

Hospice and Hospital Care for Children at Bedside with Their Families.

What Is Pediatric Hospice Care?

Pediatric hospice care provides specialized support for children with serious illnesses when curative treatments are no longer pursued. It emphasizes comfort, quality of life, and family togetherness rather than just medical care.



What Is Perinatal Hospice Care?

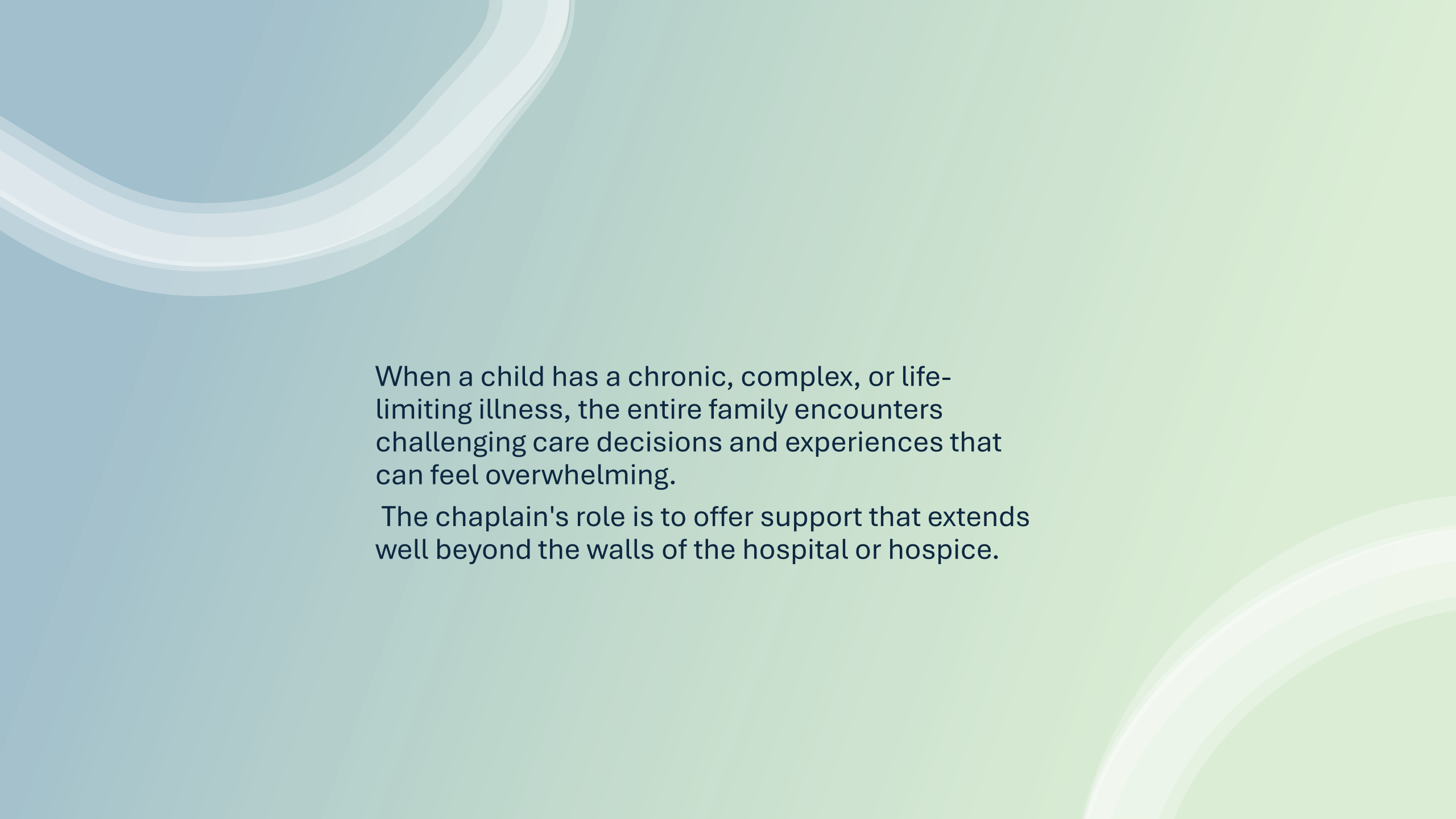
Explain Prenatal



Perinatal hospice care is a unique form of support for families who have discovered during pregnancy that their baby has a life-limiting condition, meaning the baby may not live long after birth.

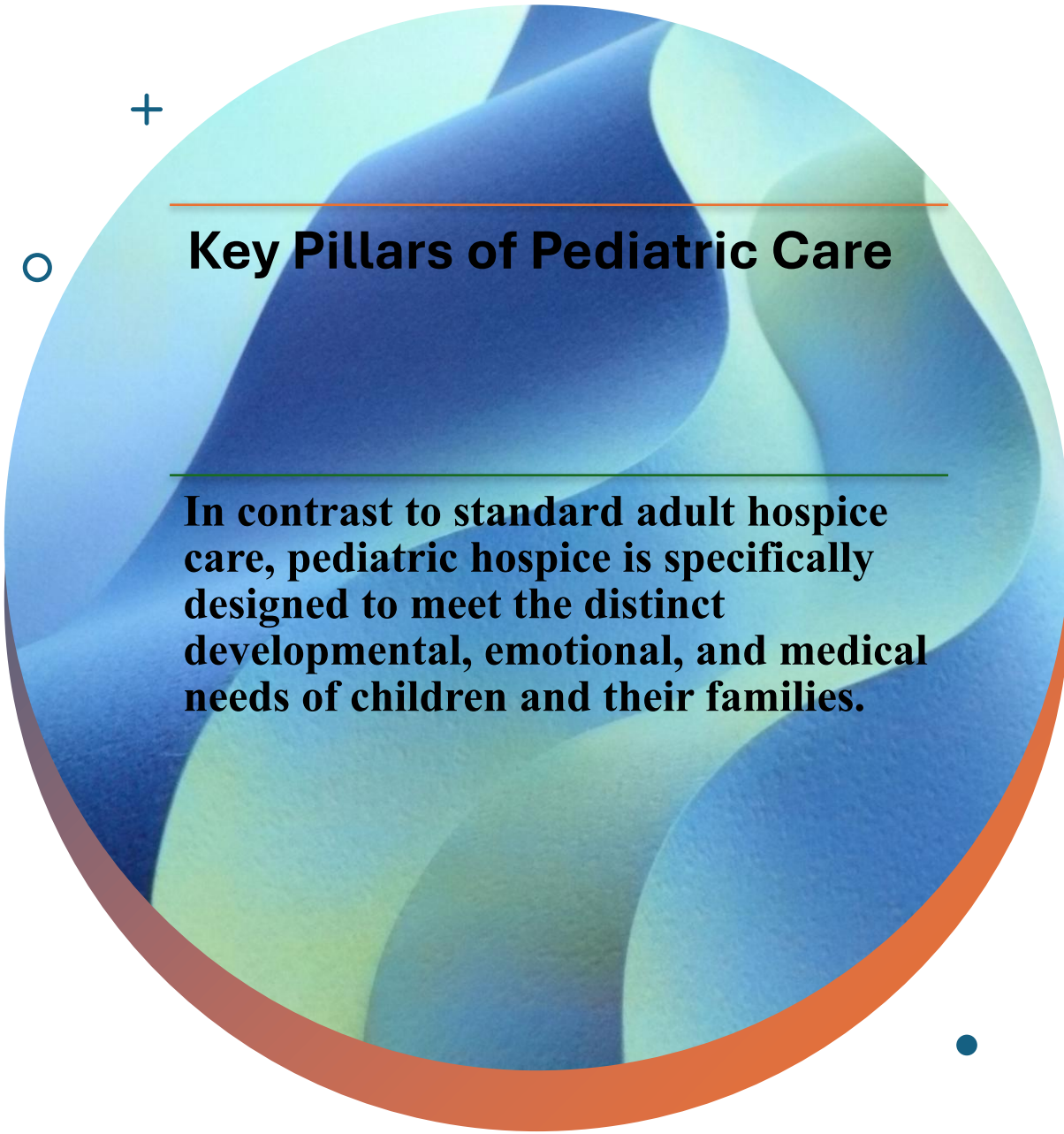


This approach allows the chaplain to accompany the family on this journey with love, dignity, and support, from diagnosis through birth and beyond.



When a child has a chronic, complex, or life-limiting illness, the entire family encounters challenging care decisions and experiences that can feel overwhelming.

The chaplain's role is to offer support that extends well beyond the walls of the hospital or hospice.



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Key Pillars of Pediatric Care

In contrast to standard adult hospice care, pediatric hospice is specifically designed to meet the distinct developmental, emotional, and medical needs of children and their families.

Concurrent Care: Children are usually allowed to receive both life-prolonging or curative therapies (like chemotherapy) and comfort-focused hospice care at the same time.

Age-Appropriate Pain Management: Expert control of complex symptoms, pain, and respiratory distress.

Holistic Support: Includes child-life specialists for play therapy, music and expressive therapies, and social workers and grief counselors for the whole family.

Location Flexibility: Care is frequently provided directly at the family's home, reducing hospital stays and maintaining a normal, comfortable environment.



A holistic approach allows the chaplain to understand the vital role that additional support plays in improving the quality of life for both the child and their loved ones.



The chaplain's mission extends beyond merely providing care; they strive to be a partner in the journey, assisting the family in navigating challenges with compassion, expertise, and hope in Bedside Conversations.



From an early age through age 21, a skilled chaplain should provide compassionate, family-centered care that addresses the unique spiritual care needs of children.

The chaplain's role includes helping children who are in pain or experiencing distressing symptoms find comfort and relief. Additionally, the chaplain offers essential emotional and practical support to families dealing with the stress and uncertainty of their child's illness.

How Hospice Helps a Child:

Comfort care is
provided at home
or in a serene
environment.

Relief from pain,
breathing issues,
and other
symptoms.

Engagement in
play, music, and
memory-making
activities.

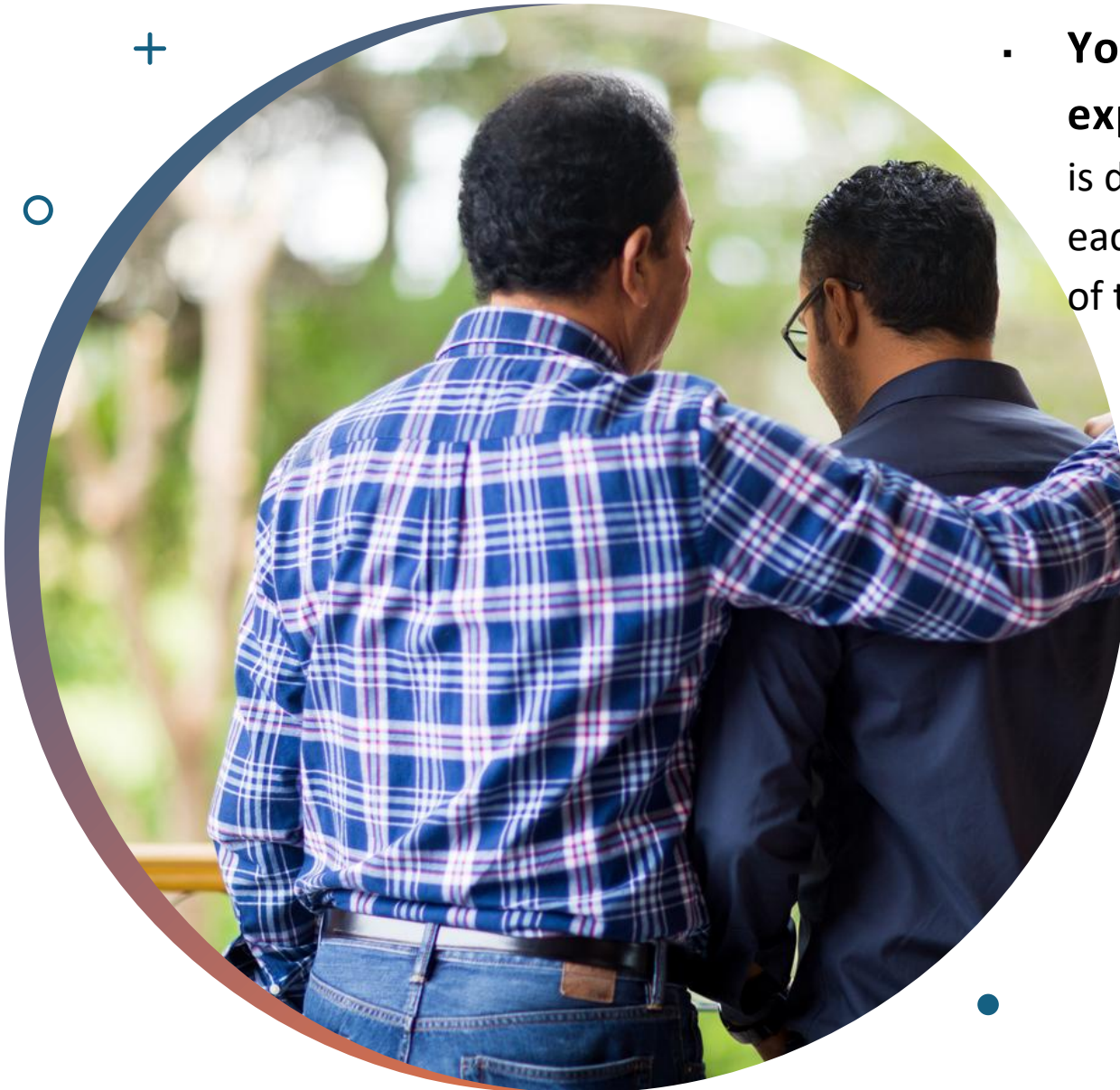
A gentle, loving
presence at every
stage of care.



What is Pediatric Palliative Care?



Pediatric palliative care is specialized support aimed at helping children with serious illnesses feel better physically, mentally, and emotionally. It goes beyond simply treating the illness; the main focus is on ensuring that the child is as comfortable and supported as possible, whether they are at home, in the hospital, or in another setting. The chaplain's role is to provide follow-up and assistance with any spiritual care matters that arise within the family.



- **Young adults receive support from chaplain experts who understand them.** Pediatric hospice care is delivered by trained CPE clinicians who tailor services to each child's age and developmental level, and to the needs of their family.

What is Support and Enhancement Care?

Support and Enhancement Care are specialized layers of pediatric support designed to enrich the quality of life for children and their families.

Chaplains can assist in these services that are developmentally appropriate and relationship-centered, including options like child life services, music therapy, and therapeutic family activities.

They honor the unique needs of each family while promoting comfort, meaning, and togetherness throughout a challenging journey.

A chaplain and their team can create a peaceful, loving space for a seriously ill child.

When a child is approaching the end of life, every moment is a chance to make their space feel gentle, safe, and filled with love. While families often intuitively know how to do this, it can also help to lean on [hospice](#) teams, who are trained in [caring for kids](#) in the final stage of illness.

“There are always ways to make a child feel more at ease, physically and emotionally.

But there’s no single right way,” says Maureen Booth, a pediatric hospice nurse and RN case manager with HopeHealth. “It’s different for everyone.”





• Chaplains can ensure that children are surrounded by items that evoke the feeling of home. Whether a child is at home, in a hospital, or in an inpatient hospice unit, familiar sensory comforts can have a significant impact.

• “Soft blankets, their favorite stuffed animal, and clothes that smell like home — those things matter,” says Maureen. “It’s about touch, scent, and the sense of safety they provide.” Let the child guide what brings them comfort.

