

Guidelines for Virtual Events with Minors

COVID-19 has quickly changed how we continue with the campus mission, including hosting events that involve youth participants under the age of 18. While the type and amount of electronic communication between you and youth participants may have changed, some expectations have not. Continue to follow campus policies. Before the start of the program, review the campus policy for Activities with Minors, collect waivers and photo/media releases, and ensure all host who will engage with minors have taken the appropriate CANRA training. Below are some additional considerations when hosting virtual events and activities.

If you have questions, or would like more information about youth protection on campus, please contact the Office of Risk Services at risk@berkeley.edu.



Set Boundaries for Communications

- Do not have one-on-one interactions with minors, especially in breakout rooms.
- Ensure 2 adults are in the virtual room before the event starts.
- Learn the host controls and settings of the virtual platform, i.e. how to mute all, turn off video functions, remove participants, and other troubleshooting issues.
- Disable screen sharing, private chat, and non-host recording.
- Set password to access events and enable waiting room.
- Send link and password information directly to participants and their parents. Avoid posting it publically.
- Refrain from communicating with minors via private emails, texts, and social media.
 - If you must communicate with a minor, copy another adult and only use your Berkeley email and/or phone.
 - Communications should be focused on learning and the program. Do not share or ask about any personal information.
 - Be aware of the time of day when you are sending communications.
- Any communications that may be misinterpreted as inappropriate should be brought to the attention of a supervisor or advisor.
- In the spirit of transparency, save chat transcriptions and consider recording program sessions. If recording, make sure to collect photo/media releases from parents/guardians.
 - Should they chose not to consent to a media release, have a plan to ensure their minor is not being recorded (like disabling their video).





Maintain Professionalism

This is an unusual learning situation, and it is easy to be more relaxed when in your own home, but here's no need to compromise professionalism. Maintaining professionalism helps reinforce existing boundaries between adults and minors.

- Dress appropriate during instruction and require participants to dress appropriately as well, as if they were attending in person.
- Ensure that the views participants see are appropriate. For example:
 - Encourage using a home office or living room rather than a bedroom, when possible.
 - Use the option to blur the background or have a custom backdrop.
 - Use an appropriate photo when video is disabled.
- Stop cyberbullying, any disrespectful comments, or inappropriate images by immediately disabling audio, video, or removing participant.
 - Assign another host to monitor participants.
- Before program starts, ask hosts to make their social media accounts private.

Involve Parents

Keeping parents in the loop gives you another set of eyes and ears to manage risk, especially in this unique and difficult time!

- Communicate all program details, curriculum, and expectations in advance.
- Invite parents to participate or drop in periodically – with the appropriate attire.
- Ensure parents know how to report concerns or issues to the program.

Other Resources

[Office of Risk Services Best Practices for Activities Involving Minors](#)

[UC Berkeley Policy on Activities Involving Minors](#)

[UC Berkeley Volunteer's Code of Conduct](#)

[Settings for Securing Zoom](#)

In person and on-line training can be requested by contacting risk@berkeley.edu