

Emerging Minds Families

FACT SHEET

Supporting your child throughout their telehealth experience

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Definition

Emerging Minds acknowledges that families come in many forms. For the purposes of easy reading, the term 'parent' encompasses the biological, adoptive, foster and kinship carers of a child, as well as individuals who have chosen to take up primary or shared responsibility in raising that child. We also appreciate that every child is unique and has different strengths and experiences that shape their health and development.



It's important to be clear on the role you'll play in your child's telehealth appointment. Together with your professional and child, decide on how involved you should be in the session. This will depend on a range of factors, including:

- your child's age
- the nature of the support needed
- the professional's recommended way of working
- how confident your child is in talking to a professional
- your child's desire for independence
- your child's ability to engage for the whole session without support
- your child's ability to manage the technology; and
- how comfortable you are having your child engage with the professional without you.

There are many ways to support your child during their telehealth appointment and the best approach will depend on their age and level of need. You could be:

- fully engaged throughout the session and an active participant
- present throughout the session, mostly as an observer and note-taker; for technical support as needed; to help keep your child engaged and focused, and to let the professional know of any issues at your end
- not directly involved in the session but are present in the background. You can hear what's happening in the session, but you only become directly involved if your child or the professional requests it
- involved at the start of the session and then, when your child feels comfortable and the professional has explained the plan for the session, you leave and move to a part of the house where you won't overhear what's happening in the session
- not involved in the session at all. You may hear about progress and 'homework' to be done between sessions from the professional, your child, or both.

Ways of supporting your child during a telehealth session

Depending on the nature of the service being provided, it may be helpful to support your child in any of the following ways:

- preparing and managing materials such as pencils, paper, toys, books, comforting items
- managing technology such as adjusting camera angles and volume levels, typing in the chatbox, opening links
- managing your child's attention by encouraging them to focus
- letting the professional know about anything you notice about your child's engagement, such as waning concentration, signs of anxiety, tiredness, looking like they want to say something, or needing a break
- offering hugs, holding their hand, patting their shoulder, rubbing their back or other forms of supportive touch.

However, remember to let your child be the focus of the session. For older children, talk together to decide on the level of engagement you're both comfortable with. If you're not sure how much involvement from you is best, ask your professional.

By keeping these strategies in mind, you can ensure your child has the support they need to make the most of their telehealth sessions.

Check out our other fact sheets for simple strategies you and your child can use to make the most out of your telehealth appointments.

AVAILABLE HERE

Telehealth resources



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This resource was co-produced with:



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