

Learning how to foster connection through telecommunication is useful knowledge during and after COVID-19. Virtual communication may support people to access services when physical interaction is not possible, for those in rural and remote locations, those without transportation, and for children with disabilities who may experience extreme stress attending in-person appointments.

SAFETY

Update all contact information and create an emergency plan should the technology disconnect or the person accessing services be in immediate danger.

RECOGNIZE EMOTIONALITY

Be prepared to recognize signs of distress and respond accordingly with limited body language cues available.

VIDEO DEFICIT

For younger children, create conversations through a speak, listen, respond model such as that used in “Dora the Explorer”.

PREPARATION

Pre-plan conversation themes and activities. Follow the child’s lead if they want to talk about or play something different than what was planned.

THROWING

Two service providers chat virtually, switching roles where one person pretends to be a child or adolescent. Their job is to make the call as difficult as possible for the other service provider so they are comfortable and well prepared to deal with any situation the child may throw at them.