



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

Engaging Family School Partnerships Through Tele-Mental Health

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Participant Question & Presenter Response

Q1 *How can I keep parents engaged (in telehealth) when they are dealing with tragic events, trauma and stress?*

A1 Help the adults have these conversations and navigate their own feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. Encourage parents to have conversations with kids about these events— Kids are seeing and hearing about the events either way. Engage kids in the conversations: ask their opinions and ask them what they are thinking, feeling, experiencing. Practitioners can model how to do ‘clean pain’.

Q2 *What are some strategies for working with families that are not responding to initial attempts?*

A2 Understand that building trust and relationships take time. Focus on we can do to better as a system and providers to support families, as opposed to how families can adjust to meet our needs. Vary approaches to engaging families, including methods, time, and invitations in a manner that is culturally appropriate and in their native language. Empower families to be leaders in deciding how they want to engage. Fully utilize teams and personnel within the school system and in the community to build partnerships with families.

Q3 *How can we help families reduce current stress and help them support their child's mental health?*

A3 Planning feasible yet flexible schedules and routines provides structure and consistency, which is important to supporting families and reducing stress. Practitioners should work with parents to create schedules that include healthy eating and sleeping routines, time for bonding, and pleasurable activities. Parents may find it useful to schedule in special one-on-one time with kids, especially when parents are having difficulty giving kids enough attention due to work, household duties, or other events.





Q4 *While privacy, boundaries and confidentiality are important issues to address in telehealth, how we can engage the whole family in a process that feels safe and meaningful for everyone?*

A4 Work together with families and clients to set up expectations for confidentiality in advance. Outline when discussions are private and when they will be shared. Have discussions with families about emergency and crisis planning. (i.e., expectation that an adult always be in the home and what to do if there is not adult in the home). Engage families and students in problem solving to figure out how to make distance sessions work in their households with the resources they have available to them. Always be aware of your rights, requirements under HIPPA, and guidance from your school or agency administration.

Resources:

- <https://sites.google.com/pdsdstudents.org/pdsd-virtual-calming-room/home>
- <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/table-talk>
- <https://www.resmaa.com/books>
- <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/helping-children-cope-with-changes-resulting-from-covid-19>
- <https://www.tolerance.org/>

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