

Tip Sheet for Teleconferencing Visits

Zoom is a great way to spend time with your children yet parents sometimes find it challenging to connect due to the age, attention span and/or developmental focus of the individual child. This tip sheet offers suggestions on how to prepare for tele-visit and includes conversation tips and game ideas to help you have an engaging visit.

First, set yourself up for success with these simple tips:

1. Limit distractions like the television on both ends of the call
2. Sit in a well-lit spot so that your face is clear and look right into the camera rather than the screen so the children feel you are making eye contact with them
3. Plan for/expect technical difficulties
4. Keep expectations reasonable

For toddlers and pre-schoolers:

1. Talk to your child with puppets or stuffed animals
2. Read books
3. Play games like Simon Says, Peek-a-boo and Where's your nose
4. Use songs/finger play such as Itsy Bitsy Spider, Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
5. Play music, dance

For school-aged children:

1. Read a book
2. Have a dance party
3. Play charades, hang-man or Simon Says
4. 20 Questions- One player chooses an animal or object and everyone else takes turns to ask a question so that they can guess what they are. Yes or no answers only
5. I Went To The Shop- someone starts with "I went to the shop and I bought...a packet of chips". Next person starts from the start and adds their own – "I went to the shop and I bought...a packet of chips...and a bunch of bananas". Carry on for as long as you can without getting confused
6. Would You Rather- ask and discuss..."Would you rather be able to fly or breathe underwater?"
7. Show and Tell- ask them to choose a special item that they can share with you explain why it's special
8. Drawing Challenge- agree on something to draw and give it a go at the same time
9. Play board games that both participants have in their individual locations, such Battleship, Headbanz or Pictionary

For older children and teens try some of these conversation starters:

1. What was the funniest, most heartwarming thing that happened today?
2. If you could have a super power, what would it be?
3. Tell me a joke and I'll share one with you.
4. What's something you recently learned?
5. What movies have you watched recently?
6. Do you have any new hobbies?
7. Are there any hobbies or activities that you'd like to try?

Games for older kids:

1. Two Truths and a Lie - Take turns telling the other person two truths and one lie about your day and ask the other person to guess which were true and which was a lie
2. Would you Rather - Give the child two options to choose between. For example, "Would you rather eat a peanut butter pickle sandwich or ketchup on popcorn?"
3. Movie Lines - Share a line from a movie and ask the other person guess the movie
4. Charades
5. Play musical instruments with or for your child

VIRTUAL PLAY DATE IDEAS

for when meeting with friends is difficult

Watch a movie.	Draw pictures for each other.	Play "Would you rather?"	Play "What Am I".	Play "Last letter".
Listen to songs.	Make a story together.	Play "Two Truths and One Lie".	Play charades.	Play a board game.
Have a scavenger hunt.	Craft and chat.	Play a game on-line.	Do a LEGO challenge.	Play "Follow the leader".
Do show and tell.	Do a quiz together.	Play a text RPG.	Read a book aloud.	Play "Categories".

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