

Nursing Care Guidelines box).

Nursing Care Guidelines

Developing Successful Parent–Professional Partnerships

Promote primary nursing; in nonhospital settings, designate a case manager.

Acknowledge parents' overall competence and their unique expertise with their child.

Respect parents' time as having value equal to that of other members of child's health care team.

Explain or define any medical, technical, or discipline-specific terms.

Tell families, “I am not sure” or “I don't know” when appropriate.

Facilitate family's effectiveness in team meetings (e.g., provide parents with same information as other participants).

Parents can be encouraged to discuss their feelings toward the child, the impact of this event on their marriage, and associated stresses such as financial burdens. For most families, regardless of their income or insurance coverage, financial concerns exist. The costs of caring for a child with special needs can be overwhelming. In addition, one or both parents may have to sacrifice job opportunities to remain close to a medical facility or to avoid losing insurance benefits. Numerous volunteer and community resources are available that provide assistance, rehabilitation, equipment, and funding for a variety of health problems. National and local disease-oriented organizations may provide needed assistance and support to families that qualify. Many of these are discussed elsewhere in the text under the specific diagnosis. State and federal departments of health, mental health, social service, and labor may be able to help locate appropriate regional resources. For example,