what you can expect from your child's treatment here. We also want to invite you, as the person who knows your child best, to actively work with our team in helping your child.

You are our partner in your child's treatment and we look to you for suggestions and feedback on how we can do better. We want your help in improving the experience that you and your child have with us. Please do not hesitate to call us with your questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Costea', is positioned above the printed name.

G. Oana Costea, MD  
Unit Chief  
Children's Program

## Philosophy of Care

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**Teamwork:** We work as a team with you and your child. We understand that parents and caregivers know their children best.

**Understanding the whole child:** We look at all areas of your child's development (physical, emotional and social). We work together as a team of professionals from many disciplines.

**Least restrictive care:** We actively work to help children be successful in less restrictive environments.

**Problem-solving and collaboration:** We teach children tools to help them resolve conflict in healthier ways and to help them make safer choices.

**Support of diversity:** We understand that families come in many forms and from diverse backgrounds. We respect differences in childrearing beliefs and view diversity as an important part of treatment.

## Our Patients

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Children from across the region are admitted to Bradley Hospital. Family backgrounds and experiences are diverse and we work to respect and honor the unique aspects of every child. Children may struggle with sadness, anxiety, troubled thinking and limited coping skills that leave them easily frustrated. Many of our children have experienced stressful or traumatic events in their lives.

## Our Program

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We see hospitalization as a stepping-stone that helps children remain safe while learning the skills that will help them move on. Since children coming to our program are experiencing significant stressors or are having difficulty with unsafe behaviors and impulsivity, we closely monitor all children and put individualized safeguards in place when needed. The length of your child's stay will depend upon the circumstances of the admission and response to treatment.

The environment that the children live in is called a "milieu." Our milieu is designed to be therapeutic 24 hours per day. Registered nurses and milieu therapists staff the unit, usually one staff member for every three patients. We have daily group therapies as well as therapeutic activities for all patients on the unit. They are geared to encourage emotional growth. Please do not hesitate to call or ask questions about our program. If questions arise during your visit, please let a staff member know. We are here to help you and your family.

In milieu therapy, our team works to change behaviors. We work on the child's level and we allow children to be children. They play games, explore and learn, just as they would outside the hospital. At the same time, our milieu staff oversees each activity with an eye toward helping children cope with their own emotions using problem-solving strategies and tools. Often, children involved in milieu therapy are able to make much more rapid progress in the intensive treatment environment.

Milieu therapists encourage and reinforce the use of more effective strategies for managing conflict and emotions. They also use a simple behavior management system to provide incentives for learning. Children earn stars or points based on their progress toward individualized daily goals and for making choices and using skills that allow them to remain safe. They earn these rewards when they demonstrate kindness and show respect for others or practice a skill. Milieu therapists do not take away privileges for poor choices, although they may temporarily restrict a child's participation in group activities due to safety concerns. At these times, they will work more closely with your child to help them develop a personal problem-solving plan. The added therapeutic attention helps them participate more successfully in the program.

## **The Treatment Team**

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Your child will be treated by a team of professionals, including a child and adolescent psychiatrist, a clinical social worker, psychologists, nursing staff, and milieu therapists. We also have a pediatrician and a pediatric nurse practitioner who may be consulted for medical issues during the hospitalization. It is important to know that because Bradley Hospital is a teaching hospital affiliated with the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University, your child will have a team of psychiatrists. The team includes a supervising psychiatrist, who is fully trained and experienced, and a training psychiatrist, who is a licensed medical doctor with at least one year of post-medical school clinical experience.

## **The Assessment**

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Your child will undergo a comprehensive psychiatric, psychosocial, and psychological assessment that includes a diagnostic evaluation. Included in this assessment are the comprehensive psychiatric evaluation, the social worker family assessment, a nursing assessment, psychological screening questionnaires, and observations and behavior ratings from the milieu and from group therapies. It is important to remember that all members of the team are observing your child's current functioning and documenting progress. Team members routinely share information with one another. All of these observations are taken into account when determining the treatment plan. The team assessment is then summarized in a written document called the discharge summary.

## **The Treatment Plan**

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The treatment team integrates the diagnostic information we obtain into a proposed individualized treatment plan. The plan will be discussed with you and your child. Your child will be provided with intensive inpatient treatment, including possible medication treatment, family therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, social skills therapy and milieu therapy. Individual therapy (supportive and/or cognitive-behavioral) is also provided. We never start any medications without parental consent. In an emergency, medication may be used to ensure safety, and parents/guardians are informed as soon as possible. Our philosophy is to be conservative about the use of medications. Medications are only recommended when appropriate and every effort is made to have children on the fewest number of medications. Before discharge, you and your child's treatment team will work to develop an after-care plan for ongoing treatment outside the hospital.

## **Research**

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Bradley Hospital is committed to improving the treatment for children and adolescents through research, teaching and training. You and your child may be asked to participate in specific clinical research studies. The studies have been fully reviewed by hospital research committees for appropriateness and safety. They are conducted through our affiliation with the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. Your decision regarding participation in a study will not affect your child's care. You always have the right to refuse participation without question.

## **The Admission Process**

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All patients undergo a routine physical examination as part of the medical and developmental assessment. Your child will undergo routine laboratory tests that may require blood and urine samples. The physical exam is also an opportunity to observe your child for any bruises or scarring that may have occurred as result of self-injury or harm by others.

## **The Diversity of Families**

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Not everyone is familiar with the idea of seeking professional help for a child's behavior problem. If our questions do not make sense to you, let us know and ask us to explain why this information is helpful. We understand the importance of honoring the family's belief system about how children are expected to grow up. It is important for you to let us know about how parenting is done in your family and to share your views of child development, so our team can better understand your family. In many families, extended family members are very strong influences in children's lives. Please let us know all of the people in your family who are helping with decision-making about the children.

## **Items Your Child Needs During Hospitalization**

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We invite you to bring in favorite personal items such as blankets and stuffed animals to increase your child's comfort level. We discourage children from bringing valuable items to the hospital such as jewelry, watches and electronics.

- Casual clothes: jeans, shorts, shirts (no short shirts or short shorts)
- Underwear
- Sleepwear – sweats and T-shirts
- Sneakers
- Socks
- Jacket/sweatshirt
- Swimwear (in season)

We can launder dirty clothes. If you choose, you may take your child's laundry home. We encourage the labeling of all belongings and will be happy to assist with this. Using a permanent marker, we will write your child's initials on the tags of his/her clothing.

## **Educational Support**

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Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact their child's school and to bring assignments from school, especially if there is any concern that the child may fall behind during this hospitalization. For children who are hospitalized for more than three weeks, a tutor may be available to assist them in completing work or identifying supplemental instruction. Please speak with your social worker to discuss how we can help to support your child's learning while they are hospitalized at Bradley.

## **Safety**

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Our staff has been trained to assist children in coping with emotional crises and social conflicts without the use of physical restraint, mechanical restraint or locked seclusion. For example, children develop a personal safety plan while on the unit that provides strategies and tools for resolving conflict or controlling anger. However, there may be times when staff must use more restrictive techniques to prevent harm to the child or to others. When this happens, we follow training protocols and hospital policies that are consistent with national guidelines regarding seclusion and restraint with children. A nurse will assess the health and emotional well-being of children during restraint or seclusion. We document, monitor and review the use of these techniques and actively work with children to develop alternatives to seclusion

and restraint. Please let us know how you would like to be informed, should your child's behavior require the use of restraint or seclusion.

We want your child to feel comfortable on the unit. In general, most items that might make your children feel more comfortable here are permitted. However, to ensure the safety of all children on the unit, we have established some expectations regarding potential safety issues. We do not allow children to have physical contact with each other. Clothing with drug or alcohol content, violent themes, hats, and revealing clothing are restricted to ensure a therapeutic environment for everyone. Items with potential for danger such as lighters, razors, nail clippers, nail files, cigarettes, curling irons, glass objects, mirrors, balloons, spiral notebooks, plastic bags and electronic devices with cords are also not permitted. We suggest that children on the unit refrain from borrowing or lending personal items. Most other items are permitted (i.e. pictures, comforters, books). We suggest that parents take home any items of value as they may break or get lost or stolen.

## Visiting Your Child

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We strive to provide suitable times and places for your child to visit with you. Visiting hours are between 9 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. daily. Parents are encouraged to visit; you are an important part of your child's treatment. Please call in advance to schedule your visit so that we can identify a comfortable visiting space. To ensure a safe environment for your child and others, it is necessary that all items you bring in be checked on arrival to the program. For the safety and confidentiality of our patients we request that all your personal belongings (including cell phones) be placed in a locker in our parent room. A key will be provided.

During the week, recommended visit times are: 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m., 2:30 – 4:30 p.m., and 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. So that all children may benefit fully from the therapeutic environment, visits are generally no more than one hour. If you need to come at times other than those recommended, you will always be welcome. Visits can be scheduled with your social worker or directly with staff.

**For safety, we ask that you please do not bring the following items to the unit:**

- Cigarettes, lighters, and matches: Although you may have these for your personal use, some children have been known to remove these items from parents' bags without anyone noticing.
- Glass bottles, soda cans, metal utensils and plastic bags: Although these are everyday items, children who misuse these can cause significant harm to self or others.

Feel free to bring in food for your child. Please make sure these items do not contain any peanuts or tree nuts as some children suffer from serious nut allergies. Also, we ask that you

take home any food not finished on your visit. The Rhode Island Department of Health does not allow us to store food. We thank you for your cooperation in maintaining a safe environment. Please enjoy your visits. If we can do anything to make your experience on our unit better, please let us know.

## Telephone Calls

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Upon admission to the Children's Program, an initial phone/visit list will be determined. In some cases your child may be restricted from contact with particular individuals or may have supervised contact depending on what is most helpful to his or her well-being. All patients have the right to call their social workers, caseworkers, lawyers, clergy, child advocate or mental health advocate at any time.

## Mail

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Staff will open all packages in front of the patient who receives them. Patients have the right to send and receive mail. Postage for outgoing mail is paid for by the hospital.

## Children's Unit Weekday Daily Schedule "At a Glance"

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7:25 a.m. Wake Up

8 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 – 10:15 a.m. Daily Morning Rounds and Group Check-in

The attending psychiatrist and social worker will speak directly with your child on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. On Wednesday, the check-in meeting will occur later in the day. During this block of time, there is a brief check-in with staff and the group to review the schedule for the day.

10:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Social Skills Group and Therapeutic Recreational Activities

Social Skills Group is a 45-minute group led by milieu staff. The group provides instruction in empathy skills, impulse control, anger management and problem solving. Recreational activities are an opportunity to practice social skills with staff supervision and guidance. During this time there can also be gym and playground time, creative expressions (art), cash-ins for incentives from the star or point programs, and other therapeutic recreational activities.

1:30 – 4 p.m. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Groups and Therapeutic Recreational Activities

CBT groups are led by a psychologist, psychology trainee or social worker. CBT is based on the idea that how we feel and what we do are affected by what we think. In groups, children will explore ways to think more positively about challenges and frustrations, and to find new ways to cope with unpleasant feelings. During this time there can also be gym and playground time, creative expressions (art), cash-ins for incentives from the star or point programs, and other therapeutic recreational activities. Once a week we also provide a medication and health education group designed specifically for children.

On weekends an attending psychiatrist rounds in the hospital during the day, and is always on-call for urgent concerns at night.

## Contacting Us

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Our mailing address is:

Children's Program  
Bradley Hospital  
1011 Veterans Memorial Parkway  
East Providence, RI 02915

Phone: 401-432-1171 or 401-432-1372

## Children's Program Phone Directory

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Steven Barreto, PhD <i>Psychology Coordinator</i>	401-432-1512
G. Oana Costea, MD <i>Unit Chief</i>	401-432-1000
Michele Gessman, LICSW <i>Social Work Program Manager</i>	401-432-1389
Lisa Goyette, RN, MSN <i>Assistant Nurse Manager</i>	401-432-1315
Julie Klang, LICSW <i>Clinical Social Worker</i>	401-432-1352

Lisa Mollo, RN, MA <i>Nurse Manager</i>	401-432-1212
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Jessica Staren, LICSW <i>Clinical Social Worker</i>	401-432-1040
Mandy Witkin, LICSW <i>Clinical Social Worker</i>	401-432-1074