

Responding to the child in concerns of abuse and neglect

DO:

- ☐ Remain calm. A child may retract information or stop talking if he/she senses a strong reaction.
- ☐ Find a private place to talk without interruptions.
- ☐ Put the child at ease by sitting near him/her.
- ☐ Ask permission before touching the child. Touch may be associated with physical or emotional pain in children who have been physically or sexually abused.
- ☐ Reassure the child that he/she is not in trouble.
- ☐ Use the child's vocabulary.
- ☐ Support the child: "I am sorry that happened to you."
- ☐ Do what you can to make certain that the child is safe from further abuse.

DO NOT:

- ☐ Press for details. You do not need to prove abuse or neglect.
- ☐ Ask "why" questions. These questions require children to explain actions that they may not understand.
- ☐ Promise that you will not tell anyone about the child's disclosure.
- ☐ Ask leading or suggestive questions.
- ☐ Make angry or critical comments about the alleged perpetrator. The child often knows, loves, or likes this person.
- ☐ Disclose information indiscriminately, keeping in mind the child's right to privacy.
- ☐ Make the child feel different or singled out.
- ☐ Investigate a case yourself. Call the police or CPS.

