

## Virtual Community Visits

Please review this page when conducting virtual community visits. Virtual community visits can be done to preschools, daycares, school classes, and a variety of community groups.

### Scheduling & Statistics

Complete the following tasks:

- Check branch or division capacity
- Confirm date, time, and program length with community partner
- Confirm virtual platform (Zoom, Teams, etc.)
- Receive or create meeting link (depending on who is scheduling the program)
- Enter visit into personal and branch calendar
- Keep track of attendance statistics

### Tech Check

- Schedule a brief “practice run” with the community partner to ensure they have a strong enough internet connection and good internet speed. Make sure they are practicing with the same device and location they will use for the actual program. Note: Schools and other community partners with extensive practice and use of virtual platforms may not require a test run. Use your best judgement.
- Check to see that you can share your screen, access chat, etc. if needed.

### Gather Program Information

Find out the following information from your community partner. It is helpful to have a phone conversation prior to the visit.

- Will the audience be gathered in-person, watching from different devices remotely, or both?
- Will the group be watching from a screen and projector? Will they be seated on the floor, or on desks?
- If gathered, where will the program take place (find out specifically which room or part of the centre)?
- What are your general group expectations around communication and questions? Do participants raise the hand button, drop questions in the chat, or turn on their microphone?

- Will the chat be on? Will I be able to see it?
- How do you like to be addressed in front of your group?
- Do group members generally have their cameras on or off?
- Confirm that your planned content will work for the group, especially technically. (Smaller groups, screen sharing, activities)
- Will the program be recorded and if so, will it be shared with others?

Remind the community partner of the following:

- The audience should be informed if the program is being filmed
- The filmed footage is intended to be shared only with the community partner's specific audience
- The filmed content is not intended for use in advertising or promoted widely outside their organization.

## General Tips & Tricks

- If participants are to be seated on the floor in front of a large screen, lower your gaze rather than looking at the camera. This will give more of an impression that you are looking at them rather than staring over their heads.
- Still choose books with big, bold easy to see illustrations. Some projectors have poor resolution, and most visits will be in the daytime. Some will be on very small screens.
- Try to share ebooks rather than physical books. They are much easier to see.
- GO SLOW! Leave what seems like an uncomfortable amount of time for questions.
- Keep it SIMPLE.
- Remember, singing is not recommended in groups. Try for an alternative like a poem, a finger play, signing the song with ASL etc.
- Have a back up plan for if there is technical troubles on their end. A puppet friend is great for that. This allows you to keep chattering nonsense (so they can make sure their speakers are working) without missing any content from your presentation. Puppets are also great for older kids and even adults.
- Expect the unexpected! There are now so many different aspects at play in a visit, and many of them are beyond everyone's control (wifi signal strength for example). Even if a program does not go perfectly, know you represented the library well.
- Follow up and ask for feedback. We are all learning! This is very new. Also let your program partner know what worked really well for you during the visit.
- Send out a follow up email with booklists, relevant activities, any resources discussed, links to relevant library pages, handouts etc. Don't forget to include links to upcoming programs!

- Share your experiences with the rest of your team. Share in the Report Back Forum below!

## Report Back on Community Visits

Create a space where staff can share their experiences, feedback, and questions related to virtual community visits. Invite them to ask a question, share an experience, and let others know their tips and tricks.