

Using Teletherapy for Parent-Child Interaction Therapy

PCIT or Parent-Child Interaction Therapy is an evidence-based approach to addressing behavior challenges in young children (ages 2 through about 6.5). PCIT was initially developed in the 1970's, and there are decades worth of research demonstrating its effectiveness for children struggling with tantrums, aggression, or difficulty listening to parents or teachers. PCIT has also been used successfully for young children with anxiety and mood regulation difficulties. This intervention teaches parents specific skills for better managing their child's behavior, such as labeled praise and selective attention, and uses weekly coaching sessions to support parents in implementing these skills with their child.

PCIT can be provided via teletherapy (a secure video conferencing platform). In a comparison with traditional PCIT, this model of PCIT (i.e., Internet PCIT or i-PCIT) shows comparable or even more positive outcomes. Parents benefit from learning to use the skills in their homes, rather than an office setting. PCIT equips parents with skills to better manage their children's behavior, enhances the parent-child relationship, decreases parent stress, and helps families establish routines.

Before the session: Prior to our first coaching session, I will send you a weekly assessment of child behavior (WACB) form to complete. The WACB gives us up-to-date information on your child's positive and negative behaviors. We'll use these ratings as well as other information you provide to track your child's progress over time. Prior to some sessions, I will also send other materials via email such as weekly homework sheets or handouts.

Teletherapy: I use the teletherapy platform provided through my practice's electronic medical record system--Telehealth by Simple Practice. You'll get an appointment reminder and session link via email ahead of time. When you click on the link, a video call screen will open in a new tab. If I've already joined the call, you'll see my face on the screen. If I have not, you'll see yourself. You'll be able to test your camera and microphone settings at this point. Then, when you're ready, click **join video call**.

What do I need for a PCIT teletherapy session:

1. Laptop computer, tablet, or smart phone: This provides the video and audio for our sessions. Using a smaller mobile electronic device allows you to move the device as needed to best capture the interactions you have with your child. To use a smartphone, you must first download the Telehealth by Simple Practice app (available for iPhone and Android).
2. Wireless headphones or earbuds: Because coaching is directed toward parents, it is helpful to use headphones or earbuds during the coaching portion of the session. Using wireless earbuds gives parents greater range of motion during sessions. If you do not have wireless earbuds, we can connect via phone call for the coaching portion of our sessions while staying connected via videoconferencing to provide the video feed.
3. Reliable internet connection: Make sure that the location of your session is one that allows you to maintain a reliable internet connection to minimize connection issues.

4. PCIT toys: Choose two or three PCIT-appropriate toys for coaching sessions. Each toy or set of materials should have its own container to allow for clean-up practice as therapy progresses.
5. Location: You'll need to identify an area in your home where you and your child can play with minimal distractions or interference from siblings or other family members.

Other tips:

1. It is best to schedule the session during a time that your child is most likely to be well rested and happy.
2. It is best to schedule the session at a time when siblings are otherwise occupied (or at school or child care) **or** to plan the session so that one parent (or other caregiver) can watch siblings while the other parent participates. Even if parents choose to switch off watching a sibling, we can structure sessions so that both parents can participate.
3. Even though you're not coming into my office for most sessions, it is best to cancel sessions if your child is too sick to fully participate or if a sick sibling will make it difficult to have a productive session.
4. It is important that our sessions start on time so that we have enough time to practice skills and answer any questions you have. Please prepare all needed materials ahead of the session start time, so that you can join the call promptly.



PARENT CONSULTATION | CHILD & ADOLESCENT THERAPY

1704 W. Koenig Ln - Austin, TX 78756 | 512.200.3604 | julia@drjulahoke.com

www.drjulahoke.com