

Tips for Family Visits

Planning:

- Complete a briefing session prior to and/or during first few minutes of the family visit

Getting Started:

- Meet the provider outside and enter together
- Allow the provider to take the lead on introductions prior to your brief introduction

Positioning: (see *positioning tips* handout for more specifics)

- Assume the positions you agreed on in the briefing session
- Be flexible. Positions may vary depending on the activity
 - Ideally the interpreter should be next to and slightly behind the parent/caregiver
 - Interpreter may position themselves behind the provider when interpreting for the child so not to confuse the child

Ground Rules for Communication:

- Everything that is said will be interpreted
- Request the provider/family to speak in short phrases
- Everything is confidential
- Check for understanding

Body Language:

- Be aware of body language and nonverbal cues

Communicating:

- Interpret for the family/child and provider speaking in first person (don't talk "about" them)
- Prior to the session request provider to
 - avoid jargon & technical terms
 - Speak slower, not louder
- If the family asks you a question that is intended for you then direct the question to the provider (i.e.
 - What do you think I should do?)
- Remind the family/provider of your role if/when necessary

Written Information:

- Advanced planning is necessary to have reports translated prior to the meeting (when applicable)
- If you identify a resource that would be helpful for the family give it to the provider to share with the family so it isn't coming from you

Cautions:

- Interpreters shouldn't participate in any activity beyond what their role is as a conduit, clarifier, or cultural broker
- Do not handle or hold the child or aid providers in activities
- Do not offer your opinion
- Remind the provider not to make comments that they don't intend to be interpreted (briefing session)
- Do not be left alone with the family/child. If the provider steps outside you step outside.
- Do not transport the child/family to any EI or non EI services
- Do not sight translate non EI records (i.e. mail the family has received)
- Do not make phone calls for the family beyond your role to facilitate communication for EI services

Adjourning:

- Always leave with the provider when the family visit adjourns

Debrief:

- Review/Discuss roles, boundaries, and strategies in a debriefing session when necessary
- When applicable, discuss any problems that surfaced
- Identify/Discuss any learning opportunities about cultural differences/similarities