



meeting where you are.

PFLAG Virtual Support Group Meetings: Working with Youth

PFLAG National has detailed guidelines for PFLAG Chapters regarding working with youth in their community. *Working with Youth: Best Practices and Guidelines for PFLAG Chapters* is available to all chapter leaders by request and interested chapters should reach out to the Chapter Engagement Coordinator for their region (pflag.org/staff) to receive a copy. Chapter Leaders in the Western Region should contact Jamie Curtis, Director of Chapter Engagement.

The best practices and guidelines outlined in that document apply to virtual spaces as well. Our recommendation is for chapter leadership to review this document before moving forward with a virtual support group that includes or is specifically designed for youth.

Important Reminders:

- If your chapter moves forward with a virtual support group that includes or is specifically designed for youth, it is your responsibility to be aware of local laws and regulations regarding parental consent and mandatory reporting and to consult with an attorney if necessary.
- To protect your chapter from liability, we do not recommend directly advertising to youth about your chapter's virtual events, including general virtual support group meetings.
- 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.

Best Practices:

- Be patient and kind. This kind of virtual meeting space is new for everybody.
- Maintain a list of the programs and organizations in your community, state, and region that serve LGBTQ+ youth as well as information about any virtual programming they offer.
- If your chapter elects to create a virtual space specifically for youth, train prospective leaders in youth group facilitation and provide clear, written guidelines. Refer to our documents on confidentiality, setting ground rules, facilitating a virtual meeting, and live-chat facilitation available at pflag.org/pflag-connects-educational-materials for additional information.

- As a part of your chapter’s sign-up sheet or other vetting process for your virtual meetings, ask participants to indicate if they are under the age of 18.
 - If your chapter is not prepared to move forward with a virtual support group that includes youth let the young person know as quickly as possible. Send an email response that includes details from your list of community organizations that serve LGBTQ+ youth.
 - If your chapter moves forward with virtual support groups that include youth, be sure to let the facilitator and live chat facilitator know, in advance, when a meeting will include LGBTQ+ youth so that they can prepare.
- When you are scheduling a meeting that might include youth, it is strongly recommended that you turn off the option for participants to share their screens. Refer to this [Zoom tutorial](#) to learn more about how to do that.
- Consider holding youth-centered virtual spaces at the same time you’re holding adult/parent virtual support groups. This can be done using the breakout room feature on Zoom. Refer to this [Zoom tutorial](#) to learn more about how to do that.