

implement home safety changes early to minimize risks to the child.

Unprepared parents can be disturbed by many normal developmental changes, such as a toddler's diminished appetite, negativism, altered sleeping patterns, and anxiety toward strangers. The chapters on health promotion (see [Chapters 7, 9, 11](#)) provide nurses with information for counseling parents. However, anticipatory guidance should extend beyond giving general information to empowering families to use the information as a means of building competence in their parenting abilities ([Dosman and Andrews, 2012](#)). To achieve this level of anticipatory guidance, the nurse should do the following:

- Base interventions on needs identified by the family, not by the professional
- View the family as competent or as having the ability to be competent
- Provide opportunities for the family to achieve competence

Avoiding Blocks to Communication

A number of blocks to communication can adversely affect the quality of the helping relationship. The interviewer introduces many of these blocks, such as giving unrestricted advice or forming prejudged conclusions. Another type of block occurs primarily with the interviewees and concerns **information overload**. When individuals receive too much information or information that is overwhelming, they often demonstrate signs of increasing anxiety or decreasing attention. Such signals should alert the interviewer to give less information or to clarify what has been said. [Box 4-2](#) lists some of the more common blocks to communication, including signs of information overload.

Box 4-2

Blocks to Communication

Communication Barriers (Nurse)

Socializing

Giving unrestricted and sometimes unsought advice