

This unedited transcript of a SpeechPathology.com webinar is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility for the viewer and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This transcript may contain errors. Copying or distributing this transcript without the express written consent of SpeechPathology.com is strictly prohibited. For any questions, please contact customerservice@SpeechPathology.com.

Telepractice: A Day in the Life of a Pediatric Teletherapist - the Inside Scoop

Recorded October 10, 2019

Presenter: Sara Smith, MS, CCC-SLP; Diana Parafiniuk, MS, CCC-SLP
SpeechPathology.com Course #9053

- [Amy] And at this time, it is a pleasure to introduce Sara Smith and Diana Parafiniuk, who is presenting Telepractice: A Day in the Life of a Teletherapist, The Inside Scoop. Sara Smith is a speech-language pathologist and lead product manager with E-Therapy. She attended UNC Chapel Hill in the University of North Texas where she received a Master's Degree in Speech-Language Pathology. She has experienced working as an SLP and supervisor in a variety of settings, including school districts, private practice, early childhood intervention, and telepractice. She currently works with E-Therapy to develop new materials and help teletherapists provide effective sessions for their students. And Diana Parafiniuk is also an SLP. She is the co-founder and chief marketing officer for E-Therapy. She manages E-Therapy's marketing team, oversees and supports operations, and supervises contractors, aides, and therapists. Diana has provided services for bilingual English/Spanish speaking populations. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and Linguistics and a Master's Degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Northern Arizona University. Diana also serves as an adjunct professor at Northern Arizona University, teaching classes and SLPA childhood communication disorders and screening and treatment. Welcome to both of you. Thank you so much for joining us today.

- [Sara Smith] Thank you, this is Sara. Can you hear me okay? Okay, great, thank you so much. We are really glad to be here to talk about telepractice. Let's get started with Telepractice: A Day in the Life of a Teletherapist. And today, we're giving you the inside scoop on that. Here are our learning outcomes. After this course, you should be able to identify the key elements required to implement telepractice services that meet professional standards. List at list three activities that can be used in a telepractice model for the treatment of common pediatric speech-language disorders. And you should be able to describe telepractice strategies for completing daily tasks, such as scheduling, communicating with caregivers, and engaging students. Here's an outline of what we'll be reviewing today. We're going to give you an overview of telepractice in our field. The basic tech requirements and professional guidelines for telepractice.

Strategies to complete daily tasks in the life of a teletherapist. And we'll be focusing most of our presentation on teletherapy techniques and lots of practical examples of teletherapy activities. What is telepractice? Telepractice or teletherapy involves the delivery of therapy services online via two-way video conferencing. It links live licensed therapist to clients who may otherwise have difficulty receiving those services. And telepractice is being used in the assessment and treatment of a wide range of disorders. Why do we need telepractice? Well, there's an increasing problem of a lack of special ed service providers across the country. And this is an issue in rural locations as well as metropolitan areas. There are many districts and states that really just don't have enough speech therapists in their particular location to serve all of the clients or students. Therapists can also use telepractice to connect to clients in need despite their location. So telepractice removes that barrier of distance so that therapists can reach their clients no matter where they are.

And telepractice creates the ability for SLPs to serve more clients in need even if they have transportation issues or maybe it's a student who's in an alternative program and not in their regular school. As long as they have a computer and an internet connection, the services can be provided. Emerging research is showing that teletherapy can be just as effective as on-site therapy. And we talked in more detail in our previous webinar about some of that evidence. If you haven't already viewed the first installment of this telepractice series, I would highly encourage you to check that out as well. Telepractice connects practitioners with specific experience to students with certain speech-language disorders. If there's a client who needs a therapist with a specific specialty and there's not one in their area, telepractice could be a really good solution for that. It also allows a therapist to have more flexibility. There's no commute time. And many therapists feel that telepractice can be a better use of time. So they're not spending time chasing students across an elementary school or driving out a distance to a client's home. Telepractice removes some of those things that can make our day less efficient. What does ASHA have to say about telepractice? Well, ASHA

officially approved telepractice in 2005. And here's an important statement from them about telepractice as a service delivery. The use of telepractice does not remove any existing responsibilities in delivering services, including adherence to the code of ethics, scope of practice, state and federal laws, and ASHA policy documents on professional practices. Therefore, the quality of services delivered via telepractice must be consistent with the quality of services delivered face-to-face.

This is an important thing to take note of. We aren't substituting a computer for speech therapy. The specialized services and expertise of the therapist is what is driving the therapy in telepractice. We just use computer activities and on-screen games to facilitate the therapy, just like you would use tangible activities in your on-site sessions. In telepractice or any service delivery model, it's important that the services be provided in an effective way that still follows all the guidelines and scope of practice as on-site sessions. Evolving technology, technology is becoming more and more a part of the educational and healthcare systems. So utilizing technology is really not such a big leap for folks anymore. Teachers and parents are becoming increasingly comfortable with technology because it's incorporated into pretty much every aspect of our lives. And students are digital natives.

Meaning, they've grown up being immersed in the digital world. They are especially at ease with using technology, and it's really very intuitive for them. And in speaking about that, this is an interesting article titled, "Understanding Teletherapy" as an option for K-12 students with disabilities. Results of this study indicate that the teletherapy platform is an easy adjustment for students because as we mentioned, using technology comes so naturally to them. The findings also show that telepractice encourages caregivers to collaborate in the therapy process in a positive way. So that was a really interesting study. In this next section, we will review technical requirements for telepractice, basics about choosing an online meeting platform, and important points for implementing a telepractice model. What is the tech setup and is it really

complicated? No, it's not, you really just need a basic computer. It could be a laptop or a desktop. A webcam, oftentimes, that's already embedded into your computer. But if it's not, you could use an external camera. A headset, many therapists find that that really improves the quality of sound. But some find that they don't need a headset. That may be depending on the therapist and the quality of their audio. Good internet connection, that's non-negotiable. That's required for that direct, live sessions that we wanna provide. And you wanna have the same setup on the student's end. We need to use a platform, an online meeting platform that is HIPAA-compliant, meanings, it's private, secure, password-protected sessions, meet standards of encryption for HIPAA-compliance. And just to note here that typically, free online video conference platforms don't have that level of security. So you really wanna double-check before you use one of the free programs out there. Your platform needs to be easy to use. It needs to be easy to use for the therapist and also for the client that you're working with. And it needs to be conducive to your needs. It might include specific features like an online whiteboard or on-screen drawing tools.

Look at the features that are offered and find what works for your needs. Here're some key points for implementing a telepractice model: Ensure that you have a secure billing and documentation system set up. If you're starting your own private practice, you may need to consult with finance or legal personnel to ensure that you're really dotting your I's and crossing your T's as far as your documentation system goes. You may choose to work with an established telepractice company that already has the setup for you. Office space, make sure that you present yourself in a professional way, that you have private space to work from and that you have good lighting and a non-distracting background. You will, of course, need to maintain appropriate licensure. In telepractice, this could mean having more than one state license. You need to be licensed in the state where you reside. And if you're working with a client in a different state, which is totally possible, then you would have to be licensed in the state where that client is located as well. And you can complete various SOP responsibilities via telepractice,

such as attending IEP meetings, which can be done via phone or video conference. Collaborating with caregivers, completing evaluations. And even supervision of SLPAs if that's needed. That gives you an overall picture of some of the guiding principles with the telepractice model. Now, I'll hand it over to Diana, and she's going to talk more about a day in the life of a teletherapist and what that looks like.

- [Diana Parafiniuk] Hi, everybody, can you hear me? Oh, okay, alright, it's working now? Oh, wonderful, thank you. Okay. Perfect. Sorry about the delay. Great. Thanks everybody for joining us for part two, and thank you Sara. Okay, so now that everybody can hear. Wonderful. In this section, we're gonna review what a daily schedule looks like for a teletherapist, how to communicate in the virtual world, keeping your clients engaged in the therapy process, and incorporating movement into your day as a teletherapist, because it's something that we really, sometimes, put on the back burner, and that's very important. So we are gonna touch on that as well. A snapshot of a typical day for an E-therapist, what does that look like? How would you put that together? E-therapists have a very different energy in their day, and so we're gonna talk about what your schedule would look like, just sort of high-level, and bring that to the forefront for yourself. This particular snapshot is a schedule for brick-and-mortar school. In the morning, when you get up and you're putting yourself together to go to work, it's a little bit different, as you're not walking through those double doors, but you're walking through your home office.

So take that time in the beginning to maybe schedule some time aside for yourself and do a review of what your day looks like. Maybe you're answering emails and you're going over the information that you're gonna be working on with your students. Make sure that you schedule that time for yourself. And then moving forward, there's a chunk of time in that schedule where you're actually doing your sessions, working with your students, working with your clients, and you will be documenting your session between that period of time. So there's a little bit of a balance and a juggle. You wanna make

sure that you're not just saving that documentation for at the end of the day but that you're doing it concisely and alongside the sessions that you're actually conducting. That is a personal preference. Some people do wait till the end. But we do find that if you schedule that within your time, that that is actually very helpful for you. This is something, when you're working at a brick-and-mortar school, that's a little bit more possible as your waiting for students to come to and from the computer. So just make sure that you're acknowledging that period of time for yourself. Remember to take a break as well, you also need to eat.

And during this period of time, it can also be very useful for yourself as well. Maybe you're taking that lunch time, you're eating, you're catching up on your notes, and you're remember to step outside, to move around, and that you're still very engaged within your schedule for that day, but you're also taking the time to nourish yourself as well. This is a very important part of your schedule. When you return, you wanna make sure that your afternoon looks similar for yourself in terms of providing those sessions and your documentation, and maybe there's something else that's also happening. Maybe you're providing an assessment online. Maybe you need to take a period of time out of your schedule to make sure that you have all of the materials that you need for that as well.

Remember to put that within your schedule. After you administer your assessment, maybe you take another break. Maybe that's something that you do need to schedule for yourself. If you're not scheduling these things for yourself within your day, they typically will not happen. We really wanted to provide you sort of just a sample example of what a schedule looks like. Maybe at the end of the day, you schedule a period of time to connect with the school staff, talk about the schedules that are coming up within the week. Make sure that you're cross-referencing your schedule with the staff. And then you're completing your paperwork, and you're responding to emails that you couldn't get to earlier. Maybe you're just filing up at the end of the day with

some information you wanna exchange with school staff. And then your day is over. So that's kind of a typical schedule that we wanted to provide to you so you had something tangible to be able to reference later on after you leave this webinar. A snapshot schedule, if you're working in a virtual setting with a virtual school or home school, we wanted to take that time for you as well as what, maybe, that would look like as, Maybe you're not getting as much face time as you would have with your brick-and-mortar staff, but maybe you're working more with a caregiver or a learning coach or a parent. Again, remember within that period of time, that you are scheduling a moment to connect with them as well. When you're working in a virtual setting and opposed to a brick-and-mortar setting, if you have a last minute cancellation from a parent or from a learning coach, maybe, take that time for yourself to connect via email or via phone call. Maybe you're picking up time in your schedule to accomplish something that you weren't able to before you started during that day. So there's some flex time there as well. Again, remember, no matter what you're setting is that you're working in, that you are taking a break for yourself, and you're getting outside or you're taking a breath, you're moving around.

In the afternoon when you return, again, your sessions will continue. You're also gonna be attending IEP meetings as well, whether it's via the computer and being present face-to-face or via phone conference. Again, documentation as we always like to reinforce. Make sure that you're doing that daily. And connecting, again, with your learning coaches or your parents, and making sure that your schedule is in place for your following sessions to come. What does teletherapy bring into your daily practice? What does that look like for you? We have, for ourselves, a different sort of energy that we bring as E-therapists, physically and literally. In that process, when you are a speech therapist providing E-therapy, you are not running from campus to campus, you're not loading up all your materials and dragging them with you. There is an alleviation for that experience in your practice which is actually a really wonderful benefit. You don't need to haul your materials. You don't need to drag them. Being able

to provide therapy from your home office or from your office, wherever that may be, without having that physical load, really does allow you a little bit more freedom and a little bit more time in your schedule. You have more autonomy being an E-therapist. Even though you're still part of a team, you do work more independently. We really do love the fact that telepractice does allow for quite a creative experience and constant learning as our field is always evolving. We did talk about what a typical schedule looks like, and what we wanna talk about now in regards to scheduling is to actually create that schedule for yourself. Are you using pen and paper?

Are you just winging it? What are you doing? We really do recommend that you use a digital schedule, whatever that looks like for you, whether it's creating an Excel sheet, using a digital calendar. Having something digitally at your fingertips while you're working within this space really does provide you more freedom and allow you the ability to change things last minute if you do need to, and so that is a recommendation that we really believe reinforces your practice. When you're scheduling, it is important to remember that, even though you're working remotely, that you do need to coordinate with on-site staff, and they do need to be aware of what your schedule is. So even though you do have this autonomy and you're working remotely and you're working more independently, a copy of your schedule to working with the staff that you are engaged with on-site, even though you're remote, is very important.

Ensure that you have all of the communication information, contact information that you need from the staff that you're working with at your fingertips so that if anything arises, you have immediate ability to contact who you need to. Same within your virtual setting. Make sure that you coordinate with your family and your caregiver, have your students' contact information listed on your schedule, your digital schedule for your immediate reference. It's always important to, please, send calendar reminders out before your scheduled session. This way, you avoid running into your clients not showing up, having any miscommunication of, "I'm not sure when I was supposed to

be there." Reminders are so important and so necessary and really do ensure that you will be doing your sessions, and you will eliminate all those last-minute confusions that may occur. Communication, we are specialists in communication. How do we communicate successfully in our virtual space? Email, email, email, phone call, phone call, phone call. Even though you are remote, again, communication is the most important. Sometimes, you have to communicate more than you would've if you're walking down the hall and getting that face time. Please, remember to communicate often. In the process of working on your communication with the people that you will be working with, whether it's your staff, whether it's your clients or your students, those reminders really do come in handy and are very important. You can even make those reminders automatic so that you yourself are eliminating that manual, having to go in and do that. So look into what possibilities you have for that as well. Everybody likes to communicate in different ways. Reaching out to who you're working with and how they prefer to receive their communication is really important.

Some people really do prefer phone call. Sometimes, we get caught up in digital communication of texting and emailing, but every once in a while, somebody really does prefer the phone call. And remember to pick up the phone and call. Maybe somebody doesn't want any phone calls at all, and they just really prefer you to text or send an email. That's a really important piece of the puzzle for you to figure out not only your communication strategy but what their communication is as well. Log and document all of your client communication. This is very important. You want to make sure that you are keeping a digital log, or some people do prefer pen and paper. The reason why we kind of refer to keeping a digital log as a better way for you to be able to keep your communication log is that if you ever need to refer back to it, you have it located on your computer, you have it located in the folder specific for your client, and you can copy and paste what you need to at any point in time, and share that digital log communication. It does track when you try to reach out to the client, how you try to reach out to the client, if they responded, if they did not respond, if you've

rescheduled. All of those pieces are very important for you in your personal practice. You wanna make sure that you keep the log up-to-date, in case you ever do have to refer back to it, and all of your dates and times are accurate. If your client is a texter, it's a good idea to keep those texts saved, and in that way, you can copy those and forward them to yourself or to whoever you need to if they're requiring any information about when communication was exchanged. So make sure that you have those saved as well. Being a remote superstar communicator. This is really important, you really do wanna be a superstar communicator because this will be so important for your practice's success when you're working with your families, your students, your clients, your schools.

If you're a superstar communicator, you really alleviate any sort of miscommunication that might arise. In addition to that, it's also important to share some information about yourself. Maybe, you're sending anecdotes to your clients, to your families, or a friendly check-in to see how everybody's doing, how therapy is going, what maybe they would like to see come up in the future for future sessions. Just sort of those side communication experiences that you create that build rapport, that really build up all of your communication success that you have with your client in order to be successful. We do have therapists that we work with that, sometimes, pop a special note in snail mail. Those are things that we kinda take for granted these days.

So even though we're working remotely and digitally, every once in a while, it's nice to open up the mail and get something special from your therapists. Don't be afraid to communicate that way too. Sometimes, that is a really special experience. Be an active communicator. People perform better when they know that they're being heard and listened to and that you're an active listener, you're an active communicator. They're experiencing that you really are invested in them and want to be able to make sure that their session is going to be the most fruitful and that you really are listening to their challenges and wanting to provide more information for them. Sometimes, we just kind

of talk at people or people are speaking to us and we're not really present. So, really being an active listener and an active communicator and putting that in your back pocket when you're practicing via telepractice and remembering that it really does make for a special experience for everybody you're working with. How do you get your hall time? How do you make sure that when you are working remotely, that you're really getting in that extra time with the staff that you're working with or the families that you're working with? Some companies do have blogs or digital environment that you can participate in and share your experiences, engage in conversations with other E-therapists. Look for those, see where you can get more information about your practice. Share the information from your practice to others. Write stories, really explain what challenges, maybe, you've had or what solutions you've come up with. Ask questions and collaborate with other E-therapists. See what other people are doing out in the community of telepractice.

Even though you are independent and working autonomously from your private office, you can participate digitally, and you can participate in so many different social forums and blogs. So really reach out within your community and see who's doing what out there. It always is wonderful to know that there's support. Creating that hall time also, in your practice, with who you're working with as well, is also important. Take that extra time within your schedule to make sure that you're connecting with your teachers, not just your students, with your families, with extended family. Make sure that you really, when you take that time, that you're listening to them. That's a super important part to build in your virtual community. I think, sometimes, we think, "I'm just gonna conduct my session. I'm really busy, I have to get out. I have the next one to go to." But really taking that extra time and including that within your schedule and having those people on the other side know that you're taking that extra time to connect with them really does create for more success with the people you're working with. How to get buy-in from our clients, if there's any reticents coming from the other side of working with you? Because sometimes, people are working within this space, and that wasn't,

maybe, their first choice. So how do you build rapport? How do you get your client to work with you and trust you? Make sure that you do those getting-to-know-you sessions. Even though you're providing teletherapy and you're working remotely and digitally, it's really important that you take the time to build that rapport, just like you do when you walk through those double doors. Really get to know them before you launch into your session, understand what their interests are, how they like to interact. Make sure that you share information about yourself, personal information about yourself sometimes. Hold up a photo, bring photos up. It's nice to build that rapport with your client on the other side, and you can do that remotely. You're not limited. In this day and age, really, clients feel very at home in the digital space, as Sara referenced. They're digital natives mostly, and they're really comfortable.

Talk about the things that you have in common and bring those to the forefront when working with them. It's possible for your clients to invite others into their online session, which is a really wonderful aspect of working remotely. You have the ability to bring other people in simultaneously into your session. You're not just limited with the one-to-one experience. Maybe that does boost the morale. Maybe that does increase their motivation and give them something to work towards. Maybe you wanna send homework home and allow them opportunities to work on something before they see you again. It doesn't just have to be when they log in with you at that moment.

And keep them practicing and engaged even when you're not working with them at the same time. Get moving, this is something that's really important. We wanna make sure that you're not tied to your chair. Nobody's duct taped you down. You have mobility, it's a really wonderful thing. This is a dynamic space, this is not static. No matter how you're delivering your services, you are still able to get up and move around. Make sure that your camera is showing your whole body, same on the other side for your client, and do fun, interactive activities. Maybe you want to incorporate kinesthetic movements when you're doing articulation therapy. Maybe you wanna be able to get

up and get the wiggles out, and that's jumping jacks or dancing or singing, incorporating those early learning songs into your practice. These are all really important things to remember to do, and they're so fun for your client, and fun for you too. It also brings a fresh energy into your therapy sessions. Sometimes, if you see that your client has too many wiggles, it allows them the opportunity to work on the task and then get up and move around, work on the task and get up and move around. It's also a really healthy experience for yourself as well, making sure that you are also moving and taking breaks for yourself.

This sort of leads to how you also set yourself up at your office too. Maybe you wanna be in a nice, big chair that allows you mobility and to stretch. Maybe you're gonna be on an exercise ball. Either way, you have options. Make sure that you look into those for what's most comfortable for you, and really do make sure that you get up. This is a super important piece of your practice as well. How do you keep yourself engaged in your online sessions, without manipulatives as we think? The digital space is limitless. There are so many activities out there. You do not have to reinvent the wheel. There are free activities, there are paid activities. There's wonderful games, there's online books. There's dice, there's digital spinners. There's different videos. Sara's gonna go into lots of different ideas and different opportunities that you can bring into your practice a little bit later within this webinar.

Digital stickers are so fun, and whiteboards allow you the opportunity to create your own games as well. So look into all of those pieces for yourself. Create rewards for your clients using those different materials at your fingertips. You can also incorporate your own personal items as well, displaying photos, creating questions, all of those different materials. Previous to this, I said, you can't have manipulatives. Hm, wait a second, yes, you can. Even though we work digitally, if you have a document camera or even the camera that's built in, you can share tangible manipulatives. You can work with different dolls. You can work with Mr. Potato Head, you can work with artic cards,

flip charts, books, pictures. They don't have to be digital. You can use any tangible materials that you feel comfortable that you had used in your practice and bring those to life within your E-therapy. The client can share their tangible manipulative as well. Ask them, what are their favorite items? Do they have a favorite stuffie? Do they have different pictures or fun toys or anything that is important to them that they wanna share with you? Bring that into your practice. Sara, I'm gonna hand this over to you to continue on talking about the different materials and activities that everybody would like to experience.

- [Sara] Great, can you all hear me okay? Great, thanks so much, Diana. In this next section, we will review what a basic teletherapy session looks like, populations or disorders that can be treated via telepractice, and a lot of practical therapy session techniques teletherapists can use in their daily work. Some of you may be familiar with a telepractice model. For others out there, this concept may be completely brand new to you, and you might be just trying to wrap your mind around what this really looks like. Let's take a look here at a short clip of a telepractice session to give you an idea.

- So here's what you get to do. You can use your track pad. Do you see on the flashlight where it says "on"? You can click on there, and that's gonna turn the light on.

- [Computer] Spin.

- Great, so now we can see it in the light. Let's try this one. We're looking for a word that rhymes with hot. What's that word? Hot.

- Hot.

- And let's put the H on the beginning of it. Hot. Hot.

- [Computer] Log.
- Hmm, log, hot, does that rhyme?
- No.
- [Computer] Spot.
- Spot, hot, does that rhyme?
- Yes.
- Yes, good job!
- [Computer] Which one rhymes with woke?
- Hmm, do you remember how to turn the flashlight on?
- Yeah.
- Right.
- [Computer] Leaf.
- Leaf, woke, does that rhyme?
- [Computer] Smell.
- Smell, woke, does that rhyme?

- [Computer] Leaf.
- Smoke.
- Yes!
- [Computer] Smoke.
- Okay, so what you get to do is drag the words. Do you see over here where it says "more"? And what does this say?
- Less.
- Less, good. Drag those words onto the right spot.
- [Computer] Less.
- So who has less letters? Good, and then who has more?
- [Computer] More, more.
- Okay, so first, show me which one has more.
- [Computer] More.
- Good, now, let me hear you say, "More leaves."
- More leaves.

- Good, what letter does that word "leaves" start with?
- L.
- You got it, great job, okay, so that,
- Less.
- You got it, yeah, now,
- [Computer] Less.
- Less, which one has less? Perfect, okay. Now, what do you see here on the page?
- [Sara] Great, that just gives you an idea, a visual, of how this works for the live interactive online sessions. As you could see, the therapist and the client are both able to see themselves and each other, and the therapist can display practice materials or games on the screen for the student to see. The therapist can share keyboard and mouse control with the student so that he or she can actually type and click on the activities on the screen. You can take turns back and forth in games. Or if you're working with a pair of students, they could take turns and actually click to play the games on the screen. So the experience is really dynamic and interactive. Who can we work with online? SLPs can treat many types of disorders via telepractice. You need to use your best clinical judgment to determine if telepractice is a good fit for your clients. But in most cases, it can work really well. For the purposes of this presentation, we're going to focus on a school-age population. So we'd like to delve in here a bit with a few common speech language disorders, especially in thinking about pediatrics. So we're gonna focus on autism spectrum disorder and pragmatic skills, articulation

disorder, and also middle school, receptive, expressive language disorders. Those are the three topic areas we're really gonna dig into next. We'll show lots of examples here so that you can get the idea of what it looks like in the daily life of a teletherapist to treat students or clients with these disorders and the treatment methods we use in our telepractice sessions. First, let's look at treating clients with autism spectrum disorder or other students who need to work on pragmatic language skills. Once again, you'll need to use your best judgment to determine if telepractice is the right fit for the student. Every student is so different with various levels of functioning and really different needs. Some students may need a caregiver or a classroom aide to be right there with them. Others may be able to sit at the computer and participate more independently. And they may surprise you because so many students are really highly motivated by getting to be on the computer. So they may participate better than expected. What techniques and activities can we use online to work with these kiddos?

Well, you really wanna take a lot of the strategies you use in your on-site work and just think about applying that online on the computer screen. For example, individuals on the autism spectrum often respond well to visual prompts. And you can certainly include this in your online work with them. There are many ways to incorporate visual supports into telepractice sessions. If your student needs a visual schedule for the session, you can simply display the schedule on your computer screen and share the screen with the student so that they can see the schedule as you go through the activities in your session. You can use visuals you might already have saved on your computer. You can create your own or you can do a quick Google search to find free visuals that are out there on the internet. You can even use real pictures if needed, such as a picture of the student sitting in a chair at the computer to use as a prompt. Incorporating this kind of thing is actually easier in a way via telepractice because everything is digital. If you want to use real pictures, you could have the caregiver or classroom aide take some quick pictures of the student. They can just shoot those to

you in an email. And then you can incorporate the real images into your visuals. Since everything is on-screen, you don't have to worry about printing, cutting out and laminating. It's just all digital. You can show the schedule or whatever specific visual support you have on your screen and use those as prompts for the student during the session. If you wanna make it a bit more dynamic, you can also incorporate visuals into an online whiteboard. If you aren't familiar with an online whiteboard, that's just a free space online where you can draw, type, insert icons or virtual stickers. You can upload images and move things around. That's what I mean by an online whiteboard. We have our second video here that will give you an idea of how that works for visuals. Let's go and play Video 2.

- [Sara] The meeting platform you choose to use may have an interactive on-screen whiteboard built in. You can also just do a search to find a free online whiteboard on the internet that works well for you. Here's an example, many of the interactive online boards have the option to upload documents directly to the board. So you can upload your schedule and then you could check off when the items are completed as you go through your session. Another way you could use visual supports here is with a prompt for turn-taking. Maybe you have a student that needs to work on really basic turn-taking skills, so you might play a simple computer game on the screen with the student. As we play a game, I could show this visual and say, "Okay, that was Max's turn. "Now, whose turn is it going to be?" Miss Sara, yes, it's my turn. That can work well for those students that need that really concrete type of prompting.

- [Sara] Great, we can go back to the slides here. For your students with autism or on the autism spectrum, you can also target emotion concepts and understanding facial expressions. When you're working with a student online, you're seeing each other's faces on the screen through use of the webcams. So you can model facial expressions and talk about the emotions they relate to, just like you would on-site with the student. You can play interactive games that target understanding of emotions and expressions,

and you can include activities like building a comic strip together to address theory of mind and understanding other's feelings and opinions. We have lots of examples for you here. We can go to our next video, Example 3, to see some examples of what I was just mentioning.

- [Sara] This is a site called Do2Learn, and they have some great resources for working with students online, including some social skills activities. Here's an example of an emotions game. You can play the game and talk through the facial expressions, practice doing the expressions with the student with the webcams, and talk about different scenarios that might make us feel these emotions. You can further address concepts of feelings and ideas by targeting theory of mind with the student. The basic idea of theory of mind is that everyone has their own thoughts and emotions and opinions, and this concept can be difficult for our clients with autism. They're thinking maybe a bit more rigid, and it might be hard for them to understand that others have thoughts and opinions that are different from their own.

One way to address this is through comic strip activities. Here is a site called MakeBeliefsComix. They have many free activities to download, E-books, and there's this great build-your-own comic strip activity that you see here. You can select the background, different characters or objects to put in your scene, and you can insert thought bubbles or speech bubbles. So it offers some really great opportunities to work on social concepts with the student. You can talk about what is going on in the scene and what the character might be thinking. So, she's at a parade, let's look at her facial expression. What do you think she feels? What's she thinking? She's thinking, "This parade is awesome!" But oh, let's look, then what happens? Her facial expression changed. Why do you think that is? What does she see, what is she thinking? We could talk about what we should say in certain situations with our comic strip, given the social context. Lots of opportunities there for practice.

- [Sara] Again, those examples were from Do2Learn.com that had the emotions activity and MakeBeliefsComix that has many resources, including a build-your-own comic strip. Social skills videos can be a great tool to use with individuals on the autism spectrum, and this is really conducive to the teletherapy platform. You can simply play a video on the screen while you're sharing your screen with the student. You can pause the video frequently as needed to ask questions, predict what might happen next, talk about how people in the video responded or what they could've done differently. There are variety of social skills videos out there, and you can find ones that are most appropriate for your client. There are videos that are geared toward early childhood students that have cartoons. And then there are ones that have real people and might appeal more for older students. Let's take a look at a quick example of a social skills video that you might use at a telepractice session. Let's go ahead and play Video Example Number 4.

- Hey, dude, I just made the soccer team. Isn't that amazing, varsity soccer. Oh my god, I had so much fun, like I had this one, this one kick, and it just went right in the corner of the net, it was amazing. It was like almost off the post, it was great. But, so I made it, and it's gonna be so much fun and sweet.

- Really, good for you.

- Yeah, thanks.

- This is so awesome, I can't wait to tell everybody that I made varsity soccer.

- I'm not interested in John making the soccer team right now. Can't you see I'm feeling down? You didn't even ask me what's wrong.

- I can't believe he's talking about his soccer game right now. Bjorn's obviously upset, can't he see that?

- John was preoccupied with his own feelings of excitement, he didn't stop to acknowledge the signals that his friend was sending. If he did, he would've noticed his classmate's body language. His head was hanging down, slumped shoulders,

- [Sara] That video was from TD Social Skills. They have a YouTube channel where you can find various social skills videos, and that's just one example, a snippet from a longer video obviously. There are lots of different videos out there. That's just one example that might be more appropriate for older students on the spectrum. There are many more types of activities a teletherapist might use in her daily work with students to target pragmatic goals. You can display social stories on the screen. You can individualize them for the particular student. You could even have the caregiver or classroom aide take some quick pictures of the student. They can just shoot those to you in an email, like I mentioned before, and then you can incorporate the real images into your visuals for the student or into a social story as needed. You can also find many online games that target figurative and non-literal language for your older or higher-functioning students. Based on the client's functional level and needs, you may also need to take more of a consultation approach where you're working more with the caregiver and training them on how to provide prompting for the student. Just like you would individualize your on-site sessions depending on the client's needs, you can do the same thing in telepractice. Another really common disorder we address in pediatric speech pathology is an articulation disorder. Let's take a look at how teletherapists address articulation in their daily work. Before starting in telepractice, teletherapists, or therapists in general, sometimes wonder if they'll be able to address articulation effectively without being able to physically be near the student. But typically, once therapists begin working with students, they realize that online articulation therapy can be very effective, and you often forget that you aren't right there with the student. A

good internet connection is vital in telepractice. With that, usually, it's not a problem to see and hear the student. So therapists typically do not have a problem with being able to hear and see articulation errors. It's important to remember that telepractice is face-to-face, so modeling speech sounds is certainly possible online. In fact, you have visual feedback automatically for the student through use of the webcams. What I mean by that is that both you and the student have your webcam images displayed on the screen in front of you. It's basically like practicing with the student in front of a mirror. They can see you and themselves at the same time, which can be really beneficial when modeling speech sounds. Let's take a look at the next videos, Example 5, so that you can see a quick example of this speech sound modeling.

- What letter were we just talking about, what letter?

- L.

- Good, and where does our tongue go when we make the L sound? Look at me. Yep, our tongue goes up, and does it go in front of these teeth or behind the teeth?

- Behind.

- Behind, good, so let's make the L sound again, I.

- [Sara] That gives you the picture of how you can utilize the webcams and your images on the screen to demonstrate articulation movements as needed in your session. You can certainly also incorporate fun speech sound games into your online sessions. There are many free game websites out there that you can use. I'm gonna show you some examples next from ABCYa.com, which is a great site to use especially with younger kiddos. If you were working with a child that has an articulation or phonological goal, you could incorporate on-screen games, such as these examples

I'm gonna show, into your telepractice session to target the goals in a way that's really motivating for the student. Let's go ahead and play Video Example Number 6.

- [Sara] This game is called Fun with the Fridge. It has letters and numbers and objects as magnets that you can move around on your refrigerator. We could choose some letters here for our practice sounds. I'm a big proponent of incorporating phonological awareness development into articulation practice. This is a really good opportunity for that. Maybe, we're practicing the back sounds, the voiceless velar sound. We could talk about how there are two letters that could make that sound. We could talk about the letter C and the letter K. We could create some practice words here, cap. We could do some manipulation with our sounds, maybe change it up and talk about how we change the first letter, how it changes the word. Now, we have map. We could do some discrimination practice between the front sounds and the back sounds. We could do some blending. Maybe we take our first sound, c-ap. Blend our sounds together to make cap. We could count the phonemes we have here. So we could use our number magnets. One, two, three, give yourself a few numbers down here. Now, we could count how many sounds, how many phonemes. We could segment them apart, we've c-a-p. Let's count these, we've got, c-a-p. Three phonemes and three letters in this sound. Cap, in this word cap. This is another game, Fuzz Bugs Farm. It focuses on consonant blends. We could choose to play the game. Select our players. Maybe we're working on S blends with our student. We could choose the S blends we'd like to practice. And now, we have our game board. We can spin, and we can blend our sounds together, sn. And find which one makes a word, sn-ap, snap. We get to move two places. Spin. We've got S-T, st, st, st-ack, that makes the word stack.

- [Sara] Okay, great. Again, that was from the site ABCYa.com, and they have many fun online games that are easy to incorporate into telepractice sessions to target speech and language goals. If you're working on-site with a student, you might utilize some word cards or sentence list for production practice, and you can do that same kind of

thing in telepractice. You can find many free word cards or word and sentence list online. You can bring up the picture cards or sentence list on your computer and share the screen with the students so that they can see what you're showing. You'll see an example of how this can work in our next video. We can go ahead and play our next video example, seven.

- [Sara] Here is a resource website called AmySpeechLanguageTherapy.com. This site is a great resource for SLP materials. There are many resources websites out there, but this is one example. On this site, you can find word lists with pictures or practice at the sentence level and much more. For example, if I needed some initial R words, I could display this on my screen to share with the student. It's important, when working with clients online, to make sure that what you're showing on the screen is large enough, especially when it's something they need to read or pictures they're labeling. So you may need to zoom in on materials. You can easily zoom with various shortcuts. You can check your computer to see how that works on your particular device. But just keep in mind, you wanna make sure the display is large enough for the client to see at will. Here, we could practice our R words, make them into sentences. I can find other speech sounds to practice, and we can use this type of static materials for production practice. We can also turn this kind of static materials into a dynamic activity through use of online drawing tools or an online whiteboard, which I mentioned previously. Here, I'm on a free online whiteboard, and I've uploaded some CH bingo cards here. In your on-site work, you might be sitting at a table with a child or group of children and have a bingo game similar to this on the table, and you work on the articulation goals as you play and produce the target sounds. In telepractice, we can do the very same thing. It's just that the game is on the screen instead of on the table. I can make it dynamic and allow us to actually play by adding in tokens with this online whiteboard that we can move around and manipulate on the screen. Most interactive boards like this have a feature where you can add in icons or tokens. I've done that here with the idea that my student loves superheroes. So I have a board and my student has a

board. Or if you're working with a pair of students, they could play each other. I might say, "I see something that could be "made out of wood or metal, and we use it to sit on." Then if the student guesses bench and says the sound correctly, then she can cover that space up with a token. We can play back and forth and get our production practice just like you would in any speech bingo game.

- [Sara] Great, and if you're working with older students on articulation goals or really any age level where you might need to target carry-over of speech sounds, you can incorporate conversational activities. One great way to do that online is by using real images. You can do a quick Google image search and display the pictures on your screen or use your own pictures or pictures from the student to make it more fun. You can choose a picture that relates to your students' interests to get them really talking. It could be a picture of a birthday party or of animals if they love animals. You could also choose an image that will elicit a lot of production practice for the specific sound you're targeting. For example, if you were working on carry-over of the C-H phoneme, you could use the picture of a chick hatching to elicit a lot of that sound. You can ask questions about the picture, play "I Spy" with the picture that has a lot of detail, or have the student come up with a story about a picture. There are many possibilities, but displaying real images on the screen can be a great way to address articulation and especially carry-over to the conversational level. Some key points about addressing articulation skills in telepractice: You can use static materials like word list that you display on the screen. With that, you could use a work reward type of model. You could have the practice words open in one tab and maybe a fun online game open in another and have the student practice, practice, with those words. Then click over for a turn with the game and back and forth. You could use games like the ABCYa examples we saw where the speech sound practice is really embedded into the game. You could also take static materials and turn them into a dynamic game like the bingo board activity I showed in the previous video. You can really individualize the materials and activities to meet your student's particular needs. Another common population that we

work with in pediatric speech therapy is older students such as middle schoolers who are working on receptive-expressive language disorders. These students can be challenging at times because they may not be interested in many of the types of activities that we typically use in therapy with younger populations. Sometimes, the stigma of attending speech therapy is increased at this age. There are some benefits that a telepractice model affords with relation to this. Anecdotally, just in my own work with students, I've had older students attend much better for online sessions than on-site sessions. Of course, you still have some that may be difficult to motivate regardless, but just personally speaking, I found that the middle school and high school populations tend to open up and participate much better in a telepractice model. The stigma's lessened because they aren't going to the speech room. They're just logging in online, and students are so comfortable these days with talking to others on the internet that it tends to feel pretty natural to them. That's just a little aside about what I've witnessed personally with telepractice. You do also have to be really mindful of keeping the activities at the student's age level. And incorporating academic materials can also be really useful and appropriate. Let's look at some activities a teletherapist might use in her daily work with this population. We can use on-screen reading materials. There are some great, free language and reading resource websites out there. I'll show you a few examples in our next video. Let's go ahead and play Video 8, and we'll take a look at that.

- [Sara] Here is an example of an online language resource. This is EReadingWorksheets.com, and there are a host of activities here that can be really applicable for your work with middle school students. These activities are also really conducive to telepractice sessions. You can search and find various topics. Here is one example of a context clues activity. You could bring this up on your screen to share with the student and work through the activity together. Remember that as I mentioned, one of the features of most online meeting platforms is that you can share keyboard control with the student, so you could also bring up a Word document on

your computer, and you and the student can type on the document as you work through some of these tasks. Another quick example here is this site, ReadWorks, which has a great library of online reading passages. You can select by the topic or grade level. For example, if we wanted to read about Carlsbad Caverns, we could click here to read a passage. We can click to view key vocabulary words from the passage, such as cavern. And we can learn about the part of speech and how it's used. That's a great way to address vocabulary and grammar. We can target language comprehension by using the comprehension question sets. There are many opportunities here for practice, but that gives you an idea. You can also use language materials from the student's academics. So you might connect with their teacher. In telepractice, you would often connect with them via email. They may be really happy to share with you some topics and materials that they're working on in class, and you can incorporate that into your session. This can really help the students to internalize what they're working on when you have that kind of cross-over of learning. You can also use debate topics in your telepractice sessions to target language goals. This can be a way to really pique the interest of this population. Give them a topic such as should all schools have sports teams? Or should students be allowed to use cellphones at school? Some of these topics can really get the students talking, and then you can use that as a jumping off point for targeting sentence structure or written language skills and more. A lot of these materials are more static with the reading passages and worksheets, but you do wanna be sure that the student is engaged and having fun. Now, this doesn't mean that you use silly, kiddie-type computer games because this population will be turned off by that. But there are fun online games out there that are geared more toward middle schoolers. I'll show you some examples of that in our next video, so let's play Video 9.

- [Sara] This site is called MathIsFun, but don't let the name fool you. It's not just all about math. There are a variety of games here that are really easy to incorporate into sessions. Several of them are games that are more geared toward middle school

populations. You could incorporate a game such as this into your session. If your student has been working really hard on some language activities, and you want to give them a brain break or simply some motivation to keep them engaged and keep participating, there are fun and free online games such as this that you can utilize. There are also online games that have language practice embedded within the game. For example, here's the site, Quia.com. You can do a search on the site to find a variety of topics and goal areas you might need to address, but I'll show a couple of examples. Here is a Jeopardy-style synonyms game that you could play with your student if you're targeting the concept of synonyms or antonyms. You could bring up a game such as this multiple-meaning words activity where the student learns about these words with more than one meaning as they playing. There are many games and activities here to address a wide variety of goals.

- [Sara] So that gives you an idea of how you can really still incorporate motivating, fun games into your sessions for older students without using the really kiddie stuff, using things that are more geared towards this population. Lastly, another way that teletherapist can address language goals is through use of video stories. Basically, short films that you can play during your session You can play the video or the short movie, pause it frequently to ask questions and keep the student engaged. And there are some really wonderful short films out there. Students typically love it when you incorporate these into your sessions. Our last video demonstration is going to be a quick clip from one of these types of narrative film shorts. Let's play this last video so that you can see what that looks like.

- [Sara] Here is the site LiteracyShed.com, and this site has many great film shorts that can be shared on-screen with your students. There are many different types of videos that can appeal to various age levels. I'll go here and play a snippet of one just to give you the idea.

- [Sara] That was just a short clip, but it gives you the idea of what kind of things that are out there, great opportunities of things to share with your students. Teletherapists can incorporate this kind of story video into their sessions to target language goals such as identifying the main idea, story retell, comprehension questions, inferencing. You could let the student type on a Word document on your computer and do a written language activity based on the video. You could target descriptive language and so much more. That gives you a glimpse into the practical therapy application therapists can use in their daily work in telepractice to treat some really common speech-language disorders. We wanna wrap it up here and leave a little bit of time for a few questions. Here are some key takeaways we wanna leave you with. Telepractice is really becoming more and more prevalent in our field, so it's important for more therapists to understand how to implement a telepractice model in an effective way. Telepractice isn't static, it can be really dynamic, interactive, and effective as a service delivery model.

The tech setup is not complicated, but you do need to follow guidelines, and that includes ensuring privacy, security, and accurate documentation for your sessions. Telepractice allows for some flexibility in your daily work as a therapist. And therapists can complete all the needed SOP responsibilities in their day-to-day work in telepractice. It's totally possible. Next, we have our references for your review, and this will also be provided on the handout. Feel free to contact us, we're gonna take a few moments here to answer some of your questions. But if we don't get to your questions or if you think of something else later that you meant to ask or just want more information, feel free to contact us directly at our emails, or you can go to Electronic-Therapy.com and click the contact us link, and you can reach us there as well. Thank you so much, and I'll, Aimee, would you like me to just go ahead and jump in to a few of the questions that I see? Okay, great. I saw, I was watching some of the questions come through as I was presenting, and I didn't wanna jump into answering questions and not have a chance to get through the entire presentation. But I did see

many of them as they were coming through, and I know a few people were asking about the games shown in the beginning. Most of the games on here, it does say where they're from. I didn't mention that, that was because it's one of my own games. I'm actually an independent app developer, and so some of the things I showed in the beginning were some of my own articulation apps that are, it's in my articulation series, it's on iTunes. That's where that was from, and the other games, if you wanna go back when you have a chance and look at the handout, they're all cited on here so that you can go and check those out. There're lots of great examples and many more things out there. We're just kinda giving you a taste here today. Let's see, some other folks, Well, let me take a look at this real quick. I'll look at all of these individually, but I did notice a few questions coming in throughout the presentation, folks asking about a platform or a system for scheduling and documentation and what we use or what we're familiar with. We have, our company has our own platform that we use, our own online platform, so I can't speak a lot to. That's what I'm most familiar with. But I'm sure there are many other apps and sites out there that offer different scheduling and documentation options. Diana, I don't know if you have any off the top of your head Because we use our own system, that's what I'm most familiar with. But I'm sure you could do a quick Google search and find some things out there and see what features work best for you.

- [Diana] Right, I was gonna say the same thing. We do have an interactive platform that we have at E-Therapy where it graphs all of your clinical data notes, and you can share that with your client. But like Sara said, I'm sure that there are different options out there. I know that some people actually do create that for themselves too, that they do share. But we have a wonderful one that we created as well.

- [Sara] And yeah, few folks were making some comments about how they love using the whiteboard tools as a reward. You can even take a snippet, a little picture of the picture that they do and shoot it to the aide to have them print off to take home. Yeah,

that's a great point there. It kinda brings home the idea that, in telepractice, it's really so much more like on-site therapy than you think it might be. It just requires you to think outside the box a little bit. Yes, your student could still draw at the end of the session as a little reward, it's just that it's on-screen. They could even still take that drawing home. It just requires you to print it off or have the aide print it off if it were a brick-and-mortar school. That's a great point to bring that up there.

- [Diana] Great, and then just an addition to that, Sara, someone had asked if they could color and do any coloring sheets, and that is completely possible through that platform as well.

- [Sara] Yeah. Mary asks, is there any possibility of interstate license reciprocity in the future? Has there been discussion of this by ASHA or state licensing boards? Diana, do you wanna speak to that?

- [Diana] Sure. Different states do have reciprocity agreements within themselves. You just have to look up and see which states have that. ASHA has a ton of information on that. If you just go to ASHA.org and look up licensing for each particular state, it will actually tell you. And then if you just call those boards, they'll say, "Yes, we have reciprocity with this one state, "which means you just have to provide us "your licensing documentation," and whatever other documents you have to provide, and you can kind of side-step some other additional requirements that they have. It is state-by-state that way. Sadly, we do not have it this time in a national licensure, which would be amazing. But yes, there are interstate reciprocity agreements between specific state, by state.

- [Sara] Great, and Linda asks, "How often do computer or internet problems happen? "And when they do happen, what do you do?" Like we mentioned in the tech setup section, the tech setup is really pretty simple and easy, but good internet connection is

absolutely necessary. So that would be on the therapist's end and then also on the student's end. I would say that the internet problems, while they do come up, it's probably getting less and less because more and more people, even in rural areas, are getting good internet just because it's so vital now to every aspect of our lives pretty much. People need good internet. So that's becoming less and less of an issue. But things do come up and computer glitches do happen. What we do is we always have that, like Diana said, you always have your contact information handy, right there on your schedule or right there in front of you.

So if you're working with a brick-and-mortar school, that would be your online, on-site facilitator. There's gonna be someone who's responsible for making sure the kiddos get to their sessions when they're supposed to be. If you're working with, maybe, homeschool or just private clients, they might be coming to you from their homes. You're gonna be contacting the guardian or the parent. You're gonna have their contact information right there at your fingertips. If the client or student doesn't show up right away for their session, you're gonna reach out with a phone call, give them just a couple of minutes to log in. If they're not there, we reach out right away with a phone call, and maybe, it's just they needed a reminder or maybe they're encountering a technical problem, and then you can kinda walk walk them through some potential fixes, basic fixes for that.

If in the rare circumstance, there's something that's just not able to be fixed, then you would, maybe there's a bad storm, and the internet is just out, then you would just have to reschedule that session for another time. But I would say, for the most part, internet or connection problems aren't that big of a problem. Most of the time, it works well. If there are little glitches, we call the family or the teacher, work through it right away. If it's not able to be worked through right away, then you can reschedule the session for another time. That answers that question. Courtney asks, "Are teletherapists paid "per therapy session or on an hourly rate?" That's really going to

depend on the company or if you're in private practice for yourself, how you set that up. So there's not really a hard and fast answer for that. It totally depends on your setting or the company that you work with. Erika says, "I know there are companies "that do telepractice for pediatrics therapy "for three to 21 population," which is mostly what we were speaking to today, kind of the school-age population. "Are there companies that do telepractice "for birth to three population too?" Diana, do you have some insight on that you wanna share?

- [Diana] Sure, yeah, there are. You just have to call around and see who's working with who or who has what contract with which particular group. But yes, that is something that teletherapy companies do do and work in early intervention from zero to three.

- [Host] Alright, well, that looks like the last of our questions. Some really great questions at the very end. As Jason says, "Thank you so much." I'd like to thank you both, to Sara and Diana. It's been great having you with us today, sharing your expertise and some really great therapy ideas. Thank you so much for sharing those as well. So we can go ahead and wrap it up there for today. I'd like to thank all of our participants for joining us, and I hope everyone has a great rest of the day. Take care, everyone.

- [Diana] Wonderful, thank you so much.

- [Sara] Thank you so much.