



ONLINE YOUTH WORK: SAFETY GUIDELINES

In response to Covid-19 many centres are closing and moving services online. Whether staying in touch, providing resource and support and through whichever medium - the following will help you consider how.

POLICY

If your organisation does not have an online working policy (or code of conduct), the following are good starting points when considering how to formulate one:

- What is deemed acceptable use, behaviour or language of all users?
- What is a manageable and constructive number in any one online group?
- Whilst there are exceptions to GDPR during times of emergency, how far should any policy deviate from this, and to what end?

SAFEGUARDING

Online or offline, safeguarding requires a whole organisation approach, and any planning or reviews should include the organisation's safeguarding officers. An online space still needs to be a safe space. For example:

- Are young people able to control their environment (switch off cameras and mics)?
- Are young people in a private or shared space at home?
- Can you or should you mix different age groups online?
- Can you adjust the privacy settings on the software or platform - is it encrypted?
- If using a platform or software, do the legal terms and conditions allow for the age group to use them?
- If there is any recording, live-streaming, or sharing of your contact? This can be useful for safeguarding purposes but ensure all young people and their parents / guardians are informed why, & agree to this before participating.

CONSIDER:

- Are data costs inhibiting?
- Do young people have digital access / technology? Are whatsapp groups needed for some?
- Some young people may not want mass participation - can you provide for them?

BEST PRACTICE:

- Avoid handing out personal contact details, use an organisational log-in or contact. Similarly, if you know participants use password-enabled software.
- Do keep a register of participation, including those who arrived early or late - are the right people online?
- Always use a secure, encrypted connection and avoid 'private' messaging, always try and keep messages in a public space unless this is a safeguarding concern.
- Have 2 staff online where possible and avoid one-to-one messaging - try not to work alone.

USEFUL LINKS:

- [UK Safer Internet Helpline](#) - 0344 381 4772
- [Think U Know](#) - An online safety site with guidance for professionals
- [We The Catalysts](#) - Online beginner guides for using digital software



A DIGITAL GUIDE: ONLINE SAFETY - MORE INFO



OTHER USEFUL SOFTWARE / APPS:

There are plenty of potential software programmes or applications that you can use to help undertake youth work online, below are just a few that you might find useful.

MENTIMETER

[MENTIMETER.COM](https://www.mentimeter.com)

Mentimeter can be used to run quizzes, polls, Q&A sessions and more. The results can be anonymised, saved and analysed, and presented in numerous formats.

SLIDO

[SLI.DO](https://www.slido.com)

Especially useful for organisational meetings.

Incorporate Q&A, quizzes, Feedback and live analytics to engage everyone.

TYPEFORM

[TYPEFORM.COM](https://www.typeform.com)

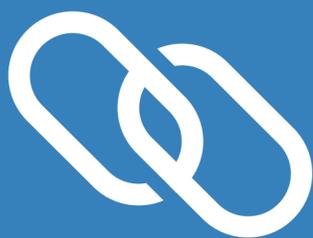
if you need digital registers this tool can be used for getting parental consent and young people's emergency details.

You can also create evaluation forms with this software.

PADLET

[PADLET.COM](https://www.padlet.com)

you can create individual Padlets for different groups or activities. You can write notes, draw sketches, paste links, vote for people's posts and more. Great for a fun discussion board.



There is a large list of other digital tools with explanations of their functions available at [Digi Youth Work](#).

A pre-recorded webinar on working online with young people can be found at [People Dialogue Change](#)