



Meet Blip

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

Hard days do not change who you are.

Hi! I'm Blip. When your brain and body feel different, it can be hard to explain. You deserve help, even when the words won't come.

1 What is PANDAS?

PANDAS is a health condition linked to strep infections. Some kids suddenly get stuck thoughts, feel they must repeat things, or make movements and sounds they can't control. Doctors are still learning why it happens.

2 It can feel bigger on the inside.

A worry may follow you even when you want it to go away. Food, bedtime, leaving your grown-up, or joining a game may feel hard. You might think, 'Why can't I just do it?' That feeling deserves kindness.

3 You can tell someone.

Try: 'My worry feels too big.' 'I need help getting started.' Or: 'Can you stay with me?' You can point, draw, or use a signal. A grown-up can help you take the next small step.

4 You are more than a hard day.

You still have your favorite things, your ideas, and your place in the world. You don't have to be cheerful to deserve care. Your grown-ups and healthcare team can help. Tell them if something feels new or worse.

You are still you. You do not have to do this alone.



Meet Blip

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

Keep a place for me, even on my hard days.

Hi! I'm Blip. Imagine wanting to join your friends while a big worry keeps pulling you back. Sometimes friendship means helping someone feel welcome before they can join in.

1 What you see may be only part of the story.

A friend with PANDAS may laugh with you and still be having a hard day. They may miss school, need a grown-up nearby, or stop playing sooner than you expect. You do not have to decide whether they look sick enough.

2 Needing space is not the same as rejecting you.

Your friend may want to play but feel overwhelmed. Ask, 'Would you like company or a little space?' Accept their answer. Keep inviting them another day. A missed playdate does not have to end a friendship.

3 Small invitations can change a day.

Say, 'There's a seat here.' Offer a quieter game or help them join a group. Don't make them earn a place by doing something that feels scary. If someone says others can't play with them, tell a trusted grown-up.

4 Be a friend, and let adults handle care.

Don't copy tics, tease, or share private health information. Ask, 'Do you want me to get a grown-up?' You are allowed to have your own feelings and boundaries, too. Being kind does not mean solving everything.

I may need something different today. I still need a friend.



Meet Blip

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

Look beyond the moment. Listen to the whole day.

Hi! I'm Blip. A child can want to participate and still struggle to do it. Please make room for what the child and family tell you, as well as what you observe.

1 Begin with a fuller picture.

PANDAS involves abrupt childhood-onset OCD and/or tics associated with strep. Other difficulties may occur. A pleasant conversation, successful outing, or smile is one observation; it does not describe the child's whole experience.

2 Hold two things together.

A child may be genuinely happy and working very hard to stay engaged. Some families describe children holding distress in until they reach a familiar place. Listen without assuming that every behavior has one cause or that support is unnecessary.

3 Respond to the need in front of you.

Ask, 'What feels hard right now?' Offer a calm voice, a predictable next step, and choices you can actually honor. Keep limits clear and compassionate. Avoid comparisons with yesterday, another child, or what you think they should manage.

4 Partner with the family and care team.

Ask which supports help, what signals mean 'I need a break,' and whom to contact. Notice changes without diagnosing them. Sudden or severe changes need healthcare evaluation. Support can begin while the clinical questions are being explored.

Understanding starts when we stop asking a child to prove the struggle.



I have PANDAS.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

I want to learn. Help me find a way in.

Hi! I'm Blip, speaking for a child with PANDAS. School can ask me to manage learning, noise, transitions, separation, and friendship all at once. Here is what I wish you understood.

1 A happy face does not tell the whole story.

I may smile because I love seeing you. I may also be trying hard to manage worry. 'They seemed happy here' can be a welcome observation; please leave room for what my family sees later. Both experiences matter.

2 Access may change from day to day.

Remembering directions, writing, starting work, eating, or separating from my grown-up may be harder at some times. Ask what changed before deciding I chose not to try. Support my return after an absence without shame or a public explanation.

3 Make the next step predictable.

Use short directions, private check-ins, a break signal, and a known place to regroup. Tell my family about concerning changes. Follow my existing IEP or 504 supports, when I have one, and coordinate proposed changes through the appropriate school process.

4 Belonging is part of being at school.

Notice lunch and recess, not just lessons. Help me enter a group, find a kind peer, or choose a quieter activity. Respond to exclusion. Ask, 'What would make tomorrow easier?' rather than making attendance a test of courage.

Please see the effort behind the school day, not only the work I finish.



I have PANDAS.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

I want to be part of the team.

Hi! I'm Blip, speaking for a child starting a sport or activity with PANDAS. I may be excited and nervous at the same time. Please help my family make a simple participation plan.

1 My needs may not be obvious.

Noise, a new instructor, unfamiliar equipment, or a fast change in plans may feel overwhelming. I may freeze, cry, repeat a question, or need extra time to begin. Please check in before calling it attitude or lack of interest.

2 Help me get started without a spotlight.

Show me the routine. Give one direction at a time and demonstrate the move. Agree on a quiet signal and a place for a brief break. Offer a gradual way to join when practical, without announcing my diagnosis to teammates.

3 Keep encouragement kind and specific.

Say, 'Let's try the first step together.' Avoid teasing, public comparisons, or making me prove I am trying. A break is a chance to regroup. Keep safety rules clear; my family can help explain what support works for me.

4 Agree on the plan before practice.

Ask my caregiver about changes to watch for, safe participation, breaks, and when to call them. Follow any clinician-provided activity limits. Keep me included when I need to pause. I want to be known for more than a diagnosis.

I can belong to the team while learning at my own pace.



I have PANDAS.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

Please make room for the child behind the diagnosis.

Hi! I'm Blip, speaking for a child with PANDAS. Coming to your home may mean a lot to me. It can also take more effort than anyone sees. A little preparation can help me feel welcome.

1 A changed plan is not a changed friendship.

I may look forward to a visit and then struggle to come, stay, or separate from my caregiver. Please don't assume a cancellation means I dislike your child. Keep the invitation open, and let our families find a manageable next step.

2 Ask before the visit.

Check with my caregiver about food, routines, the length of the visit, pickup, and a quiet place. Don't pressure me to eat or surprise me with a sleepover. Please do not give medicine or supplements without the caregiver's explicit instructions.

3 Help without making me the topic.

You can say, 'You can take a break here.' If I become upset, stay calm and contact my caregiver. Avoid debating fears in front of other children. Respect my privacy; share only what the family and child agree is helpful.

4 Your example shapes the friendship.

Encourage your child to invite, include, and speak up kindly when someone is excluded. If a group has become unwelcoming, help change it. Ordinary things, like saving a seat or planning a short visit, can make belonging possible.

Please keep inviting me. Sometimes we just need a gentler plan.



Understand PANDAS.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

Take the change seriously. Evaluate the whole child.

Blip introduces a family's concerns about PANDAS. This page supports a clinical conversation; it is not a diagnostic checklist or a substitute for assessment.

1 Understand the terms and onset.

PANDAS stands for Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections. Its described pattern includes childhood onset, abrupt onset or exacerbation of OCD and/or tics, an episodic course, and an association with group A strep. PANS is broader and includes abrupt OCD or severely restricted eating with additional acute neuropsychiatric symptoms.

2 Hear the before-and-after story.

Ask about timing, baseline functioning, infections, eating and hydration, sleep, movements, school participation, and safety. Invite the caregiver's timeline and the child's description. Functioning during a short encounter may not represent functioning at home or across the day.

3 Keep the differential open.

No single laboratory test confirms PANDAS. Strep exposure plus common childhood OCD or tics is not enough to establish it. Assess alternative explanations and coexisting conditions. Proposed immune mechanisms and treatment evidence remain under study; clinical recommendations differ in some areas.

4 Make a practical follow-up plan.

Address urgent medical and psychiatric needs, including dehydration or risk of harm. Explain the assessment, what changes require urgent help, and follow-up or referral. Coordinate symptom support and indicated infection care. Avoid inferring a specific medication or immune treatment from this handout.

A family needs both a careful evaluation and a clear next step.



I have PANDAS.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

A calm start can make a difficult journey manageable.

Hi! I'm Blip, speaking for a child traveling with PANDAS. An airport can be exciting and overwhelming. My caregiver can tell you which disability-related assistance I need today.

1 Please do not judge by appearances.

I may walk, talk, and smile while struggling with crowds, noise, separation, or transitions. Please speak respectfully and directly with my caregiver. Keep health information private rather than asking for an explanation in front of a line of passengers.

2 Extra boarding time can serve a real need.

For flights covered by U.S. disability rules, a passenger with a disability who identifies at the gate as needing extra time or assistance to board, stow accessibility equipment, or be seated must be offered preboarding. Eligibility is based on the disability-related need, not a diagnosis name alone.

3 Explain what happens next.

Use simple directions and let my caregiver help me process them. When possible, give a little warning before a change. Discuss seating needs through the airline's accommodation process. Clear communication can help us prepare rather than scramble.

4 Use a calm route to assistance.

If I become distressed, involve my caregiver and keep requests simple while maintaining safety requirements. If a disability accommodation concern cannot be resolved, ask for the airline's Complaints Resolution Official (CRO). We are asking for practical assistance and dignity.

We want to travel safely. A little understanding helps us get there.



I have PANDAS.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

Build trust before asking for the next step.

Hi! I'm Blip, speaking for a child with PANDAS. Dental care can bring unfamiliar sounds, tastes, touch, and a feeling of losing control. Please plan with my caregiver before we begin.

1 Start with a conversation.

Ask about previous visits, current symptoms, sensory needs, medicines, and the child's care team. A child who managed a visit before may need a different approach today. Describe the plan without assuming all children with PANDAS need the same care.

2 Make the experience predictable.

When clinically appropriate, offer a short introduction visit, explain equipment, and show each step before doing it. Discuss a stop signal and breaks. Avoid surprises and shaming language. Tell the child what a pause means and what you can safely honor.

3 Discuss options through informed consent.

Talk with the caregiver about the benefits, risks, and alternatives of the proposed dental plan, including any sedation or behavior-management approach. PANDAS does not automatically establish that a particular anesthetic is unsafe or that sedation is necessary. Clinical decisions belong to the treating team.

4 Protect a relationship that will last.

If the child cannot continue, reassess with the caregiver and agree on the next step. Use the least distressing clinically appropriate approach. Document helpful supports. Progress may start with entering the room, meeting the team, or tolerating an examination.

Helping me feel safe today can help me return tomorrow.



Meet Blip

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

Your feelings and your needs matter, too.

Hi! I'm Blip. When someone in your family has hard days, your day can change, too. You can love your sibling and still feel sad, frustrated, confused, or left out.

1 Different help does not mean different love.

One child may stay home or need a grown-up nearby while another has a different plan. That can feel unfair. You deserve an explanation you can understand. Ask, 'Can you tell me why our plans are different today?'

2 You can have mixed feelings.

You can enjoy time with your sibling and also need quiet or attention of your own. You don't have to hide your feelings to protect everyone else. Tell a trusted grown-up what you miss or what feels hard.

3 You do not have to become the caregiver.

You can be kind, play together, and ask for help. Adults are responsible for medical care and keeping everyone safe. You can say, 'I need a break, too.' If something frightens you, tell a grown-up.

4 There should be room for your day.

Ask for a small time that belongs to you: a walk, a story, a game, or a check-in. Family plans may need to change, but your interests, celebrations, and friendships still deserve attention. Your needs are worth saying out loud.

There is room in this family for your feelings, too.



Meet Blip

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

Support the family without asking for a performance.

Hi! I'm Blip. Grandparents, babysitters, relatives, and family friends can make hard days less lonely. Start by asking what helps this child and family.

1 Believe a fuller picture.

A child may enjoy your visit while the family is managing difficulties you don't see. Please avoid saying, 'They were fine with me,' as proof that help isn't needed. Share useful observations with curiosity, not as a verdict.

2 Respect the plan already in place.

Ask about routines, food, calming supports, and who to contact. Don't test a fear, force a separation, or change medicine on your own. Let the family explain the child's care plan, and follow the instructions you agree to take responsibility for.

3 Offer help someone can actually use.

Try, 'I can bring dinner Tuesday,' or 'I can spend time with the sibling while you go to the appointment.' Offer choices without creating another task. A canceled visit can be met with, 'We can try again another day.'

4 Keep the child and family connected.

Talk about ordinary interests as well as health. Respect privacy and avoid discussing the child as though they aren't present. Recognize a parent's effort without expecting gratitude in a hard moment. Consistent, small acts of help can matter.

You do not have to understand everything to show up with kindness.



Understand PANDAS.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

A calm approach can support a safer assessment.

Blip speaks for a child whose family reports PANDAS. This information can guide communication while you assess the situation and follow your professional protocols.

1 Assess the current situation first.

A known or reported diagnosis does not explain every new symptom. Evaluate urgent concerns according to your training. Ask the caregiver about baseline functioning, recent changes, medications, medical history, and immediate safety risks.

2 Reduce avoidable confusion.

When safe, use one calm speaker, short instructions, and time to respond. Explain before approaching or touching. Avoid crowding and unnecessary noise when the situation permits. A familiar caregiver may help interpret the child's communication.

3 Listen to both child and caregiver.

A child may have trouble describing distress or following a long question. Offer a simple choice or a yes-or-no question when useful. Ask which approach helps and what makes things harder. Preserve dignity while keeping everyone safe.

4 Carry useful information forward.

Share the observed symptoms, family-reported history, communication supports, and changes from baseline with the receiving team. Follow clinical and safety protocols. This handout does not direct emergency treatment, restraint, or transport decisions.

Start with safety. Communicate with dignity. Keep the assessment open.



See the parent, too.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

What looks like one hard day can be an ongoing load.

Hi! I'm Blip. You may see a parent cancel plans, send another school message, or seem distracted. What you may not see is everything they are carrying around that moment.

1 There is a day behind the day you see.

Some parents are helping a child through interrupted nights, preparing for school, tracking changes, arranging appointments, and adapting food or family routines. Before their own day begins, they may already have spent hours caregiving. The work can continue long after everyone else goes home.

2 The pressure is emotional as well as practical.

They may be worried about their child's distress, school access, friendships, and whether others will understand. Explaining the same needs repeatedly takes energy. A parent can be relieved by a good day and still feel worn down by uncertainty. One calmer moment does not erase that load.

3 An imperfect day is not a measure of love.

A slow reply, a messy house, a changed plan, or tears may tell you a person has limited capacity today. Families may be balancing siblings, work, money, appointments, and their own health. Please ask what is happening before deciding the parent is overreacting or not trying.

4 Make help specific and dependable.

Offer a meal, an errand, company at an appointment, or time with a sibling. Ask what works rather than giving unrequested treatment advice. Say, 'You don't need to make this sound easier for me.' Keep inviting them without guilt. Follow through on the help you offer.

Please see the effort, not only the things left undone.



For the parent.

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

You can love your child and wish today were easier.

Hi! I'm Blip. This page is for the grown-up carrying appointments, school messages, interrupted sleep, and feelings that do not always fit into a quick answer to 'How are you?'

1 The unseen work is still work.

You may be watching for changes, helping a child settle, adjusting plans, and explaining the same needs again. A day without a finished to-do list can still hold hours of care. You deserve support before you reach the end of your energy.

2 Mixed feelings do not cancel your love.

You can feel grateful for a good moment and grieve how hard things have become. You can feel tired of explaining and still want people to understand. Wanting rest or missing your old routines does not mean you love your child less.

3 Different needs can pull you in different directions.

One child may need more help while another needs reassurance, attention, or a chance to be heard. You cannot split yourself perfectly. Small check-ins and honest, age-appropriate explanations can help. Siblings' needs matter alongside the child having the hardest day.

4 You are allowed to receive help.

Ask for something concrete: a meal, help with a school message, time with a sibling, or someone to sit beside you. Work with your child's care team, and seek support for your own health, too. You do not have to become endlessly available to be a caring parent.

You are a person who needs care, too.



Why Blip?

BLIP EXPLAINS PANDAS

A hard moment does not change who you are.

Hi! I'm Blip. My name grew from an ordinary conversation about a child's changing symptoms. A little word, 'blip,' became a way to talk about a hard moment while still seeing the whole child.

1 The word came before the panda.

The name was not chosen because children are broken. It grew from the way a PANDAS parent described a change or setback. Later, the word became the name of a little panda who could help families explain things that are difficult to put into words.

2 I am more than the hard moment.

Blip is a character with a personality, interests, friends, and feelings. He is not a picture of a diagnosis. His stories make room for symptoms without allowing them to become the whole story of who a child is.

3 A small name can hold a big experience.

Calling him Blip does not mean a child's distress is small, easy, or guaranteed to end quickly. Some experiences are long and need significant care. The name carries hope and connection; it is not a promise about recovery.

4 My green hearts make room.

The hearts on my chest, ears, paws, and backpack are reminders to lead with kindness. When words are hard, I can help begin a conversation. When someone feels left out, I can remind us to keep a place for them.

A blip is part of a story. It is not the whole child.

Sources and scope

These draft handouts pair medical definitions with practical support suggestions and possible family experiences. Support suggestions are not diagnostic criteria. No independent clinical review has yet been completed. A first-person page should be personalized rather than assumed to describe every child.

NIMH: PANS and PANDAS: Questions and Answers (2025). Medical definitions, symptom patterns, evaluation, and diagnostic limitations. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/pandas>

American Academy of Pediatrics: PANS (2024). Clinical uncertainty, differential assessment, and the need for an evidence-based approach. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/emotional-problems/Pages/pans-pediatric-acute-onset-neuropsychiatric-syndrome.aspx>

PANDAS Physicians Network: What is PANS/PANDAS? Definitions and clinical context. This specialist network and the AAP differ in some recommendations; no treatment regimen is prescribed by the flyers. <https://www.pandasppn.org/what-are-pans-pandas/>

U.S. Department of Transportation: Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights. The preboarding paragraph applies to covered flights and an identified disability-related need for additional time or assistance; a diagnosis alone is not the criterion. <https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/disabilitybillofrights>

Communication, inclusion, breaks, and advance planning are suggested approaches to discuss with the child, caregiver, and responsible professional. Follow individualized plans and relevant clinical or safety protocols. The kit does not replace assessment, authorize medication, certify a disability, or guarantee a particular accommodation.

Before wider distribution: review medical wording with a qualified clinician; review school and travel statements for the intended setting; confirm the child's privacy preferences; add a stable public destination and tested QR code; finalize the artwork and ownership record.