Tips for Visiting the Child Advocacy Center

• Be calm and reassuring to your child. Don't coach your child on what to say. It is important for the story to come out in your child's words and in your child's own time.

• When you are asked for information, try to provide as many facts as you can and let the professionals decide what is needed--don't withhold information. Don't try to guess if you don't know the answer to a question; it is much better to say you don't know.

• Your feelings are important. Feelings are valuable in giving investigators insight, so tell us how you feel and why you feel that way.

• Always be honest, even though the truth may not seem favorable to yourself or others.

• Try not to overreact. It is a difficult time and emotions run high. Losing control can hurt the case and overshadow the needs of the innocent victim—your child.

• Love, support and protect your child at all costs. If the alleged offender is a significant person to you, it can be very difficult to balance your feelings for them with the need to protect your child. Remember that your child has only you to make healthy, protective decisions.

• Cooperate. You will probably feel as if investigators are prying into your personal life, but this is necessary and vital to the case and your child's welfare.

• You may feel that investigators do not care because they avoid showing emotions. In fact, investigators do care, and part of that caring involves remaining objective and calm in the face of extremely emotional situations.