

### 5.3.7 Involving child/ren and family members

It is important that the principles of partnership with children and parents are maintained in the child protection process. The following are minimum requirements for all attendees of the conference and the responsibility of the Chair of the conference to uphold:

- Treat all family members with dignity and respect and offer a caring and courteous service;
- Ensure family members know the child's safety and welfare have priority;
- Minimise infringement of privacy consistent with protecting the child;
- Be clear about powers and purpose of any intervention;
- Be aware of the impact on the family of professional actions;
- Respect confidentiality and pass on information / observations about the family only with permission or to protect the child;
- Listen to and try to understand the concerns, wishes and feelings of the child and family before formulating explanations and plans;
- Learn about the child's religious, cultural, community and familial context;
- Consider strengths, potential and limitations of family members;
- Ensure all family members know their responsibilities and rights with respect to receipt or refusal of services and its consequences;
- Use simple jargon-free language appropriate to age and culture of each individual;
- Be open and honest about concerns and professionals' responsibilities, plans and limitations;
- Allow individuals time to absorb professional concerns and processes;
- Distinguish between personal feelings, values, prejudices and beliefs, and professional roles and responsibilities and seek and use supervision to check achievement of this;
- Always acknowledge errors, failures or oversights and the distress caused to families.

Explicit consideration should be given to the potential for conflict between family members and possible need for children or adults to speak without other family members present.