Virtual Early Intervention Family Flyer

Why are Virtual EI visits used?

The growing demand for early childhood professionals has created shortages in many areas. Families living in both rural and densely populated areas often have difficulty accessing qualified professionals. Families report difficulty with scheduling, missed visits during inclement weather, and may be reluctant to have EI professionals in their home if they or their child has a compromised immune system or for other reasons.

https://infanttoddler.idaho.gov

What is a Virtual Early Intervention (EI) visit?

Also known as Telehealth, Virtual EI visits are a method of providing services via the internet. Virtual EI visits can be provided through a personal computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone using a secure network. The EI professional and family or caregiver are both present in real time.

How can Virtual EI visits support families?

- Allow families to gain access to early childhood professionals who may be far away or very specialized
- Focuses on parent-child relationship and interactions, increasing parent confidence in supporting their child
- Allow families with internet access the flexibility to work with EI professionals from a secure location
- Families can schedule times that are convenient and may include other family members
- Empower families to confidently implement strategies between sessions

What should families know about using their personal devices to receive Virtual EI visits?

As with any internet-based communication, there are potential risks regarding security or technological problems. Families should use a secure Wi-Fi network with password and install any necessary device protections. It is out of scope for Infant Toddler Program staff or contractors to provide technical assistance to families regarding their personal device equipment used for virtual EI sessions. Therefore, the Department and Infant Toddler Program are not liable for any damages to a family's home computer or other devices.

Families will need a Bandwidth of 1.5 Mbps to participate in Virtual EI. Use the following link to test your Bandwidth: http://www.bandwidthplace.com). Families should also check with their internet or wireless provider for any monthly limits on their data usage plan. The ITP is not responsible for any additional data cost incurred as a result of receiving Infant Toddler Program services through Virtual EI.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Virtual EI visits

All early intervention services are confidential. Virtual EI visits comply with all FERPA and HIPAA privacy requirements when specialized software is utilized. Your early intervention professional will ensure secure software is used.

Want to learn more?

For more information regarding virtual EI visits, please review the Tele-Intervention 101 Families video at https://www.infanthearing.org/ti101/families/index.html developed by the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM) at Utah State University.

Benefits of Virtual Early Intervention (EI)

✓ Multiple research studies demonstrate that the outcomes of children and families receiving Virtual EI are equal to families receiving in-home services. (Connected Health Policy, August 2018)

✓ Virtual EI visits encourage parents to utilize developmental strategies through coaching from their provider. (Fiechtl et al, 2014)

✓ Caregivers report that therapy conducted via Virtual EI helped them learn how to support their child better than the traditional model. (Blaiser et al. 2013)

✓ Virtual EI leads to more consistent services due to decreased cancellations related to illnesses or inclement weather. (Cason et al. 2012)

✓ The focus of the session shifts from the therapist and the child to the family and the child. (Blaiser et al. 2013)

Tools and References:

NCHAM Tele-Intervention 101 for Families
https://www.infanthearing.org/ti101/families/index.html

NCHAM Tele-Intervention 101 for Providers
https://www.infanthearing.org/ti101/providers/index.html

Center for Connected Health Policy
https://www.cchpca.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/Telemental%20Health%20Research%20Catalogue%20%28Aug%202018%29.pdf

Blaiser, Kristina, et al. "Measuring Costs and Outcomes of Tele-Intervention When Serving Families of Children Who are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing." International Journal of Telerehabilitation, vol. 5, no 2, Retrieved from https://padlet.com/tracy_sperry/telehealthresources

Cason, Jana, et al. "Overview of State's Use of Telehealth for the Delivery of Early Intervention Services". International Journal of Telerehabilitation, vol. 4, no 2, Retrieved from https://padlet.com/tracy_sperry/telehealthresources