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Multidisciplinary approach to successful emergency pediatric airway management

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Each year several pediatric patients are brought to the operating room emergently for management of a difficult airway. No systematic reviews of the etiologies, management and/or outcomes of intraoperative management of pediatric patients experiencing critical airway compromise are present in the past 5 years on PubMed. Our objective is to review outcomes of pediatric patients that underwent procedures deemed emergency airways in the operating room in a 10-year period at a free-standing tertiary care pediatric hospital. The study reviews the underlying etiologies of the airway emergencies, the different specialties involved in the emergency management, the pre-surgical and intraoperative management options employed, and the outcomes of the patients. By better understanding the etiologies, steps may be taken to improve the preoperative conditions of the patients. Review of anesthetic and surgical management techniques allows discernment between suboptimal and optimal management options. The assessment of outcomes also provides valuable insight for further patients experiencing critical airway compromise. The overall objective is to facilitate development of multidisciplinary emergency airway teams and improve pediatric patient outcomes.

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