



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

STRONG START DC EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM (DC EIP)

GUIDELINES FOR FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

(Updated Jan. 3, 2022)

What Should My Virtual Visit Look Like?

Am I ready for virtual visits?

Before you agree to participate in telehealth visits, ask yourself the following questions:

- ✓ Do I have a Wi-Fi connection or smartphone with app and website capability?
- ✓ Do I have access to a phone/tablet/computer with a webcam and speakers?
- ✓ Have I used videoconferencing (e.g., FaceTime, Zoom, Google Hangouts, WhatsApp, etc.) in the past? If you have not, your early intervention provider will work with you before your first session. A phone call is **not** an option.

If you answered “**yes**” to these questions, you should be ready to participate in virtual visits with your early intervention provider!

Prepare for your virtual visit:

- ✓ **Think about how long you are available.** An hour of telehealth feels a lot longer than an hour of in-person visits. It is ok to let your early interventionist know if you would like to end earlier or shorter than your approved frequency in your Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- ✓ **Turn off television, radio or other things that may make it hard to hear.** We want you to have as few distractions as possible, within reason, so that we can focus on your needs and your child’s needs.
- ✓ **Make sure all your technology is working.** Do a test run beforehand so you and your early intervention provider can start on time.
- ✓ **Have any activities or materials identified in your previous joint plan ready to go.** This will allow you to jump right into the visit after reviewing your joint plan and what you’ve practiced.
- ✓ **Have your providers’ phone number available.** If there are any glitches with technology, you can always call your provider for assistance.

During your virtual visit:

- ✓ **Identify the time your visit will end.** Your time is valuable; we want to make sure you are communicating when and for the amount of time that is best for you.
- ✓ **Review what has happened since your last visit.** This is the time for you to let us know what worked and what didn’t work.

- ✓ **Show what you've practiced, then practice new things together.** As much as possible, we want to provide you real-time advice. It may feel strange, but we can help you best when we see what is happening.

Ending your virtual visit:

- ✓ **Identify a joint plan.** What would you like to practice in-between visits, and what do you want to work on at your next session?
- ✓ **Discuss any problems you had with technology.** This will let you and your provider know what they may need to address or change.
- ✓ **Schedule your next session.** Pick a time and date when both you and your provider are available.

The use of virtual visits is only allowable at this time due to COVID-19 and is not a permanent method to provide early intervention services.

For resources and additional information on the District of Columbia Government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit coronavirus.dc.gov.