

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF VIDEO CHATS

- **Be prepared!** Have some ideas for activities/things to talk about before the video chat (Ask Fin WA for more information!)
- **Be flexible!** Children have short attention spans so try not to take it personally if they get distracted during your video chat
- **Be developmentally appropriate.** Use words that your child will understand
- **Take cues from your child.** Too much information can be overwhelming!
- **Manage your own anxiety.** If you are anxious your child will pick up on this and worry too

CHOOSE A GOOD TIME OF DAY

It's important to choose a time of day that will suit your child. For example, it's difficult for children to focus when they are hungry or tired

CASEWORKERS and CARERS! You can support meaningful contact by booking it at a time that will work best for the child



LOOK IN TO THE CAMERA!

Know where the camera is on your screen and try to look straight at it!

We tend to look at our own image or the image of the child but to make eye contact (from your child's perspective) it's best to look straight at the camera

Eye contact is important for connection and interactive communication

Babies and toddlers are fascinated by faces so try to fill the screen with your face!

BE AWARE OF WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN SEE AND HEAR

Get rid of clutter in the space behind you. A cluttered area behind you might be distracting for your child

Put your phone on silent/do not disturb!

Think about who is in the house with you and make sure your child does not hear or see anything they shouldn't



KEEP IT SHORT AND SWEET!

Using video calls is new for lots of people and it's not the same as having face-to-face contact. Don't put too much pressure on yourself to engage with your child via video chat for long periods. We are all getting used to using this technology, including children!

It may be better to have several short video chats rather than one longer chat.

Caseworkers and Carers! Please support meaningful contact by being flexible with the length of time allocated for video chats

BE PREPARED!

Think about some activities that you can do via video chat before your scheduled chat time. It will be more fun and less stressful if you have everything you need ready to go (books, toys, interactive games)

For ideas on activities (by age group), and suggestions about how to answer children's questions to do with Coronavirus, ask Fin WA

Caseworkers and Carers! Does contact need to be supervised? If so, please discuss this with parents before the video chat. Talk about who will supervise and how it will be done. Think about how you will explain supervision to the child

