

professional basis is the interview process. Unlike social conversation, **interviewing** is a specific form of goal-directed communication. As nurses converse with children and adults, they focus on the individuals to determine the kind of persons they are, their usual mode of handling problems, whether they need help, and the way they react to counseling. Developing interviewing skills requires time and practice, but following some guiding principles can facilitate this process. An organized approach is most effective when using interviewing skills in patient teaching.

Establishing a Setting for Communication

Appropriate Introduction

Introduce yourself and ask the name of each family member who is present. Address parents or other adults by their appropriate titles, such as “Mr.” and “Mrs.,” unless they specify a preferred name. Record the preferred name on the medical record. Using formal address or their preferred names, rather than using first names or “mother” or “father,” conveys respect and regard for the parents or other caregivers (Ball, Dains, Flynn, et al, 2014).

At the beginning of the visit, include children in the interaction by asking them their name, age, and other information. Nurses often direct all questions to adults even when children are old enough to speak for themselves. This only terminates one extremely valuable source of information—the patient. When including the child, follow the general rules for communicating with children given in the Nursing Care Guidelines box later in the chapter.

Assurance of Privacy and Confidentiality

The place where the nurse conducts the interview is almost as important as the interview itself. The physical environment should allow for as much privacy as possible with distractions (such as, interruptions, noise, or other visible activity) kept to a minimum. At times, it is necessary to turn off a television, radio, or mobile phone. The environment should also have some play provision for young children to keep them occupied during the parent–nurse interview (Fig. 4-1). Parents who are constantly interrupted by their children are unable to concentrate fully and tend to give brief answers to finish the interview as quickly as possible.