

## **INTERACTING with KIDS/FAMILIES**

### **DO:**

- Assist visiting children and families by greeting them, and helping them to feel comfortable at the Center
- Introduce yourself to children/families and tell them your first name, and tell them you are a volunteer
- Help keep the office clean and welcoming for children and families
- Encourage the children to go into the play area and explain that this is a room for kids to play or just relax – it may help to have the caregiver give the child permission to play there
- Join the child in the play area and follow their lead regarding play activity
- Approach all children and families with respect
- Make sure that another volunteer or CAC staff member can see you with the child at ALL times, including when taking the children to the toy closet, helping with handprints, etc.
- Offer to put in a movie for the kids, especially if the kids (or you!) are restless and need something to focus on
- Help kids make transitions to services – sometimes they are having so much fun with you they may need a little encouragement to go into counseling or to go with the interviewer
- Talk with CAC staff about any concerns, questions or suggestions you may have

---

Signature

---

Date

## INTERACTION WITH KIDS/FAMILIES

### DON'T:

- Don't make promises – sometimes we are tempted to make unrealistic promises when we see a child in crisis, but promises we can't keep may further damage the child's ability to trust
- Don't ask what happened or talk about any allegation of abuse
- Don't approach children abruptly or attempt to hug or touch them – it is okay to hug a child if *they* initiate it, but be mindful of the fact that the child may have recently been hurt by touch
- Don't *force* a child to separate from their parent if they are not ready – it may take several attempts before the child is engaged in the playroom; try engaging the parent in conversation if they are able as this can sometimes provide a helpful distraction allowing the child to “find” the playroom
- Don't try to influence the child's play – children, especially abused children, come in many different developmental stages, and should not be made to do “something their age”, etc., especially at this time
- Don't take children to the bathroom – their parent/guardian needs to do this
- Don't get in the position of “Disciplinarian”; if the child is not responding to basic redirection, remove yourself from the playroom and tell staff
- Don't engage with the parent in talk about the abuse; redirect the conversation; if you aren't able to redirect, remind the parent that you are a volunteer and it would be best for them to talk with staff about those kinds of concerns

---

Signature

---

Date