

Teletherapy Services Procedures and FAQ's

What Platform will you be using? Why can't I use FaceTime or Skype for my teletherapy service?

I will be using the Zoom Pro version platform. The client can install the basic Zoom platform at no charge. FaceTime and Skype do not have adequate security for teletherapy.

What will teletherapy look like?/My young child won't be able to attend that long over a screen

Mobile coaching through teletherapy focuses on the *SLP (Speech Language Pathologist) coaching the parent through specific activities to target language goals as the parent works with their child.* . The SLP can match the coaching session with a variety of routines of the parents' choosing (feeding, bathing, playtime, play with props or just with caregiver, chores, reading, etc). Together the parent and SLP decide on 1-2 activities before the session (by email). Once you are logged into Zoom, the SLP coaches as you go (*See "Expectations below). Following the session, the SLP will offer some verbal feedback, ask the parent to reflect on the session and give their own feedback and discuss next steps together.

Session length for mobile coaching: one hour

Benefits of teletherapy in early intervention of language delay

This quote captures the concept nicely:

"When you sow a seed once, you will reap a single harvest. When you teach the people, you will reap a hundred harvests" Kuan Young

In other words, I like to think of it as therapy doesn't happen just once a week when the speech pathologist visits with your child. Whether the SLP visits your home or in person, the parent is given the tools to give many "doses" of language intervention a day. Coaching through teletherapy is just using a different medium to do this.

Parent coaching and consultation through teletherapy:

- Enables **flexibility** of scheduling-You won't be tied to a specific time once a week; instead we will choose when you want me to come "visit" during a chosen routine to coach you through.
- Is **Evidenced-Based**. A **key component** of early intervention services has always been **parent training**, whether it is face -to -face or through teletherapy. It empowers a

parent to be even more of an *active participant* in teaching their child strategies during everyday routines, and in their natural environment: HOME. So, it is very functional! Teletherapy immediately puts the parent in the “driver’s seat” as a speech pathologist coaches them along. Once a parent learns these strategies, they can practice and use them many times a day over many different activities and routines. The more opportunities a child has, the better the outcomes.

- If you or your child (or I!) have the sniffles but are still up for a visit, **no one has to worry about spreading germs** with an in-person visit. We can still carry on.

When will you return to face- to -face therapy for language delay (kids age 3 and under)?

I've been doing face- to -face therapy for many years and intend to continue that model in a child's home once it is absolutely safe for all involved to do so, carefully following the health authorities directives, and on a case- by -case basis. I hope to eventually offer a “hybrid” model of therapy to include both in-person and teletherapy for **language delay** (by parent coaching/consultation). Unfortunately due to the nature of this work and types of physical interactions, as well as the difficulty of a child this age to understand or maintain a consistent safe distance it is in everyone's best interest to use the mobile coaching approach with a parent to address the child's needs.

What about articulation therapy?

I am now offering in- person services for 3-5 year olds with speech sound difficulties with the following safety protocols in place:

- Outdoor sessions at a park with a covered pavilion or at your home if you have a covered outdoor space (like a deck or carport).
- Regular hand sanitizing (SLP and child)
- Use of disinfectant wipes
- I will wear a transparent mask
- I will also use a portable plexiglass screen
- Distancing as much as possible

Zoom sessions may be considered as complement to outdoor sessions as applicable.

What are the fees and when are they due? Will the fees change for teletherapy?

My fees will not increase for this service; they are the same for both mobile coaching for language delay and for working with speech sound disorders. In the event of technical difficulties, efforts will be made to make up the time either by extending the appointment length, preparing notes or instructions and sending them by email, or continuing the appointment on the phone with a caregiver. Session fee will not be prorated.

Fees: \$150 for all therapy sessions (in-person, mobile coaching, or teletherapy), due before the session begins by Etransfer

Does your teletherapy count as “therapy”?

Absolutely. Even though I will be engaging primarily with you as described above, this is indeed a therapeutic intervention and very much a part of what I already do during face-to-face sessions.

What about siblings? Pets?

For outdoor sessions (speech sound disorders), no siblings or pets please as we would like the focus to be on your child and we want to keep things as safe as possible.

What is your cancellation policy?

Please remember that I have planned for the appointment time to see you and your child. Although I understand that things can come up now and then, regular attendance is important for progress. Please contact me at your earliest convenience, preferably 24 hours in advance if you are unable to keep your teletherapy appointment. I reserve the right to discontinue services if there are several cancellations that do not respect my time.

What if my child will not cooperate if we are in a zoom session for speech sound work?

Just as I do during an in-person visit, if this happens (yes, it happens sometimes!) we will remain flexible with the therapy “plan” and try to re-engage your child. It still creates an opportunity for teaching and learning.

Sounds great! How do I sign up?

Before we jump into therapy, I need to determine what your child’s level of current functioning is. If your child has had a formal speech/language assessment in place within the last 6 months, we can waive the formal assessment. In this case, please contact me on the contact me form and we can discuss your concerns and make an appointment. *Note: I offer a 20 minute “trial run” at no charge for new clients to ensure comfortable use of the technology, to answer any questions you may have, and to plan the first session’s activities.

If your child hasn’t had an assessment, please contact me on the “contact me” form and I will get back to you to discuss options.

Expectations

1. Sign in 5-10 minutes before the appointment starts (click link that the SLP sends you and you will be placed into the waiting room until I admit you)
2. Please do not record the sessions

3. Session time will be one hour
4. For mobile coaching: Place your device (laptop, smart phone, ipad) out of reach of your child but so I can easily observe (note: screen will be turned off as to avoid distractions and you will be the only one who can hear me through your Bluetooth headphones or by wired headphones. Tip: a mason jar metal ring lid may be handy as a phone holder
5. Have your materials ready. We may do one table activity to begin with (please place your child in a booster or high chair if we choose an activity at the table and then we will move to the floor area, ...or even outdoors to play on a porch or grass area if it's a nice day and we can maintain the Zoom connection!). We will also be following your child's lead much of the time to keep things as natural as possible. Language opportunities present themselves naturally.
6. Have water available for your child and make sure toileting needs are met before the session (it's ok if they need to go during the session but it will be less disruptive if you check beforehand)
7. Limit distractions (TV, other toys, etc)
8. If there is technical difficulty, I will phone you to finish the appointment if we are unable to reconnect by Zoom.

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