

INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEPSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

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Pediatric Psychological Associates (PPA) is temporarily offering Telepsychology appointments as deemed appropriate for current clients during the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

WHAT IS TELEPSYCHOLOGY?

Telepsychology (“Telehealth”) is the provision of psychological services using electronic telecommunication with the provider and the recipient of services being in separate locations. This involves the client and psychologist communicating through a telehealth platform utilizing both audio and video capability, similar to that used for a video conference or using Facetime to talk to friends.

BENEFITS & RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH TELEPSYCHOLOGY

The benefits of Telepsychology sessions include but are not limited to:

- The ability to continue therapy despite community measures to slow the spread of the COVID-19 by means such as social isolation and quarantine.
- The ability to maintain contact with your psychologist during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Telepsychology sessions occur in the comfort and privacy of your home.

The possible risks of Telepsychology include but are not limited to:

- As with any electronic platform, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. A breach in confidentiality could occur, exposing your protected health information (PHI) to others including the public.
- Your progress in therapy could be interrupted due to using a different form of communication that may not be as effective or feel the same as an in-person session.
- Many of the adjunct therapy tools used with children during our typical in-person sessions may not be available during telehealth appointments (e.g., play & art therapy tools). Your psychologist may discuss ways that toys, games or other materials can be used during telehealth appointments.
- Sessions could be interrupted by a technical difficulty or another unexpected event such as a loss of internet connection, loss of Smartphone or computer power, or trouble seeing or hearing each other.
- If a life-threatening emergency arises, the psychologist may not be able to help the same way they can during an in-person session.

INSURANCE INFORMATION & COSTS

Due to the unexpected and quick response needed to serve our clients during the Coronavirus pandemic, we are currently unable to give you very many details about insurance coverage of Telepsychology services.

- It is our understanding that most private insurance companies do cover Telehealth services.
- You can contact your insurance company to determine if your plan covers mental health telepsychology services.

- Each day there is new information as the U.S. government and other agencies are working with insurance companies to cover telehealth appointments during the COVID-19 crisis. As we receive more information we will update you.
- Our contracted insurance rates for Telepsychology services may be the same or lower as an in-person session. According to Kentucky law, it is our understanding that Telehealth rates should never be more than an in-person session.
- Currently, you will pay your normal copay, coinsurance, deductible, etc. that you have been paying for in-person therapy appointments at PPA. If this changes, we will let you know prior to your next appointment.
- If you do not have private health insurance or would like to self-pay for services, the rate is \$150/appointment (the same as our in-person therapy sessions).
- Appointments last approximately 53 minutes (the same as our in-person therapy sessions).
- You must keep your credit card information on file at PPA to engage in telehealth services. Your credit card information will be scanned into your child's electronic medical record (EMR) which is HIPAA compliant. The original credit card form will be shredded after it is scanned into EMR.
- A staff member will run your credit card within 24-hours of your telehealth appointment.
- If Telepsychology services are not covered by your insurance company or payment is denied for any reason, you will be responsible for full payment.

THE TELEHEALTH ENVIRONMENT

- To participate in Telepsychology services, you will need a smartphone, computer, laptop, or tablet with a built in webcam. Most of today's phones & laptops have built in video technology. Desktop computers do not necessarily come with video capability. If you are unsure, there is usually a small circle, the size of a pencil eraser, located on the middle of the top part of your screen. You can also purchase an external webcam that clips on to your device.
- If you plan to use your cell phone or tablet, you may want to purchase a pop-socket or another type of portable stand so you do not have to hold your phone during the session.
- You will need access to the internet through password protected wifi. You should not use public or unlocked wifi to avoid breach of confidentiality.
- The picture and sound quality will work best if no one else at home is using the same wifi during your session. Some people find that using headphones improves the quality of the session. It is also helpful to silence your cell phone or other electronics that could make noise or interrupt the session.
- There are many different Telehealth platforms. We will thoroughly discuss the platform being used prior to your first appointment. You will be given a link to the Telehealth account and a code to sign in at the time of your scheduled appointment.
- To participate in Telehealth, you must be present at your home in a private location with as few distractions as possible. It is not appropriate to participate in Telehealth in a car or public area such as a restaurant or coffee shop. Your provider will ask you to confirm your location at the beginning of the session per Telehealth requirements.
- Your provider will also be located in a quiet, private location to ensure confidentiality.

TELEHEALTH SESSIONS & EMERGENCY PLANNING

- At the beginning of each Telehealth session, a parent must be present to briefly check in with the provider if the client is a minor, unless an alternative is discussed and agreed upon by all parties.
- The provider will ask you to state the address of your physical location. This will confirm your identity and provide a location should an emergency arise per requirements of Telehealth.
- The psychologist will ask you to provide a call-back number in case of being disconnected during the telehealth session. Your provider will call you back as soon as possible if you are disconnected.
- Both the psychologist and the client must state if anyone else is present in the room during the session per the requirements of Telehealth.
- Both parties agree that the sessions will not be audio or video recorded.
- Progress notes with the session content will be entered into the patient’s secured electronic medical record.
- It is important to be on time for your telehealth appointment. If you do not join the Telehealth session within 15 minutes of your designated start time your appointment will be considered a “no show”. If you are running late for your appointment please directly email your provider as staff may not be present in the office to answer phone calls.
- If you need to cancel or change your appointment, please contact the office at (502) 429-5431 or email your provider directly. If an appointment is “no-showed” or cancelled in less than 48 business hours for a non-emergency reason, you will be billed our normal fee of \$45.

RESUMING IN-PERSON SESSIONS & ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT OPTIONS

- We plan to return to our normal in-person therapy sessions as soon as possible. This will depend on multiple factors including recommendations from local and national agencies about COVID-19, the public school system, as well as the comfort level of the provider and client/family.
- Your psychologist may determine that due to certain circumstances, Telepsychology is no longer appropriate. In this case, we will discuss available alternatives.
- If your psychologist becomes ill or must care for a family member and is unable to provide services, you will be notified by a staff member as soon as possible. A covering psychologist will be available to speak with you about a plan moving forward or if any emergencies arise.
- You may determine that Telepsychology is not appropriate for you or your child. You are free to stop Telehealth appointments at any time without judgement or penalty. In this case, we will discuss available alternatives.

Prior to the start of Telepsychology services, we discussed and agreed to the above information.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Patient’s Signature (ages 13+)

Date

Psychologist’s Signature

Date