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Resources for Telephone Triage Protocols

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Communicating with Families

Communicating with Parents

Although the parent and the child are separate and distinct individuals, the nurse's relationship with the child is frequently mediated by the parent, particularly with younger children. For the most part, nurses acquire information about the child by direct observation and through communication with the parents. Usually it can be assumed that because of the close contact with the child, the parent gives reliable information. Assessing the child requires input from the child (verbal and nonverbal), information from the parent, and the nurse's own observations of the child and interpretation of the relationship between the child and the parent. When children are old enough to be active participants in their own health care, the parent becomes a collaborator.

Encouraging the Parents to Talk

Interviewing parents not only offers the opportunity to determine the child's health and developmental status but also offers information about factors that influence the child's life. Whatever