

## Zoom (Video Conference) Tips for Guardians of School-Age Students

During this transition to at-home-learning, many people are using video conferencing platforms such as Zoom. Many of us have used Facetime or Skype and are aware of video calls, but group Zoom conferences are a bit different.

Here are some things to consider:

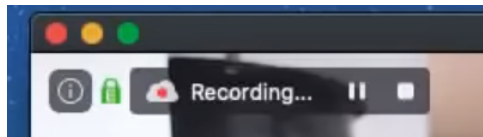
- **Zoom allows the participants to show their video** in a virtual conference room. All participants can see each other's video. A "Zoom room" might look like this:



Some **PRIVACY** and **SAFETY** things to think about before you sign up or enter a Zoom conference with/for your kids:

- **Consider the reputation of the presenters.** Have you heard of the organization and/or people running the conference? Are the presenters trained to interact with young people?
- **Consider who has access** to the conference. Was the link publicly available? How many people might participate? What age range is the conference for? Will there be a mix of ages? Do they require registration or parent permission and/or parent participation?
- **Review digital safety rules** with your child(ren). Even if these conferences are educational, they are still online and accessible. There are lots of online resources such as:  
<https://www.connectsafely.org/safetytips/>
- When you create an account, or sign in, **use only first names or a username** that does not specifically identify your child.
- When you call in from a phone, your **phone number** will be displayed unless you change your account. Download the Zoom app to change your settings instead of just joining from the link.

- Consider the **background** when you set up your computer or phone for video conferencing. What do you feel comfortable showing? Help to avoid comparisons by choosing a neutral background like a blank wall or kitchen table.
- Be aware of whether the presenters are **recording** the conference. You'll see this on the screen if it's being recorded. Have you given permission for recording? Do you know if the presenters plan to post the recording publicly?



- **You can turn off your video** if you would like to participate without anyone seeing you, your house and/or your child, but this may affect the quality of your child's experience.
- Unless the host has removed permissions, be aware that participants are able to send **private chats** to each other without the host seeing or knowing.
- **Kids know how to goof around on these sites.** They can change their pictures, change their names, use private chats etc. Sometimes it's funny and goofy, other times it's inappropriate. Kids don't always know the difference. Set ground rules for your kids. Tell them to stop the conference, or tell you, if they feel uncomfortable.
- If you have elementary age students, you should plan to attend sessions, or at least the first 10 minutes, to help manage the technology and student expectations. Often presenters will ask students to introduce themselves which can be very intimidating for younger kids.
- **Not sure?**
  - Attend with your child. Supervise.
  - Reach out to ask presenters questions ahead of time. Your questions will make the presentation better.
  - Stop video, audio, or the entire conference if you feel uncomfortable.



Created by Rural Aspirations Project  
 Have suggestions or questions: reach out to [val@ruralaspirations.org](mailto:val@ruralaspirations.org)

April 2020