Tips for telehealth/video chatting if the provider or the client are experiencing technical issues from Hilary Krosney-Rediker, LPC, LCADC, Director of Addiction Services, Jewish Family & Children's Service of Monmouth County

1) **If possible do not operate off wifi.** Wifi signals tend to drop out with video chats even when close to the router. A hard lined connection is always preferable. To eliminate any issues on our end for the time being we should do our best to be hardlined to our routers. If you cannot, get as close to your router as you can and try not to have too many walls or closed doors between you and the router. Also turn off anything that gives its own signal, like a baby monitor or anything antenna based.

If you have to be far away from your router reply to this email and I can give you some tips on how to boost signal or a relatively cheap product you can buy to relay your signal.

1b) If on a phone and experiencing serious issues if the data plan can afford it turn off your wifi and **try operating off your data plan.** We cannot do this for 20 sessions a week but the client could probably afford to use data for 45 minutes. For some reason this seems to help many of these programs keep a smoother signal.

2) If using a phone have the person **restart the phone right before the session** and have them **close all windows and all apps**. Turn off anything that is constantly using wifi. Certain games, fitness and other apps do this. This wouldn't hurt for a computer either. Close all windows and turn off all background programs and restart.

3) Have all parties involved ask other members of the household to **stop streaming services during the session** if they are not hardlined to their router. This could be tough or impossible for some people especially if a spouse is working from home or they need to keep kids busy during the session. But it is preferable especially if you are not confident in your internet connection.

4) **Use a headset or Bluetooth if you have one.** An Open mic can cause a lot of interference. For starters you will create feedback loops where the sound coming from your speakers will go into the microphone and then come out of the speakers and back into the microphone. This is not always discernible but it will happen and create lag (slowness/delay) in the conversation which could make back and forth banter awkward. Also any kind of video or voice chat will "compete" for microphone usage as they are generally set up by default to not have multiple microphones open at once. This can create a sort of stutter or clicking and popping noise when trying to talk as the microphone portion of the application struggles to give priority to who it thinks is trying to speak.