



## Translator Tips

Welcome to the Summer Miracles program! We are so pleased you have volunteered to join us as a translator for the children and families participating in our program this summer. Your contribution is invaluable. You will often be the language link between child and host parent. After an initial awkwardness, families and children find they soon overcome the language barrier and discover creative ways of getting their point across to one another and master the art of basic and essential communication. You will assist in communicating and exploring problems or concerns, clarifying needs and sorting out feelings. You will also be joining a team of volunteers and staff whose roles are to support and guide the parents and children to ensure a successful, safe and fun summer. The following are a few guidelines regarding your role:

- Please consider that your primary role is to translate for parent and child to enhance their ability to communicate with one another.
- Please translate as closely as possible what is spoken by parent and child. Do not feel you must censor, paraphrase or edit what is said even if you feel it is not appropriate or would not be what you would say or do.
- Please do not feel you must correct or parent the children. If there is a problem within the parent/child relationship, we have staff and social workers that can assist the family.
- Please do not develop a primary relationship with the child to the exclusion of the parents. In order to adequately care for the children and get to know them, the host parents must develop a primary relationship. Children may turn to you for assistance in expressing their needs and feelings but it is important the host parents are involved and aware as well.
- Children may be drawn to you because of your shared language and culture. We know you will be touched by them and enjoy your interaction with them, but please do not promise them continued contact. In the past children have misinterpreted those promises as an intention to adopt them.
- If you have a concern about safety or inappropriate behavior on the part of the child or parent *do not get involved* other than to bring it to the attention of the Community Coordinator. Many parents are hosting with the hopes of adopting their host child. Addressing and resolving conflicts will be a part of building their relationship.

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- Please do not discuss your opinion or say anything critical about the host parents to the children. If you have a concern, opinion or a complaint, address it with the adults. Begin with the Community Coordinator.
- Keep in mind that many of the children may not have the skills to effectively communicate their feelings or resolve conflict with others. It is important they are not able to manipulate or create conflict and concerns amongst the adults. If you feel there is a concern, inform the Community Coordinator. He or she will determine the best intervention.
- Please do not involve the children's chaperone in a concern without involving the Community Coordinator. It is our responsibility to oversee the program, address and resolve problems and ensure that children and chaperones are taken care of properly during the program. We count on our staff and volunteers keeping us informed to accomplish that.
- When translating, please do not impose your opinions or lecture parents or children. We need translators who will translate accurately to allow parents, children and staff to build relationships and resolve and address problems.
- We welcome your insights, observations and opinions but ask that you share them privately with the adults. Begin with the Community Coordinator or offer your input to the host parents directly if they should ask.
- As a translator, you will be privy to personal and private information about both the children and families. Please keep in mind that you have signed a Confidentiality Agreement and that information is to be shared only within our organization for the purpose of problem solving and coordinating and maximizing the care of the children and host families.

Thank you again for your commitment and willingness to assist the children and families during this exciting summer program. We look forward to having you on board!