

# Talking EBP: Information Updates for Virginia School SLPs

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**“No one wants to have learning coming to a halt across America due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and the U.S. Department of Education (Department) does not want to stand in the way of good faith efforts to educate students on-line.”**

Office for Civil Rights Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (2020) [Supplemental Fact Sheet Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/faq/rr/policyguidance/Supple%20Fact%20Sheet%203.21.20%20FINAL.pdf)

**“Telehealth has life-changing potential to connect Americans with necessary care.”**

Weidner, K., & Lowman, J. (2020). Telepractice for Adult Speech-Language Pathology Services: A Systematic Review. *Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups, 5*(1), 326-338. [doi:10.1044/2019\_PERSP-19-00146](https://pubs.asha.org/doi/abs/10.1044/2019_PERSP-19-00146)

## Need to Know:

To assist school-based SLPs who seek to understand federal and state guidance related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the following links to federal and state guidance are provided.

* [**US Department of Education COVID-19 ("Coronavirus") Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel**](https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus)
* [**HHS Guidance on HIPAA and Tele-services**](https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/emergency-preparedness/notification-enforcement-discretion-telehealth/index.html)
* [**FERPA & Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) March 2020**](https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/sites/default/files/resource_document/file/FERPA%20and%20Coronavirus%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions.pdf)
* [**Virginia Department of Education**](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/covid-19.shtml) **(COVID-19 Guidance)**
* [**State Education Agencies Communication Disabilities Council**](https://seacdc.org/resources.html)

In response to COVID-19 school closures, state education agencies and local education agencies (LEA) are making decisions about their obligation to provide FAPE to students with disabilities. Some LEAs are exploring or even implementing services using alternate means including telephone and telepractice. This issue of Talking EBP is devoted to the topic of telepractice.

## Practically Speaking:

Alvares, R. (2013). **Working With Facilitators to Provide School-Based Speech and Language Intervention via Telepractice**. [*Perspectives on Telepractice, 3*(2), 44-48](https://pubs.asha.org/doi/abs/10.1044/teles3.2.44).

Don’t reinvent the wheel; read this instead. The authors have provided telepractice speech and language services to students in rural areas for over 6 years with a current caseload of 75 students. They summarize what they have learned about the necessity of having an individual on-site with the student, especially when age, cognition, behavior, or physical limitations are concerns. Practical information is provided about roles, responsibilities, supervision, and challenges when providing services via telecommunication.

## Working with Data:

Sutherland, R., Hodge, A., Trembath, D., Drevensek, S., & Roberts, J. (2016). **Overcoming Barriers to Using Telehealth for Standardized Language Assessments**. [*Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups, 1*(18), 41-50](https://pubs.asha.org/doi/abs/10.1044/persp1.SIG18.41).

This article reports findings from a study that explored conducting **evaluation of language skills via telepractice.** The findings from this study provide evidence that “standardized language assessments delivered via telehealth using consumer grade equipment was feasible, reliable, and tolerated by students with language impairment.” Barriers related to technology, finances, and cultural factors are examined.

## More to Explore:

* **SLP Telecon** [**Replays free until May 6, 2020**](http://www.slptelecon.com) SLP Telecon is offering free replays of six 1 hour sessions addressing virtual service provision and information on best practice and getting started in teletherapy. Replays are available for ASHA CEUs.
* The [**ASHA Practice Portal** has a **Telepractice**](https://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Telepractice/) section that includes resources and the latest updates related to the COVID-19 crisis.
* In 2015, **EBP Briefs** published a [systematic review](https://images.pearsonclinical.com/images/assets/ebp/pdfs/EBPV10A2.pdf) of 6 studies that examined telepractice with school-age children and found it to be a promising approach.
* [**Navigating the COVID-19 Crisis: Considerations for Special Education Administrators**](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/7686051777262052098) from the [Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)](https://www.casecec.org/). Air date March 20, 2020.
* [**Supporting Multilingual Learners ‘Through the Storm’ of COVID-19**](http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/classroom_qa_with_larry_ferlazzo/2020/03/supporting_multilingual_learners_through_the_storm_of_covid-19.html)**:** Learn about strategies that multiple teachers are using to support ELs/multilingual learners from a distance.

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