



The Family Guide to Early Intervention Teletherapy

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What is Teletherapy?

Teletherapy is just therapy over the internet when the therapist and client are not in the same location. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, special instructors, and others can provide teletherapy. Many parts of Teletherapy are exactly like a regular in-home session. It is an excellent option when a face-to-face therapy session is not possible.



Benefits of Teletherapy

- Helps reduce missed visits due to illness and prevents the spread of illness
- Families who live in rural areas have access to more providers
- Families may have access to more specialized providers
- Just like an in-home therapy session, the focus of Teletherapy is on the family's needs and goals
- In Teletherapy sessions, the caregiver takes a more active role in the therapy session, focusing on caregiver-child interactions
- Teletherapy is a proven method of therapy to meet child goals

What Do You Need for Teletherapy?

- Computer, laptop, tablet/iPad, or smartphone with a webcam
- Good internet connection
- A quiet room with good lighting



How to Sign Up for Teletherapy

If you are interested in Teletherapy, talk to your service coordinator or therapist. You may be required to sign a consent form which gives the therapist permission to perform teletherapy.

What to Expect in a Teletherapy Session

1. Teletherapy sessions should last the same length of time as the in-home sessions. Typically, these will be one-hour sessions.
2. Prior to the session, the therapist may send you a short “lesson plan” and list of items / toys required for the session activities so you can be prepared.
3. Once the session begins, the therapist will ask you what has been going on and if your child has made any progress since the last session.
4. The therapist will then start the therapy activities he/she has planned for the session. During this time, the therapist will demonstrate new activities and/or strategies and then coach you as you perform the activity.
5. The therapist may give you handouts and internet resources.
6. At the end of the session, the therapist will discuss how to continue the session activities throughout the week, any concerns you may have, and schedule the next session.



How to make the MOST of your Therapy Session

- Be willing to learn new techniques
- Ask questions



- Give feedback to your therapist
- Voice your concerns
- Look for activities and strategies that you can do to help your child
- Practice the activities you did during the Teletherapy session

Most Frequently Asked Questions about Teletherapy?

Will our personal information and health information be confidential and private?

Yes. The therapist will use a private and secure system.

I'm not sure how to use the technology required for the Teletherapy session. What do I do?

The therapist will help you get everything set up. Ask your therapist to do a test session before your first teletherapy session to work out any technical issues.

Will Teletherapy replace all my in-home visits?

No, discuss the options with your therapist. Doing both Teletherapy and in-home sessions may be possible, depending on the health of everyone in the family and the therapist.

Can we use an interpreter for Teletherapy?

Yes. An interpreter may virtually attend both in-home and Teletherapy sessions.

What do I do if the Teletherapy session is disconnected or has technical problems?

If the session is disconnected or if the audio/visual connection is malfunctioning, it is best to end the session and restart.

What if my child is not cooperating during the session?

The therapist will likely want to give ideas and/or help teach you strategies to help you with any behavioral issues. While these sessions may be difficult, they can also be helpful!

I have several children. What if my other children are disruptive?

Because siblings are a part of the child's natural environment, the therapist will likely want to involve siblings and other family members in the session to reach the set goals.



References

NCHAM | National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (n.d.).

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