

# Telehealth for ABA parent coaching

Parenting with ABA Members CE Event

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## ◀.....▶ Telehealth:

...the use of electronic or digital information and telecommunication technologies to support clinical healthcare, patient and professional health-related education and public health and health administration

the use of communication technology to provide training and treatment for health-related conditions

Telehealth itself is not an independent variable or an intervention. IT is a service delivery mechanism, and the intervention component(s) and training provided via telehealth are the independent variable(s).

## ◀.....▶ Recurring themes:

- establish educational component BEFORE beginning direct services
- asynchronous learning successes
- also need a synchronous/ coaching component
- eLearning alone showed smaller gains
- parents gave high social validity scores
- ACT increased participation



# References (with hyperlinks)

Telehealth for ABA Parent Coaching– May 2023 CE

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# Parent Check-In

CELEBRATE

What is one win your child had in the last week(s)?

What is one win YOU had as a parent in the last week(s)?

What is one thing your partner did really well in the last week(s)?

TODAY

What is your biggest parenting concern right now?

What is your partner's biggest parenting concern right now?

Explore any differences in these.

SETTING

Any changes in daily health- sleep, eating, etc?

Any changes in routine, schedules, etc?

Any other factors to keep in mind?

# Is this a good fit for your family?

## Time

- I feel this is doable in the time I have.
- I need help finding the time.
- There's no way I can find time for this.

## Comfort/ Confidence

- I understand the plan and feel good trying it on my own.
- The training was a little unclear. I'm not sure what to do.
- That made no sense to me. We need something else.

## Troubleshooting

- I feel good applying this to new things that may pop up.
- I can try to use these behavior tools on my own.
- Not going to work for new issues that may come up.

## Whole Family

- This feels too hard on my child.
- This feels too hard on the rest of my family.
- This feels too hard on me.

## Is it worth it?

- The effort is totally worth it.
- The payoff of improvement in my family seems really far off.
- The effort does not seem like it's going to get us anywhere.

## Community

- The people in our world will be understanding of this.
- No one will understand and I'll feel uncomfortable.

# List of caregiver telehealth training components and definitions

from Umholz-Bowden et al, 2020

Performance feedback	Comments provided vocally or electronically to caregiver participants on their performance in implementing behavioral procedures
Within-session instruction	Response-guided and individualized directions provided vocally to caregiver participants during live sessions on implementing a behavioral procedure
Modeling	A demonstration provided by researchers either live or via a video model to caregiver participants on how to implement behavioral procedures
Pre-session instruction	Vocal instruction provided to caregiver participants prior to the start of the first assessment or intervention session involving a presentation or review of content related to the study, behavioral principles, behavioral procedures, the rationale for implementing specific behavioral procedures, and/or how behavioral procedures should be used in the natural environment
Address questions	A researcher designates time to answer questions caregiver participants have on behavioral principles or procedures
Prompting	a researcher prompts caregiver participants to implement specific steps of a behavioral procedure as caregivers are implementing it with a child participant or confederate
Written instructions	Response-guided and individualized directions provided to caregiver participants on how to implement behavioral procedures; typically provided via an electronic document or email
Online instruction	Slideshows, lectures, and/or modules provided to caregiver participants in an electronic format and involves content related to behavioral principles and procedures; may include a rationale for implementing specific behavioral procedures and recommendations for how to implement procedures in the natural environment

Training until meeting  
criteria

Training or intervention continues until caregiver participants meet a certain performance criterion in implementing behavioral procedures

Collaborative problem  
solving

Discussion between a researcher and caregiver participant in which they address potential or current issues related to implementing behavioral procedures with child participants, discuss how the procedures should be used outside of live sessions, and/or develop target skills for caregiver or child participants

Written manual/ handout

A written or typed guide provided to caregiver participants with content related to behavioral principles and/or procedures

Learning checks

Exercises or quizzes assessing a caregiver participant's comprehension of behavioral principles and/or procedures; does not involve an assessment of a caregiver's skill level in implementing behavioral procedures

Caregiver reflections

Report from caregiver participants describing their previous use of behavioral procedures with child participants

Practice outside of sessions

Caregiver participants practice implementing behavioral procedures with child participants outside of live sessions

Additional resources

Websites or readings researchers provided to caregiver participants on topics such as autism, behavioral principles, implementing behavioral procedures, or other related topics

Review of data

A researcher presents a caregiver participant with assessment or intervention data and explains the results

Practice exercises

A caregiver participant practices implementing behavioral procedures with a child participant or confederate during live sessions with a researcher

Booster training

Any repeated training provided to caregiver participants due to them not meeting a performance criterion in implementing behavioral procedures

Role-play	Caregiver participants either play the role of a child or interventionist to practice implementing behavioral procedures together without the presence of a child or confederate
Video self-modeling	Caregiver participants can observe their past performance in implementing a behavioral procedure for the purpose of learning correct/incorrect implementation of the procedures; video may include embedded performance feedback
Caregiver assessment	A test conducted by researchers on caregiver participant progress/current skill level in implementing a behavioral procedure
Homework assignments	Assignments related to behavioral principles or procedures given to caregiver participants to complete outside of live sessions
Performance feedback on learning checks	Comments given to caregiver participants on written exercises/ quizzes they have completed assessing their understanding of ABA principles or procedures
Summary of content	A review provided to caregiver participants on behavioral principles or procedures used during live sessions; provided after live sessions
Caregiver goal-setting	Any instance in which caregiver participants set goals for themselves in learning behavioral concepts or procedures
Graphing sessions	Instruction provided to caregiver participants on how to graph and interpret assessment or intervention data

**Table 1** Sample of potential challenges and solutions when providing telehealth services

Challenges	Solutions
<i>Technical issues</i>	
Caregiver does not have access to equipment	Establish lending library; locate nearby facility with equipment
Caregiver has connectivity issues	Upgrade modem/Internet service; reduce number of devices
Caregiver has difficulty installing/using software	Provide task analyses; instruct caregiver via phone
Caregiver has hardware or software failures	Provide access to alternative hardware or software
Poor visibility due to room lighting	Close drapes, move away from window, change room lighting
<i>Challenges with remote viewing</i>	
Client not always in view	Modify camera position/session location, remove or rearrange furniture, install physical barriers, use multiple cameras
Client behavior difficult to see or hear	Arrange for caregiver to signal occurrences of target behaviors
Practitioner difficult to see or hear	Arrange for caregiver to wear Bluetooth headset, send text messages
<i>Disruptions in client's environment</i>	
Items present in room disruptive to sessions	Instruct caregiver to remove superfluous items from room
Other family members interrupt sessions	Arrange sessions when other family members not at home
<i>Other issues related to client behavior</i>	
Client engages in dangerous behavior	Mail protective equipment to caregiver, train caregiver to block, prioritize treatments that minimize extinction bursts
Client reactive to practitioner's image or voice	Disconnect audio and/or video feed
<i>Issues related to caregiver behavior</i>	
Caregiver engages in emotional responding	Stop session, speak privately with caregiver
Caregiver behavior insensitive to vocal instructions	Arrange in-person appointments, model procedures on camera, review videotaped sessions with caregiver
Caregiver overly casual in dress or behavior	Clarify expectations at the outset of services
<i>Issues at host site</i>	
Practitioner shares office with others	Use headsets, speak softly, modify appointment schedule
Practitioner not specifically trained for telehealth	Obtain training and supervision from qualified practitioner



# Telehealth Checklist

from Lerman et al, 2020

## Is telehealth an appropriate modality?

- I have obtained sufficient training in delivering ABA via telehealth for myself and my staff
- I have confirmed I have the relevant licensures and certification to conduct telehealth ABA including licensure in the host and recipient location (as necessary)
- I have considered the risks and associated benefits of conducting this treatment via telehealth. In the case of severe behavior:
  - I have considered:
    - Risk of injury to the client or implementer
    - Potential property damage
    - Risk of counter-therapeutic effects
  - I have arranged for maximum safety at the receiving site (e.g., mailed safety gear as appropriate).
- I have communicated expectations about professional-client telehealth relationship prior to the first session, including:
  - Importance of attendance
  - Confidentiality
  - Technology requirements
  - Session structure
  - Dress requirements
  - Termination criteria
  - Crises plans

# Telehealth Checklist, cont'd

from Lerman et al, 2020

- I have provided written guidelines specific to telehealth, including
  - Contract and consent for telehealth services
  - Contract for loan equipment
  - Technology manual
  - Guidelines for transmission of data
- I have confirmed there are sufficient resources at the receiving site, including
  - Staffing
  - Session materials
  - Hardware
  - Software
  - Internet connection

## Am I ready to initiate a telehealth ABA session?

- I have confirmed sufficient connectivity for the host and receiving site prior to session. I have cleared all potential technology issues (e.g., broken microphone).
- I have tested the connection and platform through a session trial run.
- I have planned with the receiving site potential solutions to ensure clear visual and audio of the client and/or alternatives to clear visual and audio (e.g., hand signals).
- I have arranged session times to accommodate schedules (e.g., too many family members home during a session time).
- I have set up the host site to protect confidentiality:
  - Obtained headsets
  - Set-up in a locked, private room
  - Arranged schedules to ensure the session will not be interrupted
  - Considered use of a white noise machine