



Tele-Speech

SLPs, can we talk? Our Virtual Role

As SLPs, we are good at teaching others how to talk and EI SLPs are acutely aware of the need for face-to-face interactions in doing so. Challenges can arise when a screen is introduced for televisits. What is catching the child's interest? Who should be facing whom? Below are some thoughts about shifting the spotlight to caregivers and children instead of yourself.

Focus

If you aren't careful, televisits can easily become a video chat with the caregiver. Clearly defining your role and the caregiver's role in the visit is essential. Televisits provide a great opportunity to turn the focus even more to caregiver-child interactions, rather than the SLP and child. Help caregivers think about you as a "bug in the ear" to provide support while they focus on interacting with the child in the planned activity.

Fine Tune

Realities of video conferences include lags in audio and video. It may not be as easy to jump in and provide a quick idea before the moment has passed. These challenges provide a unique opportunity to help families fine tune their observational skills. Caregivers may need to provide you with information on what the child did or said if you didn't catch it as you engage in the coaching conversation.

Fascinate

A screen for a televisit can create a new distraction. Help parents explore how to be more interesting and fun to the child than the screen by having caregivers reflect on their own responses. Think about what you, as the SLP, would do to get a child's attention. Role play with caregivers and have them reflect on what they saw in your face, voice, and body that would fascinate the child.

Functional

A go-to activity for many SLPs is play with toys. Play is great, but communication happens throughout a child's day. Routines may look different for families right now and tele-intervention provides an opportunity to jointly explore other daily activities as the context for visits. Help caregivers think about how they can be supporting the child's communication across their day.