

## Guidance on In-Person and Virtual Visits & Developing a Hybrid Plan July 2022

**First and foremost, ParentChild+ prioritizes the wishes, comfort, health, and safety of families and home-based child care providers and the health and safety of staff. We are committed to prioritizing family and caregiver voice in decision-making about how they participate in the program, as long as that does not conflict with the safety of staff and any local guidance/regulations.**

### In-Person and Virtual:

As of July 2022, ParentChild+'s guidance is:

- If families would prefer virtual visits, at this time you may continue to provide them.
- No family should be denied services because they can/want only to have virtual visits. Some families have indicated that they only want virtual visits and would not have enrolled in the program if required to receive in-person visits. We prioritize family preference and want to ensure that these families can participate virtually. At this time, you may also continue to enroll new families who will only accept virtual visits.
- If families prefer in-person visits, so long as staff capacity allows, you may provide in-person visits.
- If staff have health and safety reasons for doing visits virtually, if at all possible, you should pair them with families who have expressed a preference for virtual visits.
- If your agency (including families and staff) is interested in implementing a hybrid visit plan, please see guidance below.

### Developing a Hybrid Model Plan

A hybrid model can mean, for example: (1) hybrid across the full program (families receive one visit each week in-person, one visit virtually); (2) the entire program hybrid one week and in-person the next; or (3) a portion of the program in-person and a portion virtual (the first 23 weeks in person, the second 23 virtually).

Please reach out to your state director (or national center staff if you do not have a state director) if your site wants to propose a hybrid plan, they will then review with the Research and Program staff to confirm that the plan meets national center guidance. **Please note: to implement hybrid visits for families a site must have an established plan; hybrid does not mean a different mix each week or a different mix for every family.**

Sites offering in-person visits can always utilize virtual visits when staff or a family member is ill, when weather would require visit cancellation, or to reschedule a visit that would otherwise be missed. This is not considered hybrid.

Please note that at this time, given the current health and economic conditions, sites may propose a hybrid model because it meets family and staff needs, because it reduces health

concerns, because it makes scheduling more manageable, and/or because it addresses current travel cost challenges.

We understand that different local implementation agencies, school district partners, and public and private funders have different perspectives on in-person and virtual home visits. Please reach out to your state director or national center staff if you need additional support or guidance to discuss these issues in your community. In addition, different agencies, localities, and states have and will have over time different policies and/or requirements on vaccinations, mask-wearing, social distancing, additional non-caregiver adults (e.g., ELSs) in home-based child care settings, and other issues that could impact program implementation. Sites must, of course, follow all regulations and state directors/national center staff are always available to support in navigating those requirements while implementing the program with fidelity.

#### Fidelity to Model Expectations for All Sites

- All families will receive 92 live/synchronous (either virtual or in-home/outdoors) visits over the full program.
- Phone calls and asynchronous communication, such as sharing videos instead of a live virtual or in-home/outdoor visit, do not count as visits. They are, however, wonderful supplements to live visits.
- Visits can be virtual now and transition to in-home as government, agency, staff, and family variables change.
- For those of you visiting with home-based child care providers, please consult state and local health and child care guidelines about additional adults (e.g. ELSs) in child care settings. In the case of home-based child care visits at this time, if in-home is allowed by local guidelines, it will be a three-part decision: Are all the families of children in care, the provider, and the ELS comfortable with in-home visits?
- As noted above, it is permissible to substitute virtual visits for in-home ones in the following circumstances:
  - To reschedule a visit that needed to be cancelled
  - When bad weather prevents the ELS from traveling to an in-person visit
  - When someone in the home or the ELS is ill to avoid spreading/being exposed to infections
  - If a family temporarily relocates, for reasons including health, to visit family, migrant farm work, or to housing outside your site's catchment area.

As we emerge from the pandemic, staff and/or families may feel anxious about in-person contact. Acknowledging these feelings is key to assessing comfort and planning next steps. **Remember: Decisions made now can be altered at any point as circumstances continue to change.**