**Town of Ajax: Virtual Recreation Programs - Participant/Staff Guidelines**

**Introduction**

Due to COVID-19-related health and safety concerns, the Town has made the decision to cancel all in-person Winter 2022 recreation programs. The Town is happy to offer a range of virtual opportunities to deliver Winter 2022 programming online.

**Safety Considerations in Virtual Programming**

**Supervision:**

All online programming will be supervised by two Town of Ajax staff members or two staff members from the contracted service provider running the program, however it is the parent/guardian responsibility to ensure the participant is in an appropriate and positive space for these programs. Instructors will ensure that certain restrictions settings are in place for the best interest of the participants.

**Peer Interactions:**

Participants will be able to interact with each during specific program times. The expectations that are in place for in-person programs, to respect one another, are the same in a virtual setting.

**Participant Behaviour:**

Program instructors will use behaviour management techniques when dealing with participants who demonstrate inappropriate and/or aggressive behaviour, eg. re-direction, time-out, discussion with parent/caregiver, where warranted. If inappropriate behaviour continues, instructors will request assistance from their supervisor. The safety and dignity of the participant in our programs is our first priority. We will not accept disrespectful or aggressive behaviour and any of these behaviours may lead to removal from our online recreation programs.

**Technology**

The Town of Ajax and contracted Service Providers will be using an online platform called Zoom. This requires all participants to have a device that has access to the internet, use of a microphone and speakers.

Moderators can enforce appropriate communication by enabling/disabling platform features:

•Enable chat logging for all chat communications.

•Prohibit private communications between program participants.

•Prohibit file sharing, screen sharing, and recording by program participants.

•Instructors will sign in using the host credentials so that a ‘Waiting Room’ can be utilized.

**Participant Experience**

Instructors will strive to implement and develop a great overall experience for the participants in their virtual programs. This will prompt instructors, participants, and parents/guardians to discuss and learn more about the needs and accomplishments of each participants and assist in making appropriate program design adjustments. It will also provide an opportunity to clarify goals and objectives of the program and to discuss any issues regarding the participant’s experience.

**Creating a Safe Atmosphere**

In the first session, participants will review the code of conduct and confidential guidelines for discussion and participation. Program participants will be advised that at no point should they share any of the following via the live meeting: e-mail address, social media address(es) or locations to personal profiles, mobile number, or other personally identifiable information. For those with children attending a virtual program, please refer to https://protectkidsonline.ca/app/en/ to familiarize yourself with tips on internet safety in an online program.

Instructors will respond quickly to any inappropriate behaviour online. They will document incidents and report them immediately to their supervisor. Instructors will also report any concerns they have about a child (as they will be seeing a child’s living environment and may hear concerns from a child). Remember that instructors have a Duty to Report any disclosed, observed or suspected child abuse and/or neglect. In an online group setting, staff will watch participant-to-participant interactions and keep an eye out for potential instances of cyberbullying.

**Caregivers Experience**

Caregivers/parents play a key role in protecting their children, and the Town of Ajax can help equip them to effectively supervise their children’s online interactions. Parents/guardians must understand the use of online platforms and how they can support the process. An online waiver must be reviewed and acknowledged before registration will be completed.

We encourage parents/guardians to supervise their participant while online and be available for staff to contact them with any concerns.

**Zoom Controls and Tips**

The Town of Ajax will be conducting all virtual programs via Zoom. Below are some helpful controls and tips to make the experience run smoothly.

You can also find support resources online at support.zoom.us.

Tips for new users:

•Log in a few minutes early to ask for help and work out any unexpected kinks.

•Sit in a well-lit room. Try to avoid being backlit (bright light coming from behind you).

•Consider using earbuds with a microphone if you have a noisy household.

•Position yourself close enough to your device’s camera so that the frame is made up of your shoulders and head.

**Basic Controls:**

At the bottom of the screen, you should see options to mute/unmute, stop/start video, view a participant list, chat, and leave the meeting. If you don’t see these options, move your cursor around in Zoom.

**Rename using participant’s first name only:**

It’s helpful for other participants and staff to know your name so we can all better connect with one another!

•Hover your cursor over your own video box on the screen.

•Click the blue … in the upper right corner.

•Click Rename.

•Enter your first name.

**How to ask a question, share a comment, get the facilitator’s attention:**

In a small group/individual session:

Unmute yourself if given the option and the instructor will unmute you or wave your hand on video. In the control panel at the bottom of your window, click “Chat”. In a new window (or side, right panel on your screen) a chat box will open. Type in your question, comment, etc.

**Mute/Unmute & Sound Troubleshooting:**

When you join the call, you may automatically be muted. Unless you are speaking, please keep yourself muted to minimize background noise for everyone. When the host/staff/leader invites you to speak, please unmute yourself. If you forget to mute yourself following, the Producer may mute you. For large calls, you may not have the ability to mute/unmute and the host/staff/leader will do this for you.

•To Mute/Unmute: click the microphone icon.

•To troubleshoot audio or microphone issues (you can’t hear us or we can’t hear you), click the chevron (up arrow) to the right of the Mute/Unmute mic icon. Under Select a Microphone or Select a Speaker, click the alternative option to what is default.

**Video On/Off:**

If you can have your video on, please do! Seeing each other helps us connect more deeply.

To Turn Video On/Off: click the video camera icon (to the right of the microphone in the above screenshot).

**Video format – who you’re seeing on screen:**

You can choose between Gallery View (viewing up to 49 people at a time depending on your device’s capacity) or Speaker View (focusing in on whomever is speaking). For presentations, we recommend Speaker View and for group activities, we recommend Gallery View. In the top, right side of the screen (top left side for iPad), you will see an option to switch to whichever mode is not currently activated. Click Speaker View or Gallery View to change between.

\*Please note: Zoom works best in the Zoom app, which can be found in the App Store for IPads/IPhones or Google Play Store for Android devices. For desktops and laptops it can be found at https://zoom.us/download#client\_4meeting and it’s the top option. If not using the app, Zoom will work better in Internet Explorer or Edge browsers.