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Using the Zoom App: A GREAT Tool to Support Home Instruction and Your Child's Executive Function Needs
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Please, share...

We have used the ZOOM App with our online university courses for the past 6 years and have enjoyed the personal interaction component it brings to the online instructional process. With the onset of home instruction, the ZOOM App has been a hot topic frequently referred to in the media and news releases from school systems. Zoom is a helpful video conferencing tool that was developed in 2011 (<https://zoom.us/meetings>) and can be used with an Android or Apple platform. A basic account is free and allows 40 minutes of free conferencing. **Due to the COVID-19 virus, the 40-minute time limit has been lifted providing teachers, students and parents a versatile means of connecting via video conferencing.**

Teachers using zoom can “see” and work with their entire class of students! As well, all students can work and collaborate with their teacher and peers! ZOOM is a great way to connect during this time of social distancing.

The ZOOM App is also a great tool to facilitate executive functioning skills. We have listed how this powerful tool can support your child's executive functioning...*Note the executive functions are in blue with a brief description to the right.*

Working Memory – taking in information and using it to react and problem solve

- All ZOOM sessions can be recorded and saved on your computer. This makes a ready reference for reviewing the instructional material covered by the teacher, directions for an assignment, visuals of anchor charts, etc.
- Students participating in a lesson on zoom experience the lesson by seeing, hearing, and interacting during a lesson. This multisensory approach improves the likelihood that the material will be learned.

Planning, Prioritizing, Managing Time, Organizing, and Sequencing – determining what to do, when to do it, how to do it, and meeting schedules

- Prior to the ZOOM session, you and your child will need to **plan** a work area where there is little distraction while receiving instruction. We know this can be a challenge, and you may have multiple children using it. A visual schedule posted near the work area can clear up any arguments about whose turn it is.
- Home instruction is a new schedule for many children; therefore, your child will need to **prioritize** their activities for the day so that the most important activities are completed first.

- Prior to instruction, your child will have to **organize** his or her work materials such as a computer, paper, pencils, erasers, books, etc. See our digital supply checklist on this website.
- In order to participate in a ZOOM session, your child must follow a short series of **sequential** steps to log in. He or she may need a checklist of these steps to self-monitor the sign in process. Some students stress that they will do something wrong in the sign in and draw unwanted attention to themselves.
- ZOOM sessions run on a specific time frame that is determined by the host of the ZOOM session. In terms of Home Instruction, the teacher is most likely the host and will determine what time the session is to start and what time the session ends. Your child needs to **manage his or her time** and be ready to start the instructional session at the designated time. A timer is valuable to remind the student of the time left to get logged in.

Attending to, Initiating and Focusing – Getting started, attending to, and sustaining attention

- ZOOM sessions allow for video conferencing interaction between the teacher and your child. This type of interaction adds an extra motivation to the home instruction process because your child and teacher can see each other during the delivery of instructional content. The teacher can see your child’s body language, facial expressions and body posture which helps the teacher to determine if your child is **attending** to, sustaining attention and processing the instructional content.
- After the teacher assigns a task, poses a question, or issues a directive, ZOOM allows the teacher to see if your child has **initiated** a proper response. This tool allows the teacher to be able to observe if your child is not initiating and ask questions that clarify the task, posed question or directive. As well, the teacher may prompt your child with a cue word to start their work.
- Once your child has started the task, or interacted with a question or directive, the teacher is able to monitor whether your child **continues to focus on the situation** or whether they begin to daydream fidget, etc. which can lead to a hiccup in processing the instructional content delivered.

Social/Emotional and Inhibiting – Getting along with teachers and peers, feeling safe, and controlling impulsivity

- Social distancing has placed a **social/emotional** hardship on our children and the positive relationships and interactions they have with their peers daily within the classroom environment. Using the ZOOM App to connect your child to the classroom environment creates the potential for **social** interaction and positive connections through structured activities.
- The use of the ZOOM App can promote **self-regulation and inhibit** aberrant behaviors since the child is in “view” of the teacher and peers. It also creates the ability for the teacher to implement behavior plans that may be needed to facilitate **self-regulation and inhibit** inappropriate responses.

Communicating, Cognitive Flexibility/Shifting –Communicating, for example, through the chat box in writing or speaking , changing thinking based on information learned and changing activities when directed to do so

- The ZOOM App can be a helpful tool in promoting and facilitating appropriate **verbal and written communication** skills. When using ZOOM, the teacher can repeat concepts and provide support with visuals such as anchor charts, schedules, checklists, etc. In addition, your child can ask questions, or express concerns about a task or assignment using the chat box.
- Using ZOOM, enables the teacher to somewhat emulate the school routine of addressing the transition between a variety of subjects, scheduling breaks from instruction, scheduling activities

that encompass movement. This helps your child in terms of **cognitive flexibility** and anticipating the **shift** in activities.

For more information on how to download and use the ZOOM App, please visit (<https://zoom.us/>).

[For more information on executive functioning, please visit www.instituteonexecutivefunctioning.com.](http://www.instituteonexecutivefunctioning.com)

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