GB Online Activities Guidelines

Virtual sessions are a great way to stay connected to GB members during this period of social distancing. Safeguarding and keeping children safe is central to what we do in The Girls' Brigade Ireland. These guidelines will help you to setup and host interactive, virtual sessions while ensuring that all interactions between adults and children are done safely and appropriately.

Preparation

Have a Leaders' meeting to plan your session and consider the safety of children and leaders.

Decide on someone to run the activities and someone else to manage the technology.

Check your security settings and practice using the different functions, know how to mute or remove someone quickly in case of disruption or inappropriate behaviour.

Suggested settings for Zoom meetings are included below, if you need advice on any other platforms get in touch with HQ.

Decide on the content of your session, what you hope to achieve, how girls can participate, and how they will let you know if they wish to contribute.

Information for Parents/Guardians

Send invitations to parents/guardians, do not contact children directly.

Send the details well in advance, hold sessions at a regular time and day each week, and stick to a fixed time limit.

If you plan to do a craft or activity that requires any materials, or a PE class that needs space, let the parents/guardians know so they can be prepared beforehand.

Parents/guardians should be available to supervise their children for the duration of the session.

Ideally girls should participate in a family room using speakers so that parents/guardians can follow the session. This may not be possible in all households.

Remind parents that video session can be expensive if the girl is using mobile data rather than Wi-Fi.

Explain that girls should not record, photograph, or take screenshots of the session.

Just before the session

Check your surroundings and let others in your household know that you are taking part in a Zoom session with children. Ensure that anyone who might be visible is suitably clothed. Ensure that nothing inappropriate can be seen or overheard.

Have a minimum of two leaders present, ideally more. Start the session a few minutes early with just leaders before the children join to get set up.

During the session

Try to hold separate sessions for Explorers, Juniors, Seniors and Brigaders where possible so that activities and discussions will be age appropriate.

Keep a record of who attended each virtual session just as you would for a face-to-face activity.

If a leader becomes disconnected and there is only one leader left, end the session immediately. Similarly, if only one girl is present, end the session.

Have fun! Seeing their leaders and friends will reassure girls in these strange times.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Remember that all online activity MUST be in accordance with our Child Safeguarding Policy and Leaders Code of Behaviour.

Follow the GB Child Safeguarding Policy if you are concerned about the welfare or safety of a child.

Share any concerns with your Captain who will report them to the Child Safeguarding Team:

Olive Good	087 2451310
Jemma Lee	087 1824440

If you have any questions, please contact Girls' Brigade Headquarters at info@girlsbrigadeirl.ie

Zoom is a platform that has been tested in the youth sector and will enable leaders to run virtual meetings easily and safely. With Zoom, only the person hosting the meeting needs a Zoom account, everybody else joining the meeting just needs an invitation link and an internet connection.

The Basic plan on Zoom is free and allows meetings up to 40 minutes in length. One person in the Company will need to act as the "host" and they will need to set up an account on www.zoom.us

We recommend changing Meetings Setting as follows:

Join before host	OFF
Private chat	OFF
File Transfer	OFF
Screen sharing	OFF if you don't need it, or set it to Host Only
Annotation	OFF
Whiteboard	OFF
Allow removed participants to re-join	OFF
Waiting Room	ON
Local Recording	OFF (this is in a different Settings menu under Recording)

The Waiting Room means that people cannot join the meeting room until you allow them, this gives you as leaders time to get started, and means that no one who should not be there will be able to join.

You can also "lock" the meeting if you don't want to be interrupted by late arrivals.

It is not generally appropriate to record a session – you wouldn't record a normal GB session. If you want to do any activity where recording will take place you will need consent from all participants, including how the video file will be shared and stored.

If you as a leader are taking a screenshot, or a photo of your screen, for the Company, imagine you are taking a photograph of the girls directly, only take a photo of those who have given consent to be photographed.

Clicking Manage Participants brings up a menu with a list of names, and gives you the option to Mute All if it's getting noisy or if you are getting any loud feedback problems. You can also mute individuals here.

Share Screen lets you share something from your computer, such as a video or PowerPoint.

The More button brings up a small menu which gives you some extra functions, including Lock Meeting.

There is lots more information, including video tutorials, in this blog:
https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/03/27/best-practices-for-securing-your-virtual-classroom/