



PFLAG Virtual Support Group Meetings: Facilitating a Virtual Meeting

Virtual Meeting Facilitator Best Practices:

- Be patient and kind. This kind of virtual meeting space is new for everybody.
- Assign a live-chat facilitator for your meeting who can monitor and moderate the chat throughout the session. We have best practices for live-chat facilitators available at pflag.org/pflag-connects-educational-materials.
- Remember the role of facilitators. They are great listeners and communicators and set the tone for the meeting. They are neither a content expert nor a lecturer.
- At the start of the meeting, the facilitator should:
 - Give some basic instructions including where the chat is and how participants can mute their line.
 - Remind the group of the purpose or agenda of the meeting.
 - Read ground rules and/or group agreements. Ask the live chat facilitator to share the ground rules in the chat.
 - Specifically request that people do not take screenshots or livestream the meeting.
 - Read a confidentiality statement and remind people that while the format of the meeting is different, confidentiality remains an important tenet of PFLAG gatherings.
 - Preemptively address concerns about trolling/doxing/Zoom Bombing and share that there's a plan in place to remove folks if necessary.
- Prepare a short icebreaker, group activities, and discussion prompts to keep the conversation moving. This is especially important for groups that don't already know each other.

- Check in with folks on how they're coping but do not dwell on COVID-19 or allow it to dominate your meeting.
- Take threats of self-harm and/or violence seriously. Put a plan in place for when emergency assistance may be necessary. We have created a document that has suggestions on what to do if someone is in crisis available at pflag.org/pflag-connects-educational-materials.