

- Place all strange and potentially frightening equipment out of sight.
- Have some toys, dolls, stuffed animals, and games available for child.
- If possible, have rooms decorated and equipped for different-age children.
- Provide privacy, especially for school-age children and adolescents.
- Provide time for play and becoming acquainted.

Observe behaviors that signal the child's readiness to cooperate:

- Talking to the nurse
- Making eye contact
- Accepting the offered equipment
- Allowing physical touching
- Choosing to sit on the examining table rather than parent's lap

If signs of readiness are not observed, use the following techniques:

- Talk to parent while essentially “ignoring” child; gradually focus on child or a favorite object, such as a doll.
- Make complimentary remarks about child, such as about his or her appearance, dress, or a favorite object.
- Tell a funny story or play a simple magic trick.
- Have a nonthreatening “friend” available, such as a hand puppet, to “talk” to child for the nurse (see [Fig. 4-26, A](#)).

If the child refuses to cooperate, use the following techniques: