

TIPS FOR USING NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Video Transcript

Case Investigators and Contact Tracers should use and pay attention to nonverbal communication during their conversations with cases or contacts. Here are some tips about nonverbal communication.

- **Try to smile.** Research shows that even when a person can't see the smile, it transmits through your voice and tone.
- When conducting an in-person or video interview, **pay attention to your body language.** Show that you're listening by making eye contact. Nodding and leaning in while listening can help show engagement. Leaning back or crossing your arms, on the other hand, may give the impression of judgment or disapproval. If you have the option to do videoconferencing, use it whenever possible, even if the respondent isn't on camera themselves. Position the camera at eye level so the camera isn't looking down or up at you.
- In situations where you can see the respondent, **watch for facial expressions, eye contact, appearance, and posture.** These clues will provide information that either supports what you are hearing or might signal an opportunity to dig deeper if the body language doesn't match.
- **Notice pauses, sighs, or changes in the respondent's voice.** These may be cues for when to ask probing questions for more detail or to find a better time to talk if the respondent isn't able to talk freely at that time.
- **Use silence.** It's not necessary to fill every moment of silence during an interview. Silence can be both significant and necessary. Nonverbal cues might help a Case Investigator or Contact Tracer determine if the respondent is thinking to provide an accurate answer, or if the silence might mean that they didn't understand the question. In general, allow enough silence to let the respondent gather their thoughts, but not so long that it becomes uncomfortable. It's always okay to ask if the respondent understands the question or would like the question repeated.