Commitment to Comfort: Use Positive Language
Ease pain and distress before, during and after immunization

Before and During Immunization

ALWAYS

- Use simple and positive language
- If the client has needle fear, validate and normalize
  e.g. “You seem like you may be nervous, that is normal for a lot of people”
- Offer hope and comfort strategies to help
  e.g. “We’ll do this together, so that you are as comfortable as possible”
- If sensing distress, ask about previous experiences. Discuss what comfort strategies have worked in the past, build on what went well.
- Invite the client to choose an activity to distract themselves
  e.g. “Take a few slow deep breaths, many people find this relaxes them”
  (see the Distraction Techniques Guide)
- Talk about what is going well and offer words of encouragement
  e.g. “You are doing a great job”

After Immunization

ALWAYS

- Talk about what went well
  e.g. “You did a great job relaxing your arm”
- Highlight comfort strategies the client used that had a positive effect
  e.g. “It seems like relaxation breathing really helped you today”
- If needed, reframe negative memory statements in a more accurate way
  e.g. “Actually, you relaxed very well with the breathing. You did well.”
- End the immunization with a positive memory
  e.g. “Thank you for getting the COVID-19 immunization today!”

Before, During and After Immunization

AVOID

- Statements that dismiss the persons fears or anxiety
  Avoid saying: “You’re okay” or “Your fears can’t be that bad”
  e.g. Instead say: "If you are feeling nervous, start taking some slow deep breaths”
- Statements that predict what others will feel
  Avoid using pain descriptors such as “Just a little pinch, pain or hurt”
  e.g. Instead say: “I don’t know how it will feel for you, but if we use some comfort strategies it may not bother you as much.”
- Apologizing, it can imply harm
  Avoid saying: “I’m sorry”
  e.g. Instead say: “Thank you for getting the COVID-19 immunization today!”