



MAKING A GOOD CONNECTION: ENGAGING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES IN SCHOOL TELE-MENTAL HEALTH

Best Practices for Student Engagement Through Tele-Mental Health

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Participant Question & Presenter Response

Q1 *How do I ensure equitable access for all students to tele-mental health services?*

A1 Many school districts have developed creative measures to support students and families during school closures. When making plans for service delivery, it is important to inquire how all students will receive services, such as students with disabilities, students who are low social economic status, rural areas, foster students, students experiencing homelessness. It is crucial to ensure that these students have access to technology and internet accessibility to ensure that they receive the services and supports necessary. Research federal, local, and foundation grants that may be available in your area to increase access to technology, internet access, and bandwidth.

Resources:

[Virtual Service Delivery in Response to COVID-19 Disruptions](#)
[Telehealth Guidelines for School Mental Health Professionals](#)

Q2 *How can I help my students feel comfortable using tele-mental health?*

A2 Use small steps until students are comfortable using tele-mental health. Try shortening your sessions and doing multiple sessions in a week to break up your time – for example schedule two 15-minute sessions instead of one 30-minute session. Try using games and interactive activities to engage with your student. Break up your session using small routines that mark the beginning, middle, and end of the session. Collaborate with your student to use hand signals and use virtual aids – such as stop signs, feelings thermometers, and emojis to communicate important cues and emotional experiences.

Resources:

[Creative Interventions for Online Therapy with Children](#)



Q3 *How can I best utilize teaming principles and engage with our partners in the community to support my tele-mental health work?*

A3 Keep in mind that you are not in this alone! You still have a team around you even if you are not physically together. Remember to engage with your partners – both within your school team and with your community collaborators. Parenting organizations and student organizations can be other outlets for enhancing your outreach efforts, sharing information, and continuing to engage with students.

Resources:

[Telehealth Toolbox for School Personnel: Getting Started](#)

Q4 *How do I manage groups and keep up attendance?*

A4 Use technology to your advantage! Share videos, documents, pictures, etc. through your platform of choice. Be sure to monitor your participant list and engage with individual group members as needed. Utilize features of your platform to highlight certain group members' videos or engage in smaller breakout sessions. Just as you would for in-person sessions, work with your group to establish group rules and check in with individuals intermittently. Consider modifying consent forms to make it clear of some of the changes to privacy.

Group models that are currently being piloted using tele-mental health:

Parent Cafes: <https://www.beststrongfamilies.org/covid-19-support>

Circle of Security: <http://www.necosp.org/class-calendar/telehealth-cosp-north-platte-ne-0>

Resources:

[Remote Delivery of Group-Based Trauma Interventions](#)

[Guidance for Conducting Tier II Groups During Remote Learning](#)

Additional Resources:

Free online games

- skillsgameboard.com (Checkers, Chess, Connect Four)
- playdrift.com (Mancala, Dominoes, Backgammon)
- papergames.io (Battleship, Tic Tac Toe, Connect Four)
- [Uno](#)
- [Scattergories](#)





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