

Tips on how to effectively provide support to parents by phone [from VIDEO #2]

1. Choose a time when you can focus on the phone call
2. Identify yourself and say why you're calling
3. Accurately describe the challenge the parent is facing (based on the information received from the Support Program Coordinator). If the issue is related to their child, place the importance/humanity of the child before the challenge they are facing as you word your statements
4. Check to make sure it is a good time to call
5. Ask open-ended questions to encourage discussions
6. Allow parents to express their feelings and do not take it personally when they do so
7. Confirm the other person's feelings
8. Share your similar feelings but be careful not to say that you know how they feel. Because you may not truly know how they feel and the statement may come off as trivializing their feelings
9. To keep the conversation going, ask another open-ended question
10. Paraphrase what you have heard so it is clear that you understand
11. Remind the parent that we are all different, even if situations are similar, before sharing your child's positive attributes
12. Share information the other person requests, then bring the focus back to the new parent
13. Listen carefully and think about what the parent is ready to hear
14. Ask another open-ended question instead of rushing to give advice
15. Encourage parents to have open communication with their child's caretaker/teacher/doctor
16. Refer the parent to professionals for medical/legal/financial advice
17. Share tips that have helped you cope with challenges

18. When appropriate, ask about other family members
19. Get permission to call again and invite the other parent to call you
20. Help parents focus on their child's positive attributes and things they do well
21. Give your contact information to the parent so they can get in touch with you.
Set up a Google Voice account and supply the clients with the Google-generated phone number if you do not want to offer your personal phone number. Set boundaries - Specify the day of time clients can reach you

Contact Guiding Parents at support@guidingparents.org if concerns arise.