



C A L I F O R N I A  
C h i l d A b d u c t i o n  
T A S K F O R C E

# Tips for Professionals Working with Missing and Abducted Children and Their Families

By Georgia K. Hilgeman–Hammond

- Respond to their emotional and physical needs.
- Help them to feel safe and secure.
- Provide opportunities for them to regain control by giving them choices and decision making power.
- Allow them to talk about the experience. Listen carefully and intently.
- Validate their experience. Give acknowledgment and acceptance that their reactions are normal.
- Assist with details of daily life.
- Tell them the truth. Help them to predict and prepare for what is upcoming.
- Provide them with information on where, when, and how. some sense of control over what is happening to them. This allows them some sense of control over what is happening to them.
- Stay in the present.
- Use "I" messages vs. "You" messages.
- Make appropriate referrals.
- Make follow up contacts and check-ins.
- Take care of yourself.

Used with permission.