

# VIDEO CONFERENCING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

In these extraordinary times (of COVID-19) you may want to consider virtual meetups with your youth people (secondary school age – 11+). This many create opportunities to engage with young people at this time but it can also present some challenges and risks that need to be managed.

**Here is advice on how to do this safely. Please adhere to the following points:**

- ▶ Avoid the use of Skype / Facetime / Facebook Messenger – these are social media tools and as such share contact details with all users, you may inadvertently connect young people up with other people as an unintended consequence.
- ▶ Instead use a video conferencing platform such as Zoom: <https://zoom.us/> This is free to use (will give you a 40 min chat) or a paid for account allows you to host longer sessions. Users only need to have an email address for account setup.

**Video Conferencing is beyond the normal running of your groups and therefore needs explicit permission before use in the following ways:**

- ▶ You must have your NYC management/steering group approval – discuss this with those on the committee and minute that this is happening – why not trial a video conference with some of these people first?! This does not need to be a complicated process.
- ▶ You need parental consent – set up an email which explains what you are doing, the date and time of the video conference session, which youth leaders are participating and what you roughly will be doing. Ask for a reply as a form of consent and keep these emails in a separate folder.
- ▶ Use parents/carers email address to send the meeting invite to, especially as young people never check their emails(!) and this ensures parents/carers are aware that it is happening and can set up the young people to access the session appropriately with any oversight if they want.

**While running your group as a video conference:**

- ▶ ‘Normal’ youth group rules would apply including with regards to recruitment and safeguarding process – i.e. you need at least 2 safely recruited youth leaders present who would normally have ‘real time’ contact with this group. Make sure both leaders are live before young people arrive. Ideally use the same time slot as your normal youth group meeting.
- ▶ Keep an attendance record with the date and times of the meeting. Include a record of the leaders present as well as the young people.
- ▶ Reporting of any concerns should happen on the Cause for Concern forms.

IF NEW MEMBERS WANT TO JOIN THE GROUP, THEY SHOULD HAVE THE ‘NORMAL’ GROUP CONSENT FORMS FILLED IN AS WELL.

IF YOU ARE RECRUITING NEW LEADERS FOR A GROUP, THEN THE SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCESS MUST BE FOLLOWED BEFORE THEY CAN PARTICIPATE.



# VIDEO CONFERENCING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE Continued

- ▶ Use webcam and devices in public spaces - It's important that if children and youth workers are using apps with any communication function that they are not in a private space like bedrooms or more private areas of a house.
- ▶ Observe codes of conduct – appropriate behaviour for leaders should be followed as you would expect in the usual youth group setting, it might be worth a discussion with your leaders around this before the meeting happens.
- ▶ As always, be inclusive – are there any young people from your group who would struggle to participate in this way, what extra support can be put in place for them?
- ▶ As well as the video interface, there is usually space to write comments and participants can screen share too – consider use of this facility for example to write one-word answers to questions to share, be creative!
- ▶ Be aware of and sensitive to technical difficulties! There can be issues with speakers and microphones! Chances are young people will have this sussed but leaders may have issues... !! Use the software with leaders first to try and sort out any difficulties.
- ▶ **DO NOT RECORD.** Most video conferencing software allows for the session to be recorded – this is an option for the host of the meeting only. Avoid doing this, as you would need separate permission for data capture and there are all sorts of issues with GDPR etc.

## Some reminders for communicating online:

- ▶ Always use age-appropriate language in your communications and make sure all your communications are relevant to the work of the project you're involved in
- ▶ Use organisational accounts to communicate with children and young people, never personal accounts.
- ▶ Use an organisational mobile or tablet to communicate with young people.
- ▶ if you want to take and/or share photos of a child for any purpose, always make sure you have parental permissions along with asking the child. This is also true for any video clip of young people.
- ▶ Communicating with young people by electronic means should be kept within the hours of 9am – 9pm.
- ▶ Maintaining professional boundaries.
- ▶ Avoid sharing or revealing personal information to young people you work with.

**Tip:** VIDEO CONFERENCING METHODS SHOULD NOT USE FOR ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.



# LIVE STREAMING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

In these extraordinary times (of COVID-19) you may want to consider live streaming to connect with your youth people (secondary school age – 11+). Live streaming can be a valuable way to connect with the wider community and young people but you must be aware of the safety implications for young people.

**Live streaming with young people is beyond the normal running of your groups and therefore needs explicit permission before used with young people:**

- ▶ You must have your NYC management/steering group approval – discuss this with those on the committee and minute that this is happening – why not trial a video conference with some of these people first?! This does not need to be a complicated process.
- ▶ You need parental consent – set up an email which explains what you are doing, the date and time of the sessionS, which youth leaders are participating and what you roughly will be doing. Ask for a reply as a form of consent and keep these emails in a separate folder.
- ▶ Use parents/carers email address to send the meeting information to, and this ensures parents/carers are aware that it is happening and can set up the young people to access the session appropriately with any oversight if they want.
- ▶ If you want to take and/or share images (including videos) of young people for any purpose, always make sure you have written parental permissions along with permission from the child.
- ▶ ‘Normal’ youth group rules would apply including with regards to recruitment and safeguarding process – i.e. you need at least 2 safely recruited youth leaders present who would normally have ‘real time’ contact with this group. Make sure both leaders are live before young people. Ideally use the same time slot as your normal youth group meeting.
- ▶ Keep an attendance record with the date and times of the meeting. Include a record of the leaders present as well as the young people.
- ▶ Use work accounts to communicate with children and young people via email or social media, never personal accounts. Use an work computers, mobile or tablet to communicate, where possible.
- ▶ Codes of conduct – appropriate behaviour for leaders should be followed as you would expect in the usual youth group setting,
- ▶ As always, be inclusive – are there any young people from your group who would struggle to participate in this way, what extra support can be put in place for them?

**Tip:**

**ALWAYS USE AGE-APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE IN YOUR COMMUNICATIONS AND MAKE SURE ALL YOUR COMMUNICATIONS ARE RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF THE PROJECT YOU'RE INVOLVED IN.**



# LIVE STREAMING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE Continued

## Things to consider if you're hosting a live streaming event include:

- ▶ When choosing a platform to use, make sure you understand how the platforms work, what their age limits are, the privacy settings and are aware of the safety features they offer. Avoid platforms that share contact details or locations of users.
- ▶ Make sure you have reminded young people about online safety before the session starts and make sure the young people understand that live streaming is live. Any comments they make will be seen by others and they probably won't be able to delete or edit them.
- ▶ Remind them not to share any personal information and not to respond to contact requests from people they don't know.
- ▶ Never reveal the full identity of individual participants and be sensitive to the needs of those who may have child protection concerns.
- ▶ If you provide young people with access to live streaming use an open area and make sure the activity is observed by appropriate adults who are part of the normal youth work you run.
- ▶ Will other people be able to reproduce and distribute your stream? Or have you limited the access? Use a platform that allow you to restrict the audience, for example by asking them to create a login and password?
- ▶ Make sure you have all the consent needed for young people to participate in the stream?
- ▶ Make sure the activity is observed by an appropriate adults who is a part of your normal youth work.

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## Things to consider if you're taking part in someone else's live stream include:

- ▶ making sure you know what content will be used in the stream and check it will be appropriate for the children and young people who will be watching it
- ▶ Find out how the stream will be used in the future, for example if it will be archived or broadcast again.

## What are some of the risks and benefits of creating and watching videos online:

- ▶ As everything happens behind a screen children may feel more able to do things they may not do face to face.
- ▶ The real-time nature of the live streaming means that there is no way to edit what is shared so a child may share something they later regret.
- ▶ The immediate feedback given by viewers, whether negative or positive, can have a direct effect on their confidence and self-esteem.
- ▶ Being able to be less socially isolated by building bonds with people with similar interests.
- ▶ Getting a sense of achievement as they are included and engage in the content.

