



# Partners for a Healthy Baby

## Home Visitor Tips in Response to COVID-19

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### Tips from *Partners* users in response to Covid-19 and reducing physical contact visits:

- Make a YouTube channel so your families can still see their Home Visitor and do home based activities along with them. Parents have told us their children are excited to see their Home Visitor on their devices.
- Use Zoom to continue visits, supervision, and meetings.
- Explain what and how much to buy from the store and provide education on COVID-19.
- In most situations already having a relationship with the family makes doing virtual visits easy. If you haven't already established a relationship with the family, it may be harder to get them on board with virtual visits.
- HHS posted a list of HIPAA compliant video platforms: <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/notification-enforcement-discretion-telehealth/index.html>
- Even with virtual calls, ask if you can see the baby/child, say hi to the baby/child.
- If you're discussing sensitive or private information, be sure there no other people are in the room.
- It can be challenging to keep people engaged only on the phone. Video chats may work better for some families.
- Think about Home Visitor safety and boundaries on your end of the phone. Pick a quiet area with a blank wall behind you when making your video calls. This eliminates concerns about people seeing your children, your home, surroundings, etc.
- Many of our families have limited data plans. Talk with your families to find out if their plan can handle texted Parent Handouts and video calls.
- Ask the parent about their stress level at the beginning of each virtual visit. Be ready to just listen. Try to normalize their feelings.
- Send a text message before you call/video chat to make sure it is still a good time to connect. Ask about the family's daily schedule so you can discuss the best time to tentatively schedule a virtual visit. If their schedule is very hectic, consider giving them a window of time when they can call you.
- Find out how flexible your program can be about having the child there during a virtual home visit. Some participants working in essential fields (healthcare, agriculture, etc.) may be working extra hours and will have to call you on their lunch break to remain engaged with your program during this time.
- Get creative with photo/video to keep families engaged:
  - Encourage the family to take pictures on their phone of what they are doing at home to send to the Home Visitor, like reading together, playing in the yard, etc.
  - Send families on a photo scavenger hunt around their home/yard with activities appropriate for the child's age or pregnancy, if applicable
  - Try sending your families a short video file from your phone explaining a suggested activity to try at home.
  - Video yourself singing a nursery rhyme doing a fingerplay (like Itsy Bitsy Spider) and send it to your families.
  - Go outside in your own area and show what is in your environment. One Home Visitor lives near livestock and showed the animals to the kids in her program.