



Archdiocese of Washington

Child Protection and Safe Environment

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Safe Environment for online youth gatherings

Tips for creating and maintaining while ministering to minors.

- **Dress for success**
Please keep in mind the message you are sending by what you wear. “Dress as if the meeting is an in-person gathering.”
- **Youth-Appropriate Environment**
Please conduct gatherings in a public area of your house such as an office space or living room area. Pay special attention to the background seen by the camera and remove any adult-themed references such as alcoholic beverages.
- **Platform Consideration**
Review the security features for the platform before choosing. You will need control over participants so that you know everyone that is in the online gathering. Features to look for are password protection to join the meeting, waiting room before entering gathering to control who enters, lockdown feature after all participant are present, ability to dismiss participants if acting inappropriate or showing inappropriate materials.
- **Adult Supervision**
There must be 2 adults fully compliant with ADW Child Protection Policy in the gathering at all times and additional compliant adults should be online for large gatherings. Avoid one-on-one communication with minors. Host must be a parish youth minister or person assigned by the parish. Adults should not give out personal contact information.
- **Communicate With Parents**
Online gatherings with minors must be with the knowledge/permission of parents or guardians and make links/access available to parents.
- **Know Warning Signs**
Parents/guardians need to be notified if a minor is exhibiting extreme distress or other mental health concerns.