# *Doing Youth Work Digitally!*

This page is a way to share ideas about supporting young people remotely during the Covid-19

crisis. Please feel free to share the link with other youth workers - the more ideas, the better!

UK Youth and the National Youth Agency have also created some guidance for youth workers, so please check these out and share them widely: <https://nya.org.uk/reacting-to-covid-19-advice-to-youth-services/>

Please be aware of data protection and safeguarding in relation to using online platforms.

A couple of ICO highlights...

* If you are relying on consent as your lawful basis for processing, when offering an online service directly to a child, in the UK only children aged 13 or over are able to provide their own consent.
* For children under this age you need to get consent from whoever holds parental responsibility for the child - unless the online service you offer is a preventive or counselling service.

[https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/key-data-protection-themes/children/](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/key-data-protection-themes/children/?fbclid=IwAR0Op13MiPelS_oSuOlhh8Q_7bu3co_QPeqze0pH_JfxC6WtewqNEq_m9N4)

If possible avoid the use of **Skype** / **Facetime** – these are social media tools and as such share contact details with all users, you may inadvertently connect young people up with other people as an unintended consequence.

# **Facebook Groups** - text-based chat

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| *Pros* | *Cons* |
| Easy to share images, videos and weblinks in the chat  Group is active all the time so young people can dip in and out as they like (however you will need to manage young people’s expectations by giving clear information about what times you will be available)  Easy to make groups private - Facebook have a privacy tutorial if you’re not familiar with how their settings work  Many people will already use Facebook and will be familiar with how groups work  Can be accessed via the Facebook app (for Apple and Android phones) or in a web browser, and works on both Macs and PCs | Have to have a Facebook account, which means it’s not suitable for under 13s (Facebook’s user policy says users should be 13 or over)  Easy for the group feed to get overwhelmed with lots of posts; some posts can get ‘buried’ by others that come in later, which could lead to some young people feeling ignored if their  post wasn’t seen / commented on  May make safeguarding issues more likely, as people can connect profiles through the group when they may not have done so otherwise. Leaders need to use specific Youth Work accounts (not their main personal one), and give at least one other Leader access to that account.  Since the app has access to all your social media contacts it is important to set privacy control correctly |

# **Google Hangouts** - voice and video chat (limited text-based chat)

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| *Pros* | *Cons* |
| Lots of people already have Google accounts, for instance if they have a Gmail email account or an Android smartphone  Can be used in a web browser or on a smartphone via the Hangouts app. Works on both Macs and PCs.  Easy to connect - you just need to send a web link to everyone you want to invite (this can be done by email, WhatsApp message etc)  Tutorial when you first log in, to show you how everything works  Chat is only open for as long as the admin (i.e. the youth worker) wants - once they hang up, the chat is over. This is useful for managing boundaries. | Free version only allows up to ten people to connect at once, but there is a paid version which removes this cap  Free version only shows 4 people at a time and switches when people speak  The system isn’t very good at managing situations where multiple people try to speak at the same time  Voice chat isn’t always accessible for people with hearing impairments, as the sound isn’t always very clear. It’s hard to lip-read as video and sound are sometimes out of sync and the picture rapidly changes from person to person rather than showing everyone in a grid view or similar. *(This feedback comes from a person who uses hearing aids)*  Need to have a webcam and microphone on your computer, unless you’re using the app  Doesn’t work very well for text-based chat, as messages pop up then disappear again quickly, although a side bar can be opened to show these again. |

# House Party -

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| *Pros* | *Cons* |
|  | **Concerns around handling of data - advice is not to use House Party for youth work** |

# **Instagram Messenger** - text-based chat via smartphone app

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| *Pros* | *Cons* |
| Many young people will already use Instagram and know their way around the service  Groups are private by default and you can only join by being invited  Chat is active all the time so young people can dip in and out as they like (however you will need to manage young people’s expectations by giving clear information about what times you will be available) | Have to have an Instagram account, which means it’s not suitable for under 13s (Instagram’s user policy says users should be 13 or over)  Not all young people have smartphones  Since the app has access to all your social media contacts it is important to set privacy control correctly |

# **Microsoft Teams** - video, webcast voice and text chat

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| *Pros* | *Cons* |
| Comes as part of all Office 365 licences  Combines chat, screen sharing, video conferencing  Scheduled meetings can be setup either as a group meeting or stream  Streamed meetings allow participants to watch and interact  Apps for all phones/tablets  This is the replacement to Skype for business | Needs an Office 365 licence to host a meeting - not required for meeting members  Only 4 people show on the screen at a time, video switches to the speaker |

# Skype - text, video and voice chat

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| *Pros* | *Cons* |
| Can be used in a web browser or on a smartphone via the Skype app. Works on both Macs and PCs.  Text-based chat works very well in Skype, which is useful for people with slow internet connections who might not be able to use video / voice chat. | The system isn’t very good at managing situations where multiple people try to speak at the same time  Voice chat isn’t always accessible for people with hearing impairments, as the sound isn’t always very clear and it’s hard to lip-read as video and sound are sometimes out of sync. *(This feedback comes from a person who uses hearing aids)*  Need to have a webcam and microphone, unless you’re using a smartphone  Not always easy to connect - everyone has to be online at the same time and then be invited into a group conversation, which means some people could be accidentally left out if they are late logging in or don’t tell the group leader that they would like an invitation |

# **WhatsApp** - text-based chat via smartphone app

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| *Pros* | *Cons* |
| Easy to share images, videos and weblinks in the chat  Chat is active all the time so young people can dip in and out as they like (however you will need to manage young people’s expectations by giving clear information about what times you will be available) | Have to have a WhatsApp account, which means it’s not suitable for under 16s (WhatsApp’s user policy says users should be 16 or over)  Some security concerns around WhatsApp  You connect using your phone number, which is visible to everyone in the group. This could lead to young people’s phone numbers being shared with people outside the group, or with people in the group who the individual may not want having the number.  Not all young people have smartphones |

# Zoom - text, video and voice

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| *Pros* | *Cons* |
| Voice and text-based chat works very well  Don’t need an account to log in  Paid version is £11.99 a month - allows meetings upto 24 hours with 100 participants. Smaller organisations could get a Momentum small grant to help with this cost.  Paid version allows participants to be split into small groups for chat.  Gallery view allows you to see everyone at the same time, or can switch to speaker view which shows the person currently speaking on a larger screen. | 40 mins cap on the free service (there is a paid service which removes this)  Need a reliable, fast internet connection for video chat, which might not be possible in some parts of Norfolk  May have options for people to dial in by phone if they are unable to connect via data link (obviously they will get audio only, not video). Can also be used if the audio quality is not good on a laptop connection. Not sure if the free version would have this feature.  Current load means dial in access is patchy |

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