

Basic Tips for Youth/Adolescents Using Telehealth

Telehealth sessions can feel different from the office-based sessions you are used to. Telehealth services are effective and continuing to work with your provider in this new way will help you continue to make progress on your goals. Here are some tips to make telehealth sessions work well:

Privacy is Important for Your Session:



- Talk with your counselor and family to find a good time to meet. Think about your schedule and what else might be going on for other members of your household (i.e., when your sibling uses the computer, schoolwork time, mealtimes).
- Adjust the camera so your counselor can also see the door. This will immediately alert them if your session is no longer private.
- Try using headphones and the “chat” feature – this allows you to send text messages to your counselor during your session, so you don’t have to say private things out loud.

Time, Space, and Equipment:



- Can you use the quietest room or space (it may not be your room)? Sit in a car or outdoor space?
- Face a light source or window rather than having it behind you when using video.
- It’s normal for the internet to fail sometimes. If you can’t see or hear your counselor, let them know. Make sure your counselor has a phone number to reach you if the connection doesn’t come back quickly.

Be Prepared:



Try to take 15 minutes before your session to make a short list of what you want to talk about. Consider writing things down during the week so you remember what you want to talk about.

Be Clear:



When everything is different from our normal routines, it can be hard to describe how we are feeling. Try to think of specific examples that show how you’re doing. For example, instead of saying “I feel tired,” say, “I can’t fall asleep until really late because my mind is racing. So I’m really tired all day.”

Point of View:



Consider your goals from your point of view rather than how others are reacting to social distancing. For some, this change in normal routines can lead to **positive opportunities** to connect differently with family, engage in new hobbies, or have more time to rest and relax. For others, this change may have brought on **new challenges** and feel more stressful. They may find that they need help from others to deal with it. Talk with your counselor about what you’re seeing and hearing from friends, family, and social media and how it’s impacting you.

Discuss Immediate Concerns:



If you have an emergency or have serious concerns, share them with your provider. Everyone is facing new challenges and your provider may help you create a plan to stay safe, or to seek additional support or resources.