

## *Volunteer Tips*

### **Confidentiality**

- Do not share his/her name with others when sharing your volunteer experiences.
- Do not reveal any information that your VIS friend would not want made public.

### **Your role**

- It is not your responsibility to “fix” the situation your VIS friend is in.
- You are there to be a listener/encourager/support person and potentially a resource person. Contact your VIS Contact Person or VIS staff when seeking out resources for your VIS friend.
- The problems they face are often there long before you came into the picture, and change happens very slowly and gradually.
- Pray often for your friend, and trust God to be the Healer.

### **Listening**

- This is the most important thing you can do to help another person. A good listener needs humility, silence, empathy and patience.
- Listening involves **hearing** the hurt, not **healing** the hurt.
- Try reflecting back what someone says with a summary of what they have said without providing a solution.

### **Building trust**

- Don't create a credibility gap by displaying doubts.
- Seek areas of trust and work to be non-judgmental about your VIS friend's situation.

### **Boundary setting**

- Be clear about what you can and cannot do for your VIS friend.
- State at the beginning of a visit how long you can stay, as well as define how often you will contact your VIS friend.
- Some volunteers prefer to not give their home phone numbers to their VIS friend. If you dial \*67 before entering your VIS friend's phone number, your own phone number will be kept anonymous.

### **Need help?**

- Call VIS (459-7500) anytime if you have questions or concerns about your role or your new friend.
- Keep your VIS Contact Person at your church informed about how your relationship is going, so they can support you as needed.

### **Saying Goodbye**

- It's important for both you and your VIS friend to say goodbye when it is time for your relationship to end.
- We suggest you write a note to your friend sharing your feelings about your time together.