

Autism Telehealth Tool Kit

Tips for Families: How to prepare for telehealth appointments with your child's provider

1. Talk with your provider.

- Ask what the visit will look like:
 - How long will it be?
 - Who will the visit be with?
 - What types of services will be provided?
 - What will be required of my child?
 - How will I pay?
- Check to see if the office offers a trial run to test the process ahead of time.
- Discuss any concerns you or your child have regarding telehealth.
- If you are seeing multiple providers, schedule appointments back to back, if possible. This can maximize your time and the consistency of conversations with providers.

2. Prepare yourself.

- Confirm meeting/appointment time in advance.
- Read any instructions sent or available on the patient portal.
- Practice logging in before the actual visit.
- Plan for the length and format of the appointment.
 - If this is a meeting with multiple providers, keep in mind that there may be some waiting time during the appointment as providers enter and exit.
- Think about what information you want to share with the provider.
- Write down your questions and concerns in advance.
- Arrive early. Log in to the telehealth platform before your appointment following the provider's guidelines.
- Complete the check-in procedure ahead of time.

3. Prepare your child.

- Talk to your child about what the appointment will be like.
 - Present a teaching story or use visuals to help your child understand the telehealth session and what to expect.
- Help your child to look directly at the screen. Place a highly preferred item near the computer's camera.
- Have activities available for your child to do during the appointment (coloring, iPad with headphones, book or other preferred choices).
- Small activities or reinforcers can help to keep your child busy when you need to talk with the provider directly.
- Offer your child a snack and a chance to use the restroom before the session begins.

4. Prepare your environment.

- Position yourself in a quiet, comfortable place with few distractions and good internet connectivity.
- Make sure you are in a well-lit space so that the provider can see you and your child.
 - The best lighting is light that is in front of you, not behind you.
- Your provider knows you are having this visit from home, so please do not be concerned by background noise or your home's appearance during the visit. Your provider understands!

5. Check your technology.

- Test the camera placement and the technology platform on the device you intend to use the day before.
- Make sure your Wi-Fi is working. Remember, you may be able to use your phone as a hot spot if your home Wi-Fi is unstable.
- Give the provider a phone number to call in case your internet connection is interrupted.

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Tips for Providers: How to support successful telehealth visits for patients with autism

Provide important information for families ahead of time.

- Give a clear description of telehealth and how it will operate for your clinic.
- Give concrete details of the appointment (length, service provider, type of service/treatment, mode of payment, etc.)
- Tell them what might be required of the child during the visit
- Offer a trial run to test the telehealth platform
- Offer information or resources that will help children understand what to expect
- Set clear goals for the session at the beginning and in pre-session materials

Other advice for providers during the COVID-19 pandemic:



Start the appointment with a conversation:

- How are you doing?
- What do you need?
- What do you want to leave this appointment with today?



Ask questions:

- Do you have a transition back to school plan?
- Do you have a shopping plan?
- Do you have a plan for eating out or other community activities?
If not, start working on this together.



Encourage skill-building:

- Encourage families to learn about anxiety and stress.
- Encourage learning effective ways to manage anxiety and stress for families and children.



Small tests of change can lead to big steps:

- Encourage small trials or steps back to integrating into the community or school. For example, encourage families to drive or walk by school as a first step if they plan to return to in-person learning.
- Achieving small victories can help increase comfort level when reintegrating into activities.