

## How to Stay in Touch-Virtually

This summary will give you various ways you can stay connected and continue to build relational power during our public health crisis. Let's continue to find ways to practice social distancing but maintain our sense of community through different video and telephone platforms.

1. Video conferencing (Best for large groups of people)
  - Zoom
    - Can be used for one-on-one meetings and larger groups
    - Great audio and video quality
    - Equipment needed: laptop or a desktop computer; internet connection; if using a cellphone you need the Zoom App.
  - Google Hangout
    - Best for small groups (2-10 people, less than 4 is ideal)
    - Great video/audio quality, easy to focus on small groups of people
    - Equipment needed: laptop or a desktop computer; internet connection; if using a cellphone you need the Google Hangout app on your phone.
  - Facetime
    - Up to 6 people, best for 2 people
    - Equipment needed: Apple technology
  - Facebook Live
    - Best for large groups, unlimited amount of people can watch (they can comment but not participate otherwise)
    - Any camera and a Facebook account
2. Phone Conferencing (Best for small groups of people, quick meetings)
  - Various free conference lines to use
    - <https://fitsmallbusiness.com/best-free-conference-call-service/>
  - Merging phone lines
  - Zoom (need to dial into a video conference)
  - Skype
3. Group Instant Messaging (Best for checking on task items, quick check-ins)
  - Whats App
  - Facebook
  - I-Message
  - Texting (rates may apply)

## **Best Practices for Video Conferencing and Telecommunicating**

The purpose of this guide is to help you stay in touch with your young people and their families, in efficient and time sensitive ways during our current public health crisis. Below you will find tips to make your video conferences run smoothly.

### Effective Leaders/Facilitators

- When leading a video conference, phone conference, or a group chat you have an important role **both as a presenter and tech person** in charge of managing the video chat.
- If you are uncomfortable with the technology involved in creating a teleconference ask someone to help you **get trained on it before the meeting**. If you still feel uncomfortable with technology, have someone on the meeting than can help you trouble shoot.
- You should have access to the technology you are using. Meaning if you don't have a zoom account, you can't create a zoom call.

### During the Meeting

- **Consider using a roll call instead of introductions.** Be prepared to know who is planning to be on the call. Avoid having multiple people answering at once.
- **Be Patient.** Technology can be tricky, sometimes you will need to be patient as you work around technical issues.
- **Have a clear agenda and timeline.** Start the conversation with a clear agenda. Stay on top of the time. Allot specific time for answers if you think it's necessary.
- **Other things to keep in mind:**
  - **Access:** You must make sure the link/dial-in works and that participants have access to the meeting.
  - **Troubleshooting:** Be prepared to help someone who's having technical difficulties.
  - **Noise Levels:** When conferences become too noisy (with lots of static/echo in the background), you need to either manually mute your participants if possible, or remind your participants to mute themselves. In a video chat, you can usually see who has or hasn't muted themselves. Remind everyone to mute themselves if they are not speaking.

- **Group Chat:** Some platforms have a group chat option during the meeting, be sure to check your group chat or have someone check it consistently.

### Other Helpful Tips

- **Always remember to mute! (double check anyways)**
- If you're moving, turn off your camera in case others get distracted or headaches from watching you move
- If the question applies to the whole group, feel free to ask it. If it only applies to less than half of the group, ask those people separately from the group chat.
- Don't interrupt others. If it's important, message the facilitator, as it is their role to keep watch of when people want to participate. If it's important, put it in the chat box.
- If you need help, don't be afraid to message someone privately to ask