

## **Unlocking Success: An Escape Room Approach for Perioperative Pediatric Resuscitation Training**

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**Abstract Background Information:** Simulation-based education is a cornerstone of perioperative nursing practice, yet traditional resuscitation training often lacks the engagement and teamwork focus needed to translate skills into real-time readiness. An escape room was developed and designed to strengthen team-centered pediatric resuscitation response for our Same Day Surgery and Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) teams.

**Objectives of Project:** The goal of this simulation was to engage staff to enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and reinforce critical thinking in a high-stakes simulation.

**Process of Implementation:** The escape room structure transformed mandatory training into an interactive challenge. Staff were divided into small groups and tasked with solving realistic pediatric resuscitation scenarios, each unlocking the next “level” of the escape room. Clues were embedded in patient case scenarios, medications, and equipment. Teams had to apply knowledge of airway management, medication dosing, resuscitation algorithms, and use of equipment to advance to the next clue. Success depended not only on individual clinical skills but also on communication, delegation, and collaboration, mirroring the dynamics of an actual resuscitation event.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** Staff feedback highlighted the value of experiential learning over passive review. Participants consistently described the activity as “engaging” and “memorable.” Post-training follow up demonstrated increased confidence in managing pediatric resuscitations, improved accuracy in medication preparation, and stronger role clarity during simulated emergencies. Observers noted heightened enthusiasm and camaraderie among PACU and Same Day Surgery nurses, creating ripple effects in morale and unit culture.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** The success of the escape room approach demonstrates that gamification of high-stakes scenarios can significantly enhance nurse engagement, knowledge retention, and teamwork in perioperative environments. By transforming pediatric resuscitation training into a collaborative escape room challenge, staff not only mastered clinical skills but also built stronger connections with one another, ultimately strengthening their capacity to deliver safe, timely, and effective care.

The escape room model is easily adaptable across settings and other specialties. This experience affirms that when learning is interactive, fun, and team-centered, outcomes extend well beyond competency—cultivating resilience, confidence, collaboration and a culture of excellence across the interprofessional team.