



# Tips and Strategies for Youth to Thrive in Remote and Online Programming

Grounded in the Youth Who Thrive Program Qualities  
([https://www.youthwhothrive.ca/message08\\_02d.php](https://www.youthwhothrive.ca/message08_02d.php))

[www.studentscommission.ca](http://www.studentscommission.ca)



# Welcome, Introduction, and Land Acknowledgement



# Getting To Know Each Other

## Setting Our Expectations

## The Zoom Platform

Check-in on Chat: Name, pronouns (if you'd like to share), how you're feeling, where you're located, favourite pizza toppings

## Community Builders



# The 4 Pillars: Respect, Listen, Understand, Communicate™

Let's co-create our guidelines



# Grounded in Youth Who Thrive

Literature review that includes  
program qualities:

[https://www.youthwhothrive.ca/message08\\_02d.php](https://www.youthwhothrive.ca/message08_02d.php)



# Connection and Belonging

## Supportive Relationships

- Accessibility of platforms
- Consistent and diverse connections during and in between events
- Creating and sustaining community

## Opportunities for Belonging and Meaningful Inclusion



# Accessibility of Platforms

- Increase access to technology
  - Purchasing and sharing devices
  - Minutes for phone
  - Mobile internet sticks
- Ensure multiple options for engagement
  - Video and audio
  - Audio only
  - Telephone option



Q1. How do you usually communicate with youth? Through what mechanisms?

Q2. Do you know your organizational policies around communicating with youth through different mechanisms/media?

# CONNECTING





# Consistent and Diverse Connections

- Multiple supportive adults/peers available during/after/in-between events
  - Name their roles and how youth can connect with them
- Be transparent about connecting with adults and peer supports outside of events
  - Share appropriate avenues for communication
  - Let youth know boundaries etc...of communication
  - Try setting “office hours” for drop-in chats
- Know your organizational policies and procedures
  - What are the limits imposed on communication?
  - How can you maintain connection within those limits OR do you need to change those limits?



# Creating and Sustaining Community

- Make time and space to get to know each other
  - Allot more time for activities done online
  - Commit the time needed at the beginning and the end to check-in, catch up, connect
  - Create lots of space for youth to share, even if it's off-topic -- many youth don't have access or have distanced or infrequent access to their regular supports



- Make it fun -- laugh together
  - Do icebreakers and community builders (on multiple calls! Even if they already know each other...)
  - [Icebreakers-10-activities-to-energize-your-zoom-meetings](#)
- Allow for emergence and variation from the agenda
  - Create space for youth to share -- many no longer have access or have limited access to their regular support systems
- Leverage in-person/live options to create shared activities
  - Care kits or workshop kits that are sent out ahead of time



# Safe and Healthy Spaces

Physical and Psychological  
Safety

Positive Social Norms

Appropriate Structure

- Facilitate the At-Home Connection
- Set Guidelines and Expectations
- Create Routine and Protocol to Reinforce Safety



# Facilitate the At-Home Connection

- Finding space
  - Not all youth will have a space where they can connect online and be alone--know the circumstances for youth to make sure that discussions you have with them don't create unsafe spaces for them at home
- Getting Comfortable on the Online Platform
  - Don't take for granted that youth know the platform you're working with--walk them through the features, especially the fun ones!
- Identify days and times that work well for participants
  - New/enhanced responsibilities at home, different schedules, online learning can all impact availability



# Set Guidelines and Expectations

- Start by co-creating guidelines
  - Return to them early and often, build on them as needed
  - 4 Pillars: Respect, Listen, Understand, Communicate™
- Talk about expectations for the calls, facilitators and participants
  - Decide on clear expectations together



# Create Routine and Protocol to Reinforce Safety

- **Create Routines and Ceremony**
  - Start with check-ins, name games, community builders etc... and end with check-outs
  - Provide time and space for participants to share how they're feeling
- **Identify a Safety person**
  - Share how to connect with them and any related processes (ex. Disclosure...)



- Create spaces for anonymous sharing and/or anonymous feedback
  - Find other apps or plug-ins that allow participants to share things anonymously  
<https://forms.gle/UXMTH8gtU8HkBHo46>
- Use small group and large group spaces online
  - Zoom break-out rooms can create space for youth to share
  - Have co-hosts that can move to different rooms and provide support/facilitation





# Building Confidence and Competency

Support for Youth to be  
Effective and Feel Valued

Opportunities for Skill-  
Building and Learning

- Share Leadership
- Provide Opportunities for Task-Oriented Follow-Up
- Make Space and Use Tools to Facilitate Feedback and Input



# Share Leadership

- Make space for youth to lead parts of the workshops
  - Start small, if that's easier, with youth leading check-ins etc...
- Offer trainings that will support youth to take on more leadership
  - I.e. Facilitator trainings
- Create sub-committees or action-oriented groups and have youth lead them



## Provide Opportunities for Task-Oriented Activities

- Create opportunities to practice new skills, either during or after workshops
  - Use 'kits' to share materials ahead of time so youth can 'do' during the workshop
- Sub-committees and action-oriented groups can be focused on completing specific tasks
  - Offer guidance and support, and allow for youth to create products, deliverables...
  - Many youth want to 'do' -- hard on online meetings; turn those online meetings into check-ins around the implementation



## Make Space and Use Tools to Facilitate Feedback and Input

- Incorporate different ways to provide feedback and insight about both programming and young people's experiences and outcomes
- Encourage and support youth to ask questions and seek their own input
  - Participatory Action Research can be done virtually!
- Use to tools at hand to make space for input and co-creation
  - Polls, whiteboards....
- Share back what you learn! Close that feedback loop...
  - Make space for youth to interpret what's been collected and learned
- Co-create!



# Integration

Integration of Family,  
School, and Community  
Efforts

Diversity of Experience

Customized Youth  
Programming

- Leverage Virtual/At-home Engagement to Connect with Parents and Teachers
- Offer Customized and Open Youth Programming



## Leverage Virtual/At-Home Engagement to Connect with Parents and Teachers

- Connect (or ask youth to connect) with teachers/schools to share online engagement opportunities with students
  - Support schools with much-needed online content
- For younger youth, leverage their at-home time to connect with parents, who often step in to help get kids online
- Welcome schools into your spaces to share their resources and content



## Offer Customized and Open Youth Programming

- Offer spaces for youth who share a particular identity/set of identities with facilitators of shared experiences
  - Additional safety for youth in particularly vulnerable positions
- Offer spaces that are open for diverse youth to join
  - Diversity comes with big benefits, but can challenge the safety of a space



**ANY QUESTIONS???**





# Closing

- Rose, Bud, Thorn
  - Rose: What was a highlight today?
  - Bud: What is something you want to learn more about/explore moving forward?
  - Thorn: What was the low point or what would you change about today?



# Resources

<https://experiencescanada.ca/resources/treaty-map-01/>

<https://www.summitteambuilding.com/icebreakers-10-activities-to-energize-your-zoom-meetings/>

<https://ziteboard.com/pricing/>

<https://pollunit.com/en/accounts>

<https://www.cybersafebc.ca/resources>