

# YOUTH MINISTRY VIDEO CONFERENCING GUIDELINES & RECOMMENDATIONS

## PLEASE NOTE:

*Because there is no formal policy regarding video communication and youth ministry, the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry has compiled guidelines and suggestions to assist in adjusting to the new landscape of virtual youth ministry.*

*These guidelines only apply to youth 13+.*

*All video communication with children under the age of 13 should only be with parents.*

## ESSENTIAL STEPS TO HELP WITH VIRTUAL TRANSITIONS:

1. Read the USCCB's Guidelines on Social Media
2. Read the FTC's Children's Online Privacy Protection Act.
3. The pastor is the head of your parish and supersedes any recommended guideline from the Diocese concerning communication with teens. Be sure he approves of all video communication media prior to establishing communication with teens.

## SPECIFIC GUIDELINES ON VIDEO CALLS

1. Per Child Protection Policy, you **MUST** have at least 2 Child Protection Certified adults to chaperone a group of teens. Video communication should be treated the same way we treat in-person communication with minors.
2. It is recommended all certified adults joining the chat enter *prior* to the video call, before any teens are present, and wait until all teens have left the video call to *leave*.
3. It is recommended that each participant in the video call participates in a public area of their house (i.e. the kitchen, living room, den, etc.).
4. Parents should be the first point of contact and made aware of all video calls.
5. If you are using an online video communication provider (Zoom, Skype, Google Hangout, etc.) to make your video call, we recommend disabling private chat/messaging capabilities. Each platform should explain how to disable this feature.

## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a communication plan to give to your pastor that details which media you plan to use and specific dates and times if possible. It helps to get approval for everything rather than on an "as needed" basis.
2. Record video calls to ensure that all conversations and interactions are documented. Be sure to inform teens that the conversation is recorded and why it is being recorded.
3. Create a Google Form - communication waiver - where parents can agree/opt in to letting their teen participate in video calls. We suggest asking for the parent's email to confirm their submission and to email them about future opportunities. In addition, let parents know they are invited to listen, watch and learn with their teen(s).



DO YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT VIDEO/ONLINE COMMUNICATION?  
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT TO WEST GIFFIN AT [WGIFFIN@DIOBR.ORG](mailto:WGIFFIN@DIOBR.ORG)  
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