

## **Do's and Don'ts**

### **DO**

Be as normal as possible. Children who have been abused don't know what normality is but desperately want to achieve it.

Accept the child:

Make a distinction between the individual and his/her behaviour.

Be positive.

Give the child as much time as possible.

Listen attentively. Children who have been abused are constantly striving to be heard and understood.

Reassure the child.

Believe what the child says.

Empower the child by giving as many real choices as possible.

Praise. Good emotional health and development requires a positive stroke at least once every twenty minutes.

Build confidence and self esteem.

Encourage the child to discuss thoughts and feelings.

Help the child to find constructive ways of expressing and dealing with feelings.

Be consistent.

Respect the child's privacy.

Be honest.

### **DON'T**

Humiliate the child, for example by telling him/her off in front of others.

Withdraw love.

Make fun of the child's feelings.

Push for information about what has happened in the past.

Criticise members of the child's birth family.