



SPN Position Statement

Child Welfare

Original Author: Ann Spence, DNP, RN, NEA-BC

Approved by SPN Board of Directors, September 2021

All SPN Position statements are valid for two years after approval date.

Child Welfare is the promotion of child well-being and the protection from harm. The issue of child welfare is important to pediatric nurses and to the health care of children. The efforts of the Society of Pediatric Nurses with regard to child welfare are rooted in the need to make children, and children's health, a national priority. Children may be vulnerable for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, human trafficking, social determinants of health, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (one's sexual or gender identity), intersex, and asexual/aromantic/agender(LGBTQA) concerns, and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES). The assessment of a family's resources to ensure adequate support is essential. The pediatric nurse is in the key position to identify the needs of children, assess children's vulnerabilities, provide trauma informed care, advocate for rights, and ensure protection.

Position

1. Assess each pediatric client for threats to welfare to ensure needs for health are being met to promote optimum growth and development.
2. Advocate for all children to ensure appropriate resources are provided.
3. Know local laws, regulations, and policies/procedures for reporting of suspected child abuse/neglect, and report suspected abuse/neglect in accordance with these statutes.
4. Encourage educational offerings for parents and children.
5. Work closely with social services and other social workers to ensure seamless care, appropriate counseling, and connection to key community resources.
6. Encourage agencies to have the resources available to meet the social, financial, and emotional needs of vulnerable children.
7. Support legislation to enhance services which emphasize child health and welfare.
8. Develop partnerships between healthcare agencies (e.g., children's hospitals, community hospitals), community and social service agencies, advocates, and children and their families to ensure communication of needs, the provision of resources, and service delivery to vulnerable populations of children.

RESOURCES

American Academy of Pediatrics

www.aap.org/

Child Trends

www.childtrends.org

Child Welfare Information Gateway

www.childwelfare.gov

Child Welfare League of America

<http://www.cwla.org/>

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

www.napnap.org

National Association of School Nurses

www.nasn.org

The National Campaign to Prevent Teenage and Unplanned Pregnancy

<http://thenationalcampaign.org/>

US Department of Health and Human Services

- Administration for Children and Families

www.acf.hhs.gov/

- Children's Bureau

www.acf.hhs.gov/cb

REFERENCES

Cannon, A. C., Arcara, J., Graham, L. M., & Macy, R. J. (2018). Trafficking and Health: A Systematic Review of Research

Methods. *Trauma, violence & abuse, 19*(2), 159–175. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838016650187>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: About Social Determinants of Health. Retrieved June 2021

<https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/about.html>

Hughes, K., Bellis, M. A., Hardcastle, K. A., Sethi, D., Butchart, A., Mikton, C., Jones, L., & Dunne, M. P. (2017). The effect

of multiple adverse childhood experiences on health: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet. Public*

health, 2(8), e356–e366. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(17\)30118-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(17)30118-4)

Rafferty, J., COMMITTEE ON PSYCHOSOCIAL ASPECTS OF CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH, COMMITTEE ON ADOLESCENCE, & SECTION ON LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER HEALTH AND WELLNESS (2018). Ensuring Comprehensive Care and Support for Transgender and Gender-Diverse Children and Adolescents. *Pediatrics*, 142(4), e20182162. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2018-2162>

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2020). Child Maltreatment 2018. Available from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology> <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/data-research/child-maltreatment>