

Technology for Live Video Visits

The focus of early intervention is to facilitate the active participation of families in the EI process by engaging caregivers in the planning and implementation of services. Live video visits (e.g., telehealth or teletherapy) may enable you and your child to receive early intervention (EI) services. Below, we provide some technology tips for live video visits.



What Internet platform do I need for live video visits?



Your service coordinator and/or EI provider will identify a platform (e.g., Skype and Zoom) to use for live video visits. Each EI provider or service coordinator may have a different platform. However, all platforms will let you see and hear the EI professional. Your service coordinator and/or EI provider will tell you which platform they're using and help you access the live video visit. No public-facing platform (e.g., Facebook) should be used for live video visits. You should ask your EI professional about whether the platform protects your privacy.

What technology do I need for live video visits?

For live video visits, you will need an Internet/data plan with a stable connection. Usually, you can use a phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer for live video visits. Some laptops or desktops may require a webcam and speakers.

How can I prepare for a high-quality live video visit?

We understand that your family circumstances are unique and constantly changing. Below, we provide tips for a high-quality visit, but realize that it may be difficult to implement these tips.

- Choose the location in your home that will allow you to best see and hear the EI professional. Ideally, this location will be private and quiet. This will help avoid background noise so you can see and hear the EI professional.
- If possible, set up your device so that you do not need to hold it during the session. For example, you may use an iPad stand or lean the device against a stable surface.
- Prepare your child. You may give your child a snack before the visit so the child is not hungry. You may also check whether the child has to use the bathroom before the visit. These activities will minimize interruptions and help ensure that you get the most out of the visit.
- Engage in joint planning with your EI provider. Before the visit, discuss with your provider the outcomes, strategies, routines, and activities that will occur during the visit. Identify the best time and date for the visit and how you will share feedback with one another.



For more information about joint planning, visit <https://blogs.illinois.edu/files/6150/807741/170327.pdf>

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For more information, visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse at <https://eiclearinghouse.org>

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention.



- Try to ensure a consistent and sufficient bandwidth for your Internet connection. You may ask family members to avoid using the Internet during your live video visit. If possible, hard-wire your Internet connection (versus relying on WiFi). If you're using WiFi, try a location as close to your router as possible. The ideal bandwidth of your Internet connection will depend on the Internet platform you are using. Ask your EI professional about the needed bandwidth for the platform you are using. Check your Internet bandwidth with the Speakeasy Speed Test at <https://www.speakeasy.net/speedtest/>

How can I access needed technology for live video visits?

There are several free and low-cost ways to access technology for live video visits. Consider:

- Xfinity has a program that offers low-cost computers - <https://www.xfinity.com/learn/internet-service/internet-essentials/low-cost-computer>
- The Early Intervention Clearinghouse is loaning devices and technology to families so they can participate in live video visits - <https://eiclearinghouse.org/resources/techloan/>
- The Arc of Illinois-Technology Fund for families will pay for a \$500 device for a family - <https://www.thearcofil.org/about-us/programs/assistive-technology-fund/assistive-technology-application/>
- AT&T has a program for low cost, high speed internet services - <https://www.att.com/help/affordable-connectivity-program/>
- Mobile telephone and Internet companies can provide free mobile service through the Lifeline Program. The customer accesses the Lifeline benefit by obtaining service from one of the participating companies, and the companies verify eligibility - <http://linkupillinois.org/>
- Safelink is a well-established lifeline mobile carrier - <https://www.safelinkwireless.com/>



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