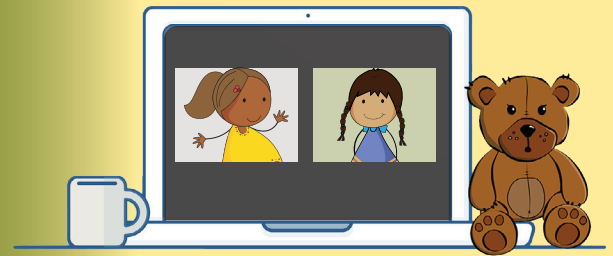


PRACTICES FOR ENGAGING CHILDREN via Telehealth Video Visits



Play is the first language of young children. To have successful video visits with young children, engage children through games and play. Make the visit as interactive as possible and follow the child's lead. If they lose attention, switch to a more interactive activity.¹

SETTING THE SCENE

Keep the camera view of your workspace free from distraction and clutter.



Encourage the child's caregiver to minimize the distractions in the room where the session is taking place.



Use exaggerated facial expressions and gestures like thumbs up and high fives.



Position yourself close enough to the camera that the child can see your facial expressions but not so close that your hands can't be seen.²

ACTIVITY TIPS

- Ask young children to show you what they like about their home.
- Draw together, then hold drawings up to the camera to share and explain. This can help you assess the child's attention, fine motor skills, and creativity from a distance.
- Use what the child has been doing to engage them. Ask about games the child has been playing or movies they watched. Ask them who their favorite character was and why, followed up by what they are like the character or what ways the character is like them.
- Tell a story or have the child tell you a story. Any daily event can become a story or encourage imaginative storytelling about taking a trip to the park, etc.
- To keep the child engaged, play verbal games such as I Spy, Would You Rather or 20 Questions.³
- Engage the child in playful activities such as puppet shows, finger plays, or peek-a-boo.
- Share a snack together or pretend to by handing it off through the computer or phone camera to each other.⁴
- Ask adolescents if they have journaling, art, music or anything else they'd like to share with you or explore an online site like YouTube or Facebook together.
- Try using different features that the video chat platform offers to engage with children, such as the Zoom "whiteboard" feature where two people can draw together or play tic-tac-toe or pictorial.⁵

References

- ¹ [Successful Video Visits with Young Children, National Council on Crime & Delinquency, 2020.](#)
- ² [COVID-19 Tips: Building rapport with youth via telehealth, 2020.](#)
- ³ [Successful Video Visits with Young Children, National Council on Crime & Delinquency, 2020.](#)
- ⁴ [Tips for Video Chatting with Young Children - Staying Connected While Far Apart, National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2020.](#)
- ⁵ [COVID-19 Tips: Building rapport with youth via telehealth, 2020.](#)