



## **CU Denver | CU Anschutz Campus Virtual Youth Programs – Best Practices**

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### **Online Platforms and Security**

The virtual platform, software and applications you choose to host virtual program sessions should be those recommended by the CU Denver | Anschutz Office of Information Technology. If you need assistance with your virtual platforms, contact the [Office of Information Technology](#) at 303-724-4357(HELP) and review their [Remote Resources](#).

After choosing, understanding and configuring the platform's security features, implement additional layers of security for all program sessions, such as:

- Prohibit sharing meeting links and passwords with others.
- Requiring a unique password to enter the session.
- Assign a co-host to assist in monitoring and moderating the virtual program session.
- Enable a waiting room feature to prevent participants from joining the meeting until the host admits them.
- Enable features that allow you to put participants on hold, move back to the waiting room or remove from the meeting all together.
- Limit a participants sign-in display to only show their first name and last initial (i.e., Lori S.) to protect the participants identity.
- Encourage virtual backgrounds, allows for more privacy for staff and participants.
- Limit screen captures/screen sharing. The meeting host can control what is shown on the screen at any given time or allow participants to share their screens, as needed.
- Chat features. Disable chat features or limit chat features to occur between the participant and staff. Follow "Rule of 3" – minimize 1:1 contact with a participant in any way (video chat, Zoom room, email, text, social media, etc.). Always have another adult or minor in the "room", on messages, emails, etc.
- Lock the meeting once the meeting begins and you no longer wish to allow anyone else to join.
- Mute all participants, allowing participants to be un-muted individually by staff, as needed for participation in the session, or when a participant "raises their hand".

### **Training Staff**

Host orientation sessions with staff to review updates and changes to the virtual programs. Those topics should include the following:

- Mandatory reporting requirements.
- Staff expectations and responsibilities.
- Clean and appropriate attire, clean and quiet space, appropriate backgrounds in recordings
- Safe online interactions with youth participants. Do not share personal contact information with youth including social media contact information. Do not follow/friend youth.
- Utilization of organizational platforms and resources for contact with youth (program apps, social media and email accounts, program provided computer, phone or other resources.
- Do not retain youth contact information on personal devices.
- Address youth behavior standards, management and dismissal of participants.



### Training Staff (Continued)

- Meeting and activity ratios. Consider the size of the session and keep the participant-to-staff ratios similar to when participants were on campus – “Rule of 3”.
- Virtual platform security protocols
- Review [University Risk Management Minor Guidelines](#)
- Review [University Risk Management Checklist](#)
- Review and comply with processes outlined in the CU Denver|CU Anschutz [Child Protection Policy APS 3001](#)

### Program Documents

- Update program documents to reflect virtual program activities and itinerary.
- Include photo/video release language. Template language can be found in University Risk Management’s [Participant Notice of Risk and Waiver](#).
- Any form of electronic capturing of the sessions is prohibited by all non-University participants.
- Outline virtual program standards - code of conduct, chat and communication expectations, behavior management and dismissal. Implement online rules and communicate concerns immediately to program director.
- Limit activities requiring physical activity. Activities that do require physical activity, describe those activities in detail and include risks and hazards associated to the activities on waiver and consent forms. Remind parents, guardians and participants to create a safe space for physical activities prior to joining a session and to check for safety hazards prior to beginning an activity.

### Improving the Virtual Program Experience

- Be professional, friendly, encouraging, and helpful to youth
- Respect diversity; ensure a safe space for all involved
- Be thoughtful of the information that is being shared on the virtual session.
- Allow time for breaks. Encourage the participants get up, walk around, stretch, use the restroom, etc.
- Parent involvement or participation. Younger participants may require parental assistance or participation in certain activities. Explain the expected level of parental involvement and consider whether you will need a separate consent/waiver for parents participating in virtual program activities.

### Need additional information?

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