



Online Ethics Center
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

A Child's Question

Author(s)

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Year

2000

Description

A scenario about a child who is enrolled in a non-therapeutic study asks whether the IV he is about to receive is necessary to make him better. Scenario is meant to stimulate discussion about some ethical issues that may arise in pediatric research.

Body

A boy of about eight with cellulitis is enrolled in a study of antibiotics to determine steady-state levels in children. The study has no clear therapeutic benefit for patients, but presents only minimal risk. The parents have given consent. When you go to put in the required IV, the child objects to the needle and then asks "Do I really need this to make me better?"

Discussion Questions

- What do you say?
- What, if anything, do you say if you find that the parents have led the child to believe that this test is part of his treatment?

Notes

Caroline Whitbeck introduced methods and modules for discussing numerous issues in responsible conduct of research at a Sigma Xi Forum in 2000. Partial funding for the development of this material came from an NIH grant.

You can find the entire sequence on the OEC at [Scenarios for Ethics Modules in the Responsible Conduct of Research](#). Some information in these historical modules may be out-of-date; for instance, there may be a new edition of the professional society's code that is referred to in an item. If you have suggestions for updates, please contact the OEC.

Contributor(s)

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