

Emerging Minds Families

FACT SHEET

What is telehealth and how can it support my child's wellbeing?

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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.

Technology is providing all sorts of new ways for us to connect with each other. This includes ways you might connect with professionals involved in supporting you and your child. Many professionals are now able to offer flexible options for families to receive help via the telephone and internet – this is called telehealth.

What does telehealth look like?

One of the most common forms of telehealth is a video call. A video call is similar to a phone call, except usually you and the professional you're speaking to (such as a GP or social worker) will use



your device's camera to see and hear each other. Telehealth video calls often happen on specially-designed websites or apps (such as Zoom or WhatsApp), which your practitioner will send you a link to and explain how to use. They might also show things to you or your child, such as diagrams, websites or videos during the call.

Phone calls are another common form of telehealth. They can often be easier to set up and join, but don't allow you, your child and the professional to see each other. Other types of telehealth can include messaging systems, like text messages on your phone, emails, and phone apps. Your practitioner might use these to send you information, appointment reminders, check in, or ask you or your child how things are going.

Most professionals will explain which of these telehealth methods they use and together you can decide what kind of support you'd like.

Why might I use telehealth to get support for my child's wellbeing?

Telehealth offers a number of benefits:

You generally won't need to travel

This can help if:

- your professional is far from where you live
- you don't have reliable access to suitable transport
- you're unable to travel
- you need to attend a lot of appointments and want to save on travel time; or
- you prefer not to travel.

It can be less intimidating for children

- Some children can find it a bit daunting to attend an office or a clinic where professionals work.
- You can access telehealth from a safe space, like your home, or another familiar setting, like your child's school.

You can be in your home

- You can learn as a family about things you can do to support your child.
- You can test advice or strategies right then and there, rather than waiting until you get home.

It may suit you and your family better

- Some parents and children just prefer the experience of talking to their professional via telehealth. It's another way of accessing support, and whether it feels right will vary from person to person.
- If you have multiple children in your care, you might find telehealth is a more convenient option for you.

If you're unsure if your professional offers telehealth sessions, you can ask the receptionist when you call to make your appointment. They can also let you know if there's a cost associated with this service.

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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