



Amplify Your Impact: Beyond Ready Media & Message Training

UConn 4-H Fact Sheet



Virtual Connections

Virtual connections can help us all stay engaged in 4-H and may be a way to strengthen networking and sharing in the months and years to come. Below are options and guidance for you to connect with your 4-H clubs and groups.

Virtual Connections Best Practices

When conducting any virtual connection (club meeting, project workshop, etc.) be sure to follow these best practice guidelines.

- Only UConn 4-H Volunteers of Record and/or UConn faculty/staff are authorized to host a 4-H virtual connection.
- Ensure a minimum of two adults, preferably a combination of UConn 4-H Volunteers of Record and/or UConn faculty/staff. If another UConn 4-H Volunteer of Record or UConn faculty/staff cannot attend, a parent/guardian can serve as the second adult present.
- This two adult minimum is for all meetings and breakout sessions, within meetings.
- Minimum of two adults must be present the entire time.
- It is recommended they join prior to the start of the meeting.
- It is recommended they wait until all youth have signed off before they exit the virtual connection.

Preparing to Connect

Consider connection options:

- WebEx (UConn preferred Platform)
- Zoom
- Google Meets

All of the above offer video and/or phone conferencing options. Please check any platform you choose for ADA compliance. You should also consider using meeting passwords as another security precaution. Please use caution when sharing passwords.

Preparing to Connect

Personal options:

If you choose to use a personal virtual connection:

- Be sure to have it approved by your county 4-H office prior to sending to youth and families.
- It is recommended you invite one of your county 4-H faculty/staff to attend if available

Setting up your virtual connection:

- Contact your county 4-H office to assist in setting up a virtual connection.
- Consider log in, password and other control measures to monitor/ manage attendance.
- Use only “group chat” and turn off “private chat” in any virtual connection.
- Turn off “screen sharing” for participants unless the content has been approved.

Consider audience and attendance options:

- Allow for the greatest flexibility to fit the greatest number of needs.
- It is recommended that you offer phone and video conferencing whenever possible.
- Determine the target audience and how to control participation.
- Limit connection to one hour or less. Anything longer would require taking a break during the session.

Communicating connection information and time:

- Send connection information to parents and youth via email.
- When posting meeting notices on social media, post to a private group with at least two adult moderators, and not a public post, which can be seen by anyone.
- Send connection information to the county 4-H faculty/ staff.

Conducting the Connection

- UConn 4-H Volunteers of Record, UConn faculty/staff or parent/guardian should join prior to the start of the virtual connection.
- It is illegal to record anyone in Connecticut without their consent. Those being recorded have to be notified in writing, and if they are under 18 years old, a parent/guardian must acknowledge the meeting format.
- Therefore, if recording the meeting, you must alert all participants that it is being recorded before the start of any meeting/ event.
- Best practice: Alert them of your intent to record in meeting notices ahead of time too, and allow for alternate arrangements to be made if necessary,
- Mute upon entry or have participants mute their microphones unless speaking.
- Turn computer cameras off unless needed for visual aid.
- Keep track of virtual connections and participation for your club records.
- 4-H members should identify themselves with their first names only.
- Designate someone (club secretary, etc.) to take minutes.
- If an adult directly contacts youth, a second adult should be included in all communications.
- UConn 4-H Volunteers of Record, UConn faculty/staff or parent/guardian should remain in the virtual connection until all youth have signed off before they exit.