



Webinar Series

Tips and Strategies for **Youth to Thrive** *in Remote & Online Programming*

This webinar presented for the Community of Practice by Christa Romaldi, Kadane Headley and KD Voss of The Students Commission of Canada discusses techniques and activities that can be easily implemented to engage youth in online programming. [Click here to view webinar](#) | [Click here to view presentation slides](#)

Connection & Belonging

Spend the time you need to get to know each other

- Commit the time you need to catch up, check-in, and laugh together
- Play games and get active!

Examples:

- Simon/Someone Says, Show-and-Tell, Scavenger Hunts, Stretching or Exercises (like jumping jacks)
- Name a word and everyone signs a song with that word in it
- Select a category and go through the alphabet, naming items from that category

Create Community Through:

- Sharing your names and pronouns
- Sharing Land Acknowledgement (region-specific or virtual)
- Taking interest in what youth are interested in Communicating via text, calls, and social media outside of the online event
- Spending time together on social media through Instagram stories, Snapstreaks, Live streams, YouTube, and TikTok
 - Have youth do a tutorial/presentation on how to make a TikTok or another platform you are not familiar with
- Sending out care kits before online activities that provide activities and resources that they can do together during virtual events

Ensure that youth can access and use the platforms & technology you're using to connect

- Provide that technology through shared devices, mobile Internet sticks, and minutes for phones
- Give people different options to connect, like phone and video calls!



Have supportive adults & peers around - explain to youth their roles and how/when to contact them

- Check your assumptions - Challenge negative assumptions you and/or other adults may have about young people. Not all youth are the same, be open to new and positive relationships.

Safe & Healthy Spaces

Co-create guidelines

- The Guidelines apply to everyone equally and break down power structures
- Ensuring participation is always optional: have alternative ways to participate, don't force mics or camera

At the SCC, we start with the 4 Pillars™

RESPECT

LISTEN

UNDERSTAND

COMMUNICATE

Know the ethics and professional parameters around online communication with youth participants

- Have processes to report inappropriate communication and address harassment and discrimination if they arise
- Be transparent and open about how and what can be communicated

Create an online inclusion team of youth who are there to support their peers to engage

- Have adults to support these youth, but let them lead the charge

Support youth to get comfortable in the space

- Show them how to use the platform; use chats (public and private), whiteboards, and screen share options
- Use the space in ways that are most accessible to them... break-out rooms, polls, spaces for sharing feedback



Building Confidence & Competency

Create and Support Youth Leadership

- Create opportunities big and small for youth to lead - you can start with leading check-in and move to leading activities
- Train and support them to take on these roles

Take action!

- Create task-oriented committees and groups with clear deliverables to co-create
- Share materials or activities ahead of time so youth can “do” while they’re on the call

Close that feedback loop

- Create opportunities to gather voice, led by staff and youth - leverage social media to collect this voice
- Share back what you’ve learned

Integration

Leverage virtual/at-home engagement to connect across school and community & build partnerships

- Share online learning opportunities with schools and other community agencies
- Celebrate events online together, like Pride
- Invite guest speakers and performers
- Virtual concerts, Zoom dance lessons or charades
- Connect youth to online resources, like telehealth, counselling services...

Have diverse and customized spaces for youth

- Create additional safety for youth by having spaces set aside for populations that share certain identities
- And create spaces where diverse youth can come together