




Effective Relationships in Telepractice:


Insights and Strategies from Remote School Psychologists

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About Your Presenter



Dr. Kathryn Steele, Ph.D.

- Ph.D. in School Psychology from The University of Georgia
- School Psychologist for 15+ Years Working in Various Settings Including Brick-and-Mortar Schools, Hospitals, and Private Practice
- Working in Telepractice Since 2018
 - 2018-2020 Practitioner
 - 2020-2022 Clinical Manager
 - 2022-2023 Director
- Member of NASP and an Editorial Board Member for Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups

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Objective

Identify opportunities for a successful relationship building with students and staff in telepractice

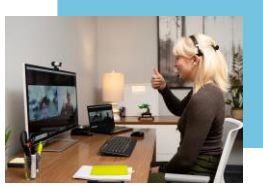



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What Is Rapport, and Why Does It Matter?

- Rapport is a connection or relationship with someone else
- Rapport is an essential part of **intervention**, which emerges as a result of both individuals feeling supported by one another within the interaction (Tickle-DeGren & Rosenthal, 1990).



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Remote Relationship Challenges

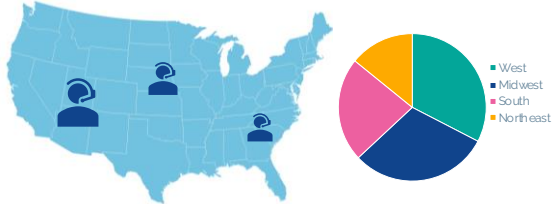
- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Work-Life Balance
Unable to Unplug | Zoom Fatigue
Physical Barrier |
| Isolation/Loneliness | Lack of Immediate
Feedback |
| Managing
Paperwork | Time for
Collaboration |
| Lack of Clarity and
Fragmented Communication | Lack of Nonverbal
Cues |

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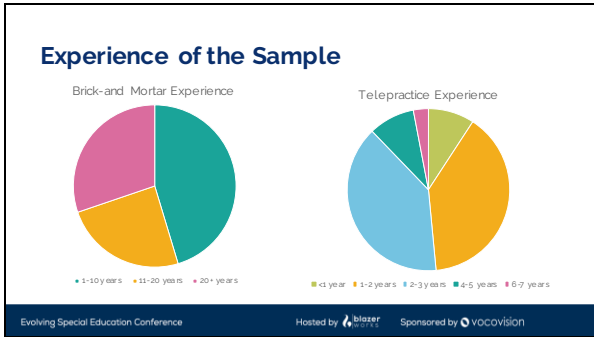
35 Remote School Psychologists, 21-22 SY

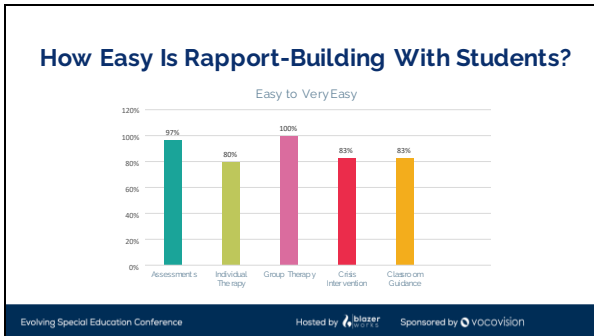


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When Building Rapport With Students...

- Contractors used the same strategies that worked in the brick-and-mortar setting... just in a virtual way
- Virtual games/websites
- Virtual rewards (high fives, stickers, drawing on whiteboard)
- Offered choices (activity, partner, etc)
- Social chat

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Relationship Aids and Barriers

Aids:	Barriers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaboration from facilitator and staff• Choice of activity• Time and conversations• School environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time to get to know them• Communication from facilitator/staff• Student characteristics• School environment• Lack of resources

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Be Prepared **Be Open** **Be Communicative**

← INTENTIONALITY →

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Be Prepared: Room Setup

- Lighting
- Technology
- Privacy
- Confidentiality
- Comfort
- Minimal distractions
- Student schedule
- Materials for session
- Behavior plan
- Student-specific items

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Be Open: Remote Worker Welcome Kit

- Introductory emails from onsite staff
- Video school tour
- Campus/district map
- Physical and mailing address
- Facilitator and administrator contact information
- Staff photo directory
- Bell schedule
- Fun facts about your area: activities, weather, news, history
- Local dialect
 - Cairo, Vienna, Houston County



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Keep It Going Throughout The Year!

- School spirit days
- School swag
- All-staff emails
- Zoom option for staff meetings
- Party planning
- Virtual social activities: book club, fantasy sports, trivia, coffee
- Training/professional development – participate and deliver



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Be Communicative Through Multiple Avenues

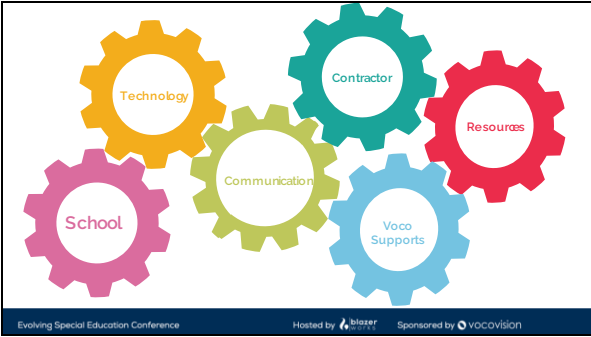
- Caseload
- Be crystal clear about expectations
- Don't just email – context can get lost
- Share procedures and local policies
- Digital signature procedures
- District shared drive and email
- Schedule a regular check in
- VocoVision Tech and Clinical Teams



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Questions?

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References

- Tickle-Degnen, L., & Rosenthal, R. (1990). The nature of rapport and its nonverbal correlates. *Psychological Inquiry*, 7, 285-293.

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