

Do's and Don'ts Transcript

Hello. Welcome to the Friends of Tennessee's Babies with Special Needs website. We are delighted that you have joined us. My name is Robin. Today's training video is directed to Early Intervention Service Providers. We will discuss the "Do's and Don'ts" of home visits. If you need a printed copy of the "Do's and Don'ts" we will be discussing today, you can download them from this website. Let's get started.

Do take a few minutes to think and relax prior to each visit to get yourself prepared and ready.

Go into each home visit as if it is the only thing you have to do all day and that there is no place that you would rather be.

Respect the culture, the values, and the language of the child's home.

For example, if it is the family's custom to take their shoes off in their home, do likewise, when you enter their home take your shoes off. If they don't celebrate Christmas or holidays, respect that. If they speak a different language, it's always nice to learn a couple of words in their language. Don't impose your own values. We've all gone into homes where we see things that we think we would do differently. If they leave the TV on all day or there is a sibling who is four years old and still on a pacifier. Don't say things to them, those are their values.

Do focus on the family.

If the grandfather has been ill or a family member has been ill, ask about them. If a sibling is involved with sports, ask about a recent game. It establishes a rapport with the family.

Don't exclude other members of the family from your visit.

It's real important that you present activities that will include the siblings or that you share information with grandparents if they're a vital part of the caregiving for that child.

Do present yourself as a professional with confidence.

We've all gone into families where the families are very highly educated and it makes us feel inferior. Just remember that you are the expert with Early Childhood Development. If a family asks you a question that you don't know how to answer, be honest with them and tell them you don't know. "That's a really good question. I've never been asked that question before, but I'll research it and I'll get back with you next week."

Be yourself.

Be genuine in all you say and do. Families' value sincerity and sincerity builds trust.

Develop a good reputation in your community.

And you will be able to build relationships with families that promote success. For example, learn about the resources in your community. If there are food pantries, support groups, parent groups, play groups let your families know that so that they can become involved.

Don't remain in an uncomfortable or unsafe situation.

Taking care of the home visitor is very important. Talk to your supervisor if you are placed in an unsafe environment. If you don't feel comfortable that day being there, just tell the family, "Today doesn't really seem like a good day for me to be here. Why don't I come back at a different time this week?"

Do be prompt.

It's very important to be on time and to show the family that their visit is important to you. If you're going to arrive early or a little bit late, call to prepare the family and to get their permission for the change.

Dress appropriately and in a manner that will make the families feel comfortable.

It's very important to dress modestly. Remember that you are going to be on the floor a lot playing with the children, keep that in mind.

Don't expect perfection from the family.

If you've given them an activity to follow through with during the week, and their week was very hectic and they didn't get to do it, reassure them. "It's okay we can do it this week instead."

Do be flexible.

If a family is outside when you arrive, change your activity to outside. If a family needs to change their appointment time, do everything possible that you can to work it out for them.

Don't be the center of attention.

I know it's very easy to get caught up in an activity that you are doing with the child, but remember you're role as the Early Intervention Service Provider is to allow the parent to take control of that activity. Teach them how to teach their child.

Do find and build on the positive aspects of the family and be a good listener.

Begin each home visit with a positive statement about the family or the child to let the family know that you're paying attention to their efforts and to build rapport.

Don't discuss other families in your program.

Don't give specific names or contact information.

I hope that you find these tips helpful in conducting your home visits. Thank you for joining us and for being such an important part of early intervention. Thank you for playing such an important role in the lives of our babies. Because remember...babies can't wait. See you next time.