

# Indiana First Steps

## Best Practice for Conducting Virtual Visits



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Virtual visits are those provided using video conferencing technology in accordance with the procedures outlined in the COVID-19 Policy dated March 15, 2020.

- Document communication between all team members (e.g. family, providers, service coordinator) stating child will be utilizing virtual visits
- Conduct a practice virtual visit with families prior to first virtual visit
  - A practice session with the parent will allow you to establish rapport
  - Consider doing the practice during the child's nap time to help you and the parent have a relaxed, conversational interaction
  - The practice session also allows you to assess technology issues such as sound and video quality
  - Close other programs not needed for the session
  - Discuss the quality of the live interaction including lighting and background noise
  - Provide a brief outline of future session structure
- Communicate with the family via email, text, or phone call several days before the session
  - Confirm the appointment
  - Share outline of the session
  - Identify who will be participating in the session, both on the provider side and the family side
- Discuss arranging the home environment for the session with the parent.
  - Where will the computer sit?
  - Will the child be in a high chair?
  - Who will be in the room?
  - Where will materials reside?
  - What order will materials be used?
  - Where will parent(s) sit for the session?
  - Who will interact with the child?
- Provider should prepare a location for the session
  - Set up your room
  - Check the lighting to confirm it is sufficient; it should be in front of you
  - Evaluate your background area and remove any distractions
  - Place a sign on your door to eliminate unauthorized people from entering your session
  - Turn your phone to silent
  - Close all programs on your computer not needed for the session
  - Ensure all technology necessary for the session is charged
  - Evaluate your microphone to confirm it is in the correct location and turned on
  - Adjust your camera to allow for direct eye contact with the family
  - Check to see if the family is online
  - Allow several minutes to gather your thoughts
- Conduct the session
  - Follow the same preparation procedures as you did for the test session
  - Greet family and ask if they can see and hear you on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being great and 1 being poor
  - Close session and start over if there are problems
  - Share your impressions and tell family how to adjust their equipment
  - Make sure both the provider and the parent have their cell phones handy in case there is a need to talk through troubleshooting a technical issue
- During a virtual visit providers should
  - Review goals and activities from previous sessions
  - Give parents strategies and techniques that can help the child and family reach outcomes
  - Be flexible, creative, respectful, kind, non-judgmental
  - Wrap-up session, answer questions from family, review session and goals to work on for next session

To see the source for these best practices and find additional information on the practice of tele-intervention, providers and parents are encouraged to watch the following free trainings from The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM). Please note that these trainings are offered as a free resource and have not been tailored to the policies of Indiana First Steps. <http://www.infanthearing.org/ti101/index.html>

The use of virtual visits are only allowable at this time due to COVID-19 and are not a permanent service delivery option. This temporary policy will be in effect until May 31, 2020 or when Indiana's public health emergency is lifted, whichever date is soonest.