

# Behavior Rehabilitation Services (BRS) Tip-Sheet for Remote Visitation

Thank you for your continued commitment to serving children and families during this stressful time. We honor the work you have been doing and continue to do during this crisis period. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and a declaration of emergency at both the state and national levels, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is taking additional steps to safeguard the health of the children and families it serves.

On March 26, 2020, Gov. Jay Inslee issued a proclamation suspending in-person visitation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: [www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/proclamations/20-33%20-%20COVID-19%20DCYF%20Visitation-Remedial%20Services%20%28tmp%29.pdf](http://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/proclamations/20-33%20-%20COVID-19%20DCYF%20Visitation-Remedial%20Services%20%28tmp%29.pdf).

If your clients participate in Family Time Visits with their family members, you can use video conference technology to continue having these visits.

If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact your BRS Program Manager or the child's case manager.

## Emergency Interim Policy

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and declaration of emergency, DCYF has made changes to Policy 4254 Family Time and Sibling and Relative visits. You can view the interim policy guidance on our website: [www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Family%20Time%20Interim%20Policy%20memo%20FINAL%20\(003\).pdf](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Family%20Time%20Interim%20Policy%20memo%20FINAL%20(003).pdf).



## Virtual Visit

Visitation providers will be using an online application to conduct remote visitations.

Check with your visitation provider to learn what online application they are using for the visit. There should be no cost to you to participate in a virtual visit or download an application on your smartphone, tablet or access the webpage on your computer.

We know a virtual visit will be different from an in-person visit. The youth are still able to engage with their parent just like an in-person visit. You and the parent can be creative to make these virtual visits fun and engaging.



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Some suggestions on how to make the virtual visit successful for youth ages 11 and older:

- Involve the youth in planning the virtual visit.
- Ask them what they would like the visit to look like, where they want it to occur, etc.
- Talk about day to day activities, how learning is going.
- Do a learning activity together.
- Create a book for each other while contact is limited, like a journal.
- Baking or cooking together - parents can talk a child through making a favorite family dish.

## Safety Considerations

Providing for child safety is part of DCYF's core mission. Video conferencing may have different safety risks to consider than in-person visitation. Below are a few safety considerations while a remote visitation is occurring:

- Ensure identifying information is not visible while doing a video conference. This includes addresses or phone numbers, passwords, SSNs or full names (first middle last).
- Conduct video conference in areas that are hazard free.
- No recording of the visitation is permitted.
- Do not have people around that should not or are not approved to be a part of visitation.
- Ensure that you do not have information about other clients in places that are visible to the camera.

## How to talk to kids about COVID-19

News of the coronavirus is everywhere and most children have already heard about the virus and have been impacted by the changes the virus has brought to our lives. Child Care Resources has put together a document about talking with children about COVID-19. You can access this document online: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html).

## Questions

Communication during this time is essential. If you are unable to participate in a virtual visitation or have questions or concerns, please talk with your case worker or licensur. If you have a contracted community provider assisting your visits, you can also talk with them about your concerns or questions. We will continue to provide support to you during this time. Thank you for your patience and cooperation.