Synchronous virtual program delivery: Considerations for implementation and evaluation

Thursday, October 1, 2020

1:00–2:00 p.m. ET

Webinar transcript

Annie Buonaspina:	So, we have some grantee teams presenting today. We're just trying to get all the panelists on, but I'm going to start by going through some slides about how you can participate in our conversation today. So, as an intro, this is our first in a series of group sessions that we're planning to hold this fall; we're calling them Eval TA Chats, but they're going to include a mix of program implementation and evaluation considerations for each topic.

Today's topic is on synchronous virtual delivery. As I mentioned, we have four grantee teams who are going to speak to some implementation lessons learned, and then we'll also provide some evaluation considerations. And then, next week, we're going to have a session on asynchronous virtual delivery. So, if you're doing both or if you're incorporating some asynchronous elements into your live program, then I would encourage you to join that call as well.

Derek, if you could advance, I'll just quickly go through our agenda for today. Thanks. As I mentioned, we'll start by hearing from a few teams who started delivering via live delivery, either in the spring or the summer. They have lessons learned which we're hoping will be helpful to all of the teams—especially those of you who are starting this fall—but really everyone, as I'm sure all teams are constantly refining their virtual approach. And then, as I mentioned, we'll go through some evaluation considerations.

As a final point throughout all of these conversations, we're really interested in hearing from your team. If you have your own experiences to share or if you have questions for any of the teams that are speaking, we're going to have a lot of opportunity built in to participate. We're hoping for this to be more like a really big group discussion.

If you'd like to participate, I can just go through the ways that you can do that. Derek, you want to go to the next slide? Your first option is that you can raise your hand and we'll unmute you. One of us will always be monitoring the list of attendees. This image looks like a lot of buttons, but you can really ignore all of them, with the exception of that hand button. If you click on that, we'll be looking at the list and we'll make sure to unmute you so that you can actually talk during the session. Right now, you're all muted upon entry. And we would just ask you to make sure that you click at the end to lower your hand, because otherwise we're going to keep calling on you throughout the session.

And then, Derek, if you want to go to the next slide. The other option, if you'd prefer it, is to use the chat box. If you look at the top right-hand side of your

screen, you'll see that blue chat bubble, and that toggles your chat box area. You can just type a message in there. You're going to see a number of options for who you can send those messages to. Unless you really want to keep it private, it's probably best to just send that to all participants, because that way everyone can see what you wrote.

Okay. So we'll go to the next slide. This is the poll. Before you toggle it, Derek, if I can read the question. We wanted to start with this poll to see where everybody was with virtual delivery. Our question for everybody on the call today is, what is your current status related to live virtual implementation? If you don't mind launching the poll now. You should see it pop up in your sidebar. And you'll have a little bit of time to answer that.

The options are: "You're currently implementing live delivery." "You're going to start this fall"—so I would use that one if you either just started or you're going to start soon. "You're considering live virtual implementation." And then "Other," if there's something that we missed, you can feel free to use that one as well.

Okay. Let's check the results. It looks like most of you, about half, are already doing some implementation, or have been doing it for some time. And then about a third of you are going to start this fall. So that's good to know. For those of you who have some experience with it and have been doing it for a little bit, like I said, you should take advantage of some of the opportunities that we'll have to share some strategies that you've learned so far.

Okay. Yep, we're going to start with introductions. So, I'm Annie Buonaspina. I'm a research analyst at Mathematica, as well as a TA [technical assistance] liaison with the TPP19 [Teen Pregnancy Prevention 19] grantees. And Jane, if you want to quickly introduce yourself.

Jane Choi: Hi. Yes, I'm Jane Choi and I also am one of the TA liaisons for the TPP19.

Annie Buonaspina: I'm going to read through the teams and then I'll go to the next slide. So, I guess we'll just start with Adagio Health. If one person from each team could share who else on your team is presenting today and then a little bit of information about your program, that would be great.

AnaKay Yaghoubian: All right. Can you all hear me?

Annie Buonaspina: Yep.

AnaKay Yaghoubian: Okay. This is AnaKay Yaghoubian. I am the director of education programs at Adagio Health. And on the call today we have Courtney Smalt, who is our health educator on the project, and Maria Townsend, who is one of the folks on our evaluation team. Our project is based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. As you can see from the spreadsheet, we are using Positive Prevention PLUS, which is a comprehensive sex education curriculum.

Our partner on this is an organization called Auberle, in the Pittsburgh area, that provides foster care, residential care, and crisis care for families, and we are

working with Foresight, that they are associated with. Two of them are residential sites for female use. One is a residential site for male use. And one is called 412 Youth Zone, which is a very unique organization here in Pittsburgh that is a center for youth that are transitioning out of foster care, homeless youth, and transient youth. That is where we're implementing our program.

It was initially in person, and, as Annie mentioned, it has been virtual since about April. We initially tried using Microsoft Teams, but that was a challenge, so we moved into using Zoom. We are still doing things like offering incentives for the youth to attend. Courtney, our health educator, also did some phenomenal videos with the content of the curriculums included, so that could also be utilized in place of virtual sessions but also still be virtual education. So, I'll leave it at that.

Annie Buonaspina:	Thanks, AnaKay. Skye or Bajha, go ahead.
Skye Timmons:	Hi, everyone. Good morning. My name is Skye Timmons, pronouns are they/them/their. And I'm with Bajha Jordan, who uses she/her pronouns. I am the project coordinator overseeing the Positive Prevention PLUS curriculum that's being facilitated as part of UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland. And Bajha is my phenomenal colleague and one of our health education coordinators who's been implementing the health education of Positive Prevention PLUS with Oakland youth.

We started a virtual format in May. We had a focus group with young people at one of our high schools, including teachers and school administrators, about how to best roll out sex ed virtually during shelter in place. And then, from that feedback from our community members, we were able to start virtual implementation of Positive Prevention PLUS in June of this summer. We piloted three different virtual formats, which Bajha will go over in a bit, to really try and figure out how we can best implement for the school year ahead using this virtual format.

We're primarily serving young people ages 14 to 19, although our age group has gone up to age 24, because now we're really opening it up to more young people in the community. Our largest partner is Oakland Unified School District, so embedding within 10th through 12th grade classrooms. And we also have three clinics. We're working with young people as part of our clinics as well.

Annie Buonaspina:	Thanks, Skye. Carmen, actually, if you want to introduce your team for Project Vida, that would be great.
Carmen Zuniga:	Hi. Can everyone hear me?
Annie Buonaspina:	We can.
Carmen Zuniga:	Okay. Good morning everyone. My name is Carmen Zuniga. I am the senior deputy outreach and wellness officer for accessing youth services in Project Vida in El Paso, Texas. Our main partner and district champion is Canutillo. Canutillo is a rural community that is on the outskirts of El Paso, Texas, and it borders New Mexico and Mexico. So it's a very rural community. We are a federally qualified

health care center, so we have a community clinic co-located in one of the elementary schools.

During this time, we've been implementing Positive Prevention PLUS and Making a Difference. We are implementing in the school setting; however, with this stay-in-place COVID situation, we decided to shift our direction and meet our champions where they're at, and we decided to implement in an after-school setting, what we would consider after-school hours, so that we weren't competing with our district's need to close out their academic year.

We have great support from the teachers so that we can recruit students from their classes, and we implemented in the summer. Right now, we're in the process of working with our district to implement and co-facilitate during the academic school year. The individuals that are going to be participating with me are Sofia Macias, our lead outreach facilitator, and we also have our evaluator and our outreach facilitators on this call. We look forward to sharing with you all of our lessons learned.

Annie Buonaspina: Thank you. And Kara, you're going to present for Boys and Girls.

Kara Petrosky: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Kara Petrosky. I'm the director of teen and support services at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania. On the call we also have Kellen Hill, who is our project manager, and Janel McTaggart, who is our lead instructor. We utilized the Wyman TOP, or Teen Outreach Program, curriculum. In its full glory, it's 25 sessions in nine months, so it's one of the lengthier curriculums. We typically run it through the course of the school year. We do operate the program [and] not only within school settings. We partner with six different school districts in Allegheny County, but we also run the program in our own Boys & Girls Club after-school programs, and we have other community partners that are also after-school programs where we do the programming.

So we did a pilot program over the summer using different ed tech tools with virtual implementation. We have a lot of lessons learned that we're excited to share with you today. And we used surveys to find [out] from youth what ed tech tools and what presentations and lessons most spoke with them, and engaged them the most, throughout that six-week pilot period of the virtual program that we ran over the summer.

Annie Buonaspina: Great. Thanks, Kara. So now we're going to get into some of these lessons learned. Our first topic that we wanted to focus on is adapting an in-person program to a virtual space, while also maintaining the key lessons that you want to communicate. Whether you're just launching a virtual program, which it sounds like some of you were, or whether you've run a few cycles, adapting lessons is likely going to be an ongoing process as you refine your virtual delivery. The Adagio Health team is going to share a little bit about how they approach that process. So I will turn it over to that team.

Courtney Smalt: Hi, everybody. I'm Courtney. I am the health educator from Adagio Health. Yes, as Annie said, it's been an ongoing process. For us, there were some activities in

the Positive Prevention PLUS curriculum that were fairly easy to adapt, like some of the worksheets could be easily turned into polls, which are launched on Zoom and you get the same automatic response as you would with the paper worksheet. And some were not quite so easily adaptable.

There was one worksheet in particular—its objective was about decision-making and creating decision-making skills and competencies. This worksheet never really landed well anyway, with the kids in person. Trying to walk through pros and cons lists and deciding factors online, it was a challenge. And so, instead, we decided to think outside the box a little bit, [about] what type of activity we could provide. We settled on a choose-your-own-adventure-style activity where they still have to practice decision-making skills. Yes, thank you. The slide that you're seeing now is actually the first one in our slide deck on this choose-your-own-adventure activity.

As you can see, there is a little paragraph here. We're introducing a couple of characters. This is in our pregnancy option lesson. And every slide after this one has two options, and you can see the ones—raise the baby themselves or the adoption—depending on what the youth say. And this can be run individually if they're using individual devices. It can also be in the group setting. Since I do work in residential care, they often have one device and a couple of kids sitting around one device. So, it could be either/or. Your facilitation technique obviously will change based on that.

Like I was saying, they get a little bit of a scenario and then they have a decision to make. During the decision process, they need to tell me what they're thinking, what are the factors that they are considering. And when you hit one of those options, it will link to the next slide in that branch, in that decision-making tree. So, there are various paths. Again, they just have to keep using decision-making skills and building off of the scenario that they're given.

In individual cases, it's great. You really get to talk in depth with them about what they're thinking. In group settings, it's also really nice because they like to then talk back and forth, and if somebody disagrees with what somebody has voiced, you get a chance to flesh that out as well. This is one activity the kids are very interested in. The fun thing I think, as a facilitator as well, is that no matter how many times you run this, it's different every time, and every group is different. So that has been one of our biggest lessons, thinking outside of the box and getting creative.

Annie Buonaspina:	Thanks so much, Courtney. Now we want to turn over to everybody. Does anyone have questions for the Adagio team about how they went through this process? Or, alternatively, if you have additional examples to share about how you adapted your programming to make it work online, that would great to share with all of us.
Jane Choi:	Yeah, and while people are thinking, we do have a question in the chat box from Nicole. What software did you use to create the choose-your-own-adventure feature?

Courtney Smalt:	Oh, great question. I used PowerPoint. There is a way in Microsoft PowerPoint to link the slides. That's where that activity gets the most complicated, but just PowerPoint.
Annie Buonaspina:	If anyone else has questions, please raise your hand or chat it in the chat box.
	Okay. Well, we'll give a little bit more time if you either have questions for Adagio or if you have your own experiences to share.
	Okay. If no one else is going to go, I just want to say thanks to the Adagio team. I think this activity is really awesome. So glad that you were willing to share one of the slides and show everybody what you did! I'm going to move on to the next one. Another key consideration is format—what's going to be the most effective format to deliver your program? Maybe that means figuring out the number of lessons or the lengths of sessions that work best, if you have that flexibility, or maybe it means rethinking the way you deliver the curriculum.
	For this topic, we wanted to hear from our team in Oakland, because they can speak both to what they did and about the formats they experimented with, but also [about] this really great process that they learned to understand what works best for the young people that they serve. So I will turn it over to Bajha.
Bajha Jordan:	Hi. Good morning, everyone. My name is Bajha Jordan, pronouns she/her/hers. I work with Skye. As Skye mentioned, we piloted three formats this past summer with young people to identify a format that works best for our young people in a virtual setting. I will describe each format as version A, version B, and version C to illustrate how feedback given during the focus groups from each of these versions were used to plan the next.
	Version A format included two Zoom meetings with young people, one meeting at the start of their four-week program to introduce the objectives of the program and expectations, and one meeting at the end to wrap up the program and hold a focus group. In between those two meetings, our young people received information about sexual and reproductive health using Positive Prevention PLUS curriculum, but they used their asynchronous/independent prerecorded videos created by the curriculum developers to learn about these topics.
	Once our young people completed the independent videos that they were assigned to watch, we held our focus group at the end, so that, at that last Zoom meeting, the health educators, including myself, could learn what the young people liked and didn't like about this asynchronous learning format. To summarize the rich feedback our young people provided us: they wish they had had more face-to-face interaction with the health educators. Just having two of the meetings was not enough for them. They also felt the lessons were heteronormative and abstinence focused. They also said the videos and materials within the lesson were a little outdated and they would want to receive more recent materials, especially when we discussed HIV.
	This group really provided us a lot of feedback, and that's just a summary of some of the things that they pointed out, but the list goes on. From their feedback, we

thought about it as the health education team, and that's how we planned our version B format.

Version B was a synchronous format, meaning myself and another health educator attended lessons with our students through Zoom. We met with our students three days a week for four weeks. They got to see us with our cameras on. They got to interact with us. We taught all the lessons. And with this format, myself and my fellow health educator, we were able to really dive deep into some of the information that was provided in the curriculum. We could talk a little bit more about sex and gender and identity. We could show more videos and have a discussion after the video to show what they learned from the video. We were also able to have more affirming language, especially when we're talking about best practices for preventing pregnancy and STIs [sexually transmitted infections]. Instead of focusing on abstinence is number one, we said abstinence is number one but there are other options if you choose these other options. We gave students that additional information that the online asynchronous lessons did not provide our young people.

To summarize the end of that version with another focus group, our students from that group gave us really positive feedback about the program. They enjoyed having the frequent meetings with us. They enjoyed the material since they felt it was more relatable and engaging. And they really liked the conversations we were able to have because we could dive deep and really provide the additional information for them.

And so, from their feedback, from both version A and version B, we knew we wanted to do one more pilot this summer, and this is how we came up with our version C format. By this time it was the end of the summer. School is getting ready to start and we knew our young people could not commit to three days a week for four weeks, knowing they will have class pretty soon. So we decided to use the asynchronous format as we did with version A. Our young people watched a prerecorded lesson independently, similar, like I said, to version A. Instead, we included four Zoom meetings this time. We met one day a week for four weeks. And the extra Zoom days were incorporated due to our young people from version A responding that they wanted more face-to-face interaction, and version B, our young people really liked that interaction. We thought, "Okay, if we offer more Zoom meetings during this week, we can still provide that interaction and make it more engaging." With the extra days, myself and Skye used that time to review the lessons that the students had watched already. It was just another learning process so that they could talk about what they learned, what questions they might have had, and we could provide more information in this group.

To summarize version C, the young people in this version really enjoyed the lesson review because they said they were able to narrow down the important takeaways of each lesson. The online program has 14 lengthy lessons, and with this review, we were able to kind of highlight certain information out of each lesson so that they could really leave the program informed. They felt the four Zoom meetings were the right amount of interaction. They liked the flexibility of

having to watch the lessons on their own but then coming back with us to talk about what they learned.

To discuss the impact of our youth ownership in this format and just all of our formats that we used, we really wanted to make sure our young people had a voice in the program they were receiving. We knew, as health educators, that improvements were needed in the learning materials and in the structure of this virtual setting. The best way to get those improvements was to hear from our young people about what they liked, disliked, and ways it could improve. That's why we decided to hold focus groups after each version.

We informed the young people each time that their feedback in our focus group is valuable to us in making the necessary changes for other young people that we will soon educate throughout the year. Each version we piloted incorporated feedback that was provided by young people. Everything we did was being mindful of what our young people had told us. So that's how we were able to come up with our different formats for our program.

Jane Choi: Thanks so much, Bajha. That was great. Even if you don't have the option of mixing synchronous and asynchronous as the Oakland team did, I think the approach that they used to test out different models that you're considering—getting feedback from young people—was just really great. So glad you were able to share. Does anyone have any specific questions for the team? Or, additionally, if you have your own lessons learned about formats that worked well, or if you've used an approach like this and making it more youth-informed, definitely share those as well, either in the chat or we can unmute you.

We have a question that came in through the chat. And I want to first say that I think some people were having trouble chatting to all participants, but Derek fixed that, so I think we can chat. But Laurie asked, "As you adjusted the number of presentations or lessons, did you have to submit or gain permission for an adaptation?" And the answer is yes. Skye and her team submitted a major adaptation request.

We had a second question come in, too: "How did the Oakland team recruit for these focus groups and pilot groups?"

Bajha Jordan: We recruited through school teachers and administrators, medical providers, and our mental health clinicians. We really worked closely with our school-based health center, really connecting with providers and letting them know that we have this program. We also connected with the staff and teachers of the high schools that we supported, to let them know that this program was offered. It was really through partnerships that we were able to get students in the program. And as we learned through our focus groups, some of our participants recruited the other participants. One was like, "Oh, yeah, my sister's in this program," or "my really good friend." And even just having that relationship, they would work together on the assignments. I just thought that was really cool as well, to see that peer-to-peer connection happening.

Jane Choi:	Okay. We had another comment come in from Jacqueline from OPA [Office of Population Affairs]. She said we can be pretty flexible with adaptations if it's a pilot, and work with your PO [Project Officer] to determine the extent to which an adaptation needs to be approved prior to a pilot. And then we have a question come in from Rachel: "Besides the SGDs, did you collect any data from the youth completing the lessons?"
Bajha Jordan:	And to point out, Skye had mentioned in the chat, but to also just reiterate, we did pre- and post-tests, and the evaluation survey at the end. And we did a needs assessment at the very beginning, just to get an idea of what our young people already have learned about sex and reproductive health, or just health and wellness in general. Our young people received numerous surveys from us just so we can really collect that feedback. Yes, and we used the Qualtrics platform for our online surveys.
Annie Buonaspina:	Great. Thanks. So, maybe, Jane, we can introduce Project Vida next.
Jane Choi:	Yep, that sounds good. In addition to thinking about virtual synchronous delivery, we also want to think about how to support delivery. Project Vida has a number of really great strategies they've used for supporting good sessions, including preparing facilitators, troubleshooting tech, and ensuring participation. I'm happy to turn it over to Sofia and Carmen at Project Vida.
Carmen Zuniga:	Thank you, Jane. Before we talk about supporting successful delivery and what we did to support our teachers during this fall implementation, I'd like to share a little bit about our outreach and recruitment and retention strategies. We really needed to rethink what worked during the spring, during post-COVID, what we were doing to recruit and retain our students. Basically, what we did was our team gathered and decided to come up with a flyer so that we can recruit teams. They came up with a tagline called "Learn and Earn." They put in information, but the thing is that we shared this flyer with a digital media specialist who converted it into a video. It was about a minute or two video catered to our middle school, our high school, and our parent audience, talking about what the curriculums were about really briefly, and incentivizing the teams to connect. Especially because we were going to do this in an after-school setting where we didn't necessarily have a captive audience, we wanted to make sure that we were saturating Facebook and Instagram and various social media platforms, specifically in that zip code, so that teens knew about the program. We had a really good recruitment strategy, so we had about 48 participants. About half were Positive Prevention PLUS and the other half were Making a Difference.
	We also decided that we needed to stay connected with our teens. Usually, when we have our face-to-face interactions, we have snacks for them, we have incentives, we provide resources. We had to rethink how we would make these connections with our teens in a virtual setting. And so we developed care packages. Our organization is really adamant about making sure that we are also keeping safe and practicing social distancing. Some of our staff members ordered

the materials, other staff members went into the office space and put these care packages together.

In these care packages, we included snacks, maybe some popcorn, we included resources, journals, pens, markers, and headphones. We knew that our teens were going to be listening to these sessions at home, and we wanted to make sure that we provided them a sense of privacy. We included headphones in these care packages. It was a really great way of connecting with our teens and saying, "Hey, we're here." Especially during the summer where we know that they probably didn't have much going on because of social distancing, we wanted to provide them with this care package to say that we're going to be connecting with you throughout the series of this curriculum and we're here and supporting you.

In addition to that, we had weekly incentives in our sessions so that we could keep the teens engaged. For TPP, because it was self-paced, we decided to have office hours where our facilitators would come into the space and connect with the teens, do some icebreakers, and just do a little refresher on where they were with their self-paced curriculum and ask if they had any questions as they were moving along with the programming.

In addition to that, . . . recruitment and retention is going to look a little bit different because it's fall, and also we're going to be implementing in the school setting and we're going to have a larger volume of teens enrolling into the program, [so] we are revisiting this recruitment and retention strategy. We're possibly thinking of doing a drive-by for picking up your registration packets, where they can pick up their care packets. For the teens that are at home, we might mail them out. And then the teens that are actually going to face-to-face school implementation, we can either deliver them to the campuses, or, on their way out, they can pick them up.

We're still kind of trying to figure out what that's going to look like, but one of the things that we knew really worked was hosting office hours. We want to create a space where the teens can stay connected with the facilitators. If they need any additional resources or to talk through some things that are happening, we're able to provide that to them, as well as connect them to any primary care, behavioral health, or family planning services that they might need. I'd like to pause really quick just to see if anyone has any questions about recruitment, retention, and these outreach strategies before I hand it over to Sofia, so that she can talk about the success of providing virtual support during this implementation.

Jane Choi:	I didn't see any questions come through, so let's toggle to Sofia.
Carmen Zuniga:	Okay, great.
Sofia Macias:	Okay. Thank you, Carmen. Are you all able to hear me fine?
Carmen Zuniga:	Yep.
Sofia Macias:	Okay. Awesome. As Carmen had mentioned, yes, in the summer, we transitioned our implementation efforts to be conducted virtually and in after-school settings.

In virtual implementation, we did see the need of having two facilitators in giving each lesson, or module in this case, for Making a Difference. One facilitator would be easily able to give the lesson while the other admitted students through Zoom, took attendance, and troubleshot anything with the students, or, again, the second facilitator could give the lesson, if necessary. This was done solely for Making a Difference since it was a synchronous learning setting, and TPP students were given the self-paced option from the Positive Prevention PLUS website. We did gain licenses for those students who had registered.

Through our great evaluation team and their efforts, we were also able to generate attendance logs to determine the number of students registered. As you'll see, the number of observations needed to be conducted were for both MAD [Making a Difference!] and PPP [Positive Prevention PLUS]. However, as I mentioned before, for PPP, as it was a self-paced option for teens, facilitators really monitored at the back end of the Positive Prevention PLUS website to see the students' progress, and that's how we determined attendance, through the provision of the program, in order to take attendance.

We did see it beneficial to have both facilitators meet at least 10 to 15 minutes beforehand, to prep and resolve any technical issues beforehand. We did keep in mind that, if a facilitator was giving the lesson and experiencing any technical issues, the second facilitator could easily take over. That was some of the lessons that we've learned through virtually implementing.

Now, considering this for the fall virtual implementation, we hope to not only have a facilitator but also a teacher. This will ensure that they are meeting before each lesson to troubleshoot anything, as well as provide technical assistance throughout the lesson. For us to better understand how teachers would be virtually implementing this fall, we did meet with them beforehand, and these are all the teachers from across four campuses of two middle schools, a high school, and an early college, to further discuss the Pear Deck for Google Slides Add-on. And those conversations, our stakeholders were also part of it.

So, what Pear Deck is, it is an interactive extension added to Google Slides, which we will be using for Google Slides, but it is also an option for Microsoft PowerPoint. This platform add-on better facilitates conversations, participation, and the delivery of the program implementation with the students and the teachers in conducting in-school learning, while also meeting fidelity and evaluation requirements. Luckily, we were able to submit minor adaptations to the slides that were a little bit modified to add this Pear Deck Add-on. And I believe I had also submitted adaptation forms to use Pear Deck, specifically this feature, to the transition to virtual implementation. So you want to keep that in mind.

We did meet with CIC teachers weeks prior to fall implementation. We actually designated some days and times to meet with them. We took the opportunity to gain some other buy-in as well, and, luckily, we obtained a very, very positive response from teachers. They were actually willing to update their own slides

based on their existing school curriculum. So they're actually considering adding this Pear Deck feature to their slides.

We ensured that all teachers were giving enough time and practice through teach-backs in these meetings, and when we were training them as well, to use Pear Deck, which increased not only their understanding of the platform but also helped them gain confidence and be comfortable in using this new feature, which we plan to roll out this fall. Throughout this process, those teachers and our stakeholders from Canutillo have been very, very supportive of this program implementation now moving forward and fitting the needs of their community. With that being said, we will actually start next week with virtual implementation. Does anyone have any questions whatsoever in regard to the deliverance of the program?

Annie Buonaspina: There's a question from Jacqueline, which is about Pear Deck, which leads really well into the next presenter—right, Jane? I'm not sure if you had seen that comment.

Jane Choi: Nope, I hadn't. Thanks for pointing it out. And if there are any other questions, please chat them into the chat box. I do want to turn this over to the Boys & Girls Club of Western Pennsylvania. They're going to be talking about some of the ways that they tested a number of strategies this summer to figure out how to implement online to enhance engagement.

Kara Petrosky: Awesome. Thanks everyone. This is Kara again, from Boys & Girls Club. We're going to talk a little bit about different ed tech tools that we utilized over the summer to increase engagement and increase discussion with our young people. I do want to make a note at the beginning that in the virtual space, there's definitely a level of it not being as personal and as private as it would be in an in-person setting. Be mindful of the space that the young people are in—are they in a private space, at home or at school, or elsewhere—because that can tend to lead the discussion one way or another. Just be mindful of that. The virtual setting isn't as personal and isn't as private. However, we also found that some of the youth actually preferred the virtual setting as opposed to in-person sessions. It provided a little bit of a buffer for the youth to feel that they could be more open and engaging with the conversations and topics.

As I mentioned before, we used the Wyman TOP Curriculum, and it is more of a discussion-based curriculum. Wyman didn't have their own virtual platform or virtual programs or virtual lessons, so it was very important for us, at the beginning, to work with Wyman. And we also worked with some of the other TPP 19 grantees who used Wyman, and came together with our curriculum developer to have discussions about how Wyman can best support our efforts in virtual implementation. I definitely encourage everyone to reach out to the curriculum developer and see how they can better support the needs that you have to meet the needs of our young people.

We use the Google Suite primarily at the Boys & Girls Club. That allows us to use Google Slides, Google Sheets, Google Docs, and Google Forms to do surveys.

And the helpful thing with that, with the Google Suite, the Docs can be live. You can have multiple people adding to the documents to answer different prompts or answer questions all at the same time. And it is available for all participants to be able to see. They can use it during the session, before the session, or after a session. All teams are able to contribute to the topics and to the questions.

With Google Meet, we do still use Breakout Rooms. I will say that Zoom, right now, is a better platform to have breakout spaces for our teens, to break them down into smaller groups. As a whole group, we would come together, give them two or three targeted questions to discuss with their smaller group, or a shared Google Doc to work on within that smaller space, adding to that more personal feel. And they would have a time limit and then we would come back together as a whole group to discuss those questions or that Google Doc. I understand Google soon should have a better way to do breakout, and a more manageable way to do breakout rooms, but Zoom is definitely a leader in that field at this point in time.

As other presenters mentioned before, we also used the Pear Deck Google Chrome extension, and this has definitely increased engagement. And the lessons that we did use the Pear Deck extension were the lessons that the users reported through a survey that they enjoyed the most. So, it does provide a high level of interaction. You can do self-paced slideshows with it. You can also do instructor-led slideshows with this as well. But there's anything from multiple-choice questions, where they can type in answers, to a temperature gauge of how they're feeling. You can insert that throughout. You can also embed links within the slideshow that would connect youth to other ed tech tools that we use.

The other two ed tech tools that I'm going to talk about are Flipgrid and Kahoot. Before I get there, I want to back up a little bit. The way that we determined which ed tech tools that we were going to use to implement the TOP program, we had a team meeting before we started the pilot virtual implementation, and we talked about using different ed tech tools. Each of the instructors were asked to research an ed tech tool and then, at our next team meeting, use that ed tech tool to present part of a lesson and to introduce that ed tech tool to the other instructors.

We decided early to limit the number of ed tech tools that we were going to use for two reasons. The instructors have to learn how to use each of the ed tech tools, and then, subsequently, all the teens have to learn how to use the different ed tech tools. So we wanted to limit them to about three or four that would increase that engagement the most.

Moving on to Flipgrid, there were times in the Pear Deck slides where you could put in links to Flipgrid. Flipgrid is a way for anyone to record small movies or videos and recordings. We like to use this if we had a question to ask the students. We would give them time to make and record and plan out their video, and then submit that response. With this method and model, it gave the youth time to really think and process about what their answer was going to be, and they also had that time to do a little bit more research on the Internet, which they really appreciated. And it mimics a lot of social media that youth use anyhow, with TikTok and

Instagram and recording those videos. It gave that feel and that vibe and that connection with social media that they used on an everyday basis, but it added a little bit more of an educational component to it.

The other thing that we utilized was Kahoot. Kahoot is typically used as a trivia platform, but it's a way to do trivia questions, to do team-building, to do polls. It can be used as an intro or an exit activity. It can be used as a true or false, to kind of gauge initial knowledge of some of the topics that are going to be discussed. The way we introduce these tools to the kids is that we plan sort of mini lessons or team-building, get-to-know-you lessons, utilizing the ed tech tools so they get comfortable using them and getting familiar with them, then when we got into more serious discussions and more intense topics, they had that familiarity with using those ed tech tools. Like I said before, we limit it to three or four. I wouldn't recommend going to more than that, but that gives you options to vary the ed tech tools that you are using. If they use the same tools over and over again, there's a tendency to a sense of complacency, and not that interesting engagement. So being able to use a variety is also important on that front.

Jane Choi: I'm so sorry—I'm just going to jump in real quick. I think that's a really great point, to vary the tools, and something that, as TA liaisons, I've heard from other grantees as well. Kara, I just wanted to point out that there's a number of questions and comments happening in the chat as well. I won't read them out loud because I don't want to take up too much time, but if you don't mind just checking. I think you've sparked a lot of conversation here, which is great.

It sounds like Jacqueline suggested maybe it would be beneficial to have a meeting with grantees to talk about these different tools and strategies. I just wanted to point that out. And I hate to cut you off short, because this is so engaging, but I do want to pass it on to Annie because she wants to chat a little bit about some of the evaluation aspects of implementing virtually. So, again, sorry, Kara, but I'm going to pass it to Annie.

Kara Petrosky: All right. Thank you.

Annie Buonaspina: Thanks. And, Kara, if you have a chance to respond to some of the questions in the chat, I think that would be great because, as Jane said, there were quite a few. I'm going to breeze through this evaluation section and try to abbreviate what we have here. We definitely wanted to touch on program implementation but evaluation considerations as well. To do that really quickly, I wanted to talk about observation forms.

You're all using the TPP observation form, but, in addition to the things that are on there, like time management, knowledge of content, group participation, I just wanted to encourage teams to think about additional things that you might look for in a virtual setting. Maybe some technology-specific items like facilitator ease with the technology, use of add-on features. We've heard from a lot of teams talking about how they added interactivity to their sessions so the facilitators can use the chat boxes and polls. And then are the youth engaging with those. Those

are all good opportunities to provide feedback to the facilitators and get a sense for how youth are engaging with the program as you're observing.

With fidelity logs, if you don't already have it, some key things to think about adding are fields to note, whether you are delivering virtually or in person, especially as you may be toggling back and forth a lot this year. Definitely add a field to note technology disruptions, if that's something that you don't already have. That's likely to be a given at some point during the virtual program, so making sure that facilitators are knowing that is really important. And then also, you probably already have this on your fidelity logs, but just make sure and encourage facilitators to use the fields to note changes and adaptations that they might make over the course of the delivery, because that can be a really good source for identifying promising practices. If you see a delivery strategy that looks promising, you can pull that out and try that in some of the other groups that you're running, and try to collect some information about how it works to determine whether or not that's a strategy that you should incorporate into your virtual approach overall.

Just one quick note on documenting adaptations. We talked a little bit about adaptations already today. I should emphasize that we're mostly talking about minor adaptations here, things like customizing activities or enhancing delivery by adding icebreakers. Because you might need to make more of those types of adaptations as you're piloting and transitioning to those virtual environments, just wanted to emphasize the importance of having a system for documenting those changes. You'll have some preplanned adaptations, like what Courtney shared with how you're thinking about how to alter an activity to make it work better in a virtual setting. And then there are things, of course, facilitators may try over the course of delivery to enhance the delivery. That's some of the things we were talking about with adding the virtual icebreakers to make students feel more comfortable. It's good to know those things, too, just to keep a record about what it takes to deliver the program well in a virtual space.

Reasons to be really on top of documentation to support your CQI [continuous quality improvement] efforts, as we already said, are to be able to identify promising strategies for your fidelity monitoring, to understand what changes were made, and to keep a record of what works well. So, at the end, you not only want to be able to inform your model going forward, if you're going to continue with some virtual delivery, but you also want to have a chance to inform others who might be delivering the program in this setting about how to do it well. If you don't already have a system down for documenting some of these changes, we did release a tip sheet on adaptations that you can check out.

I have to skip the chat because we're running out of time. I don't want to keep people long. But I wanted to touch a little bit on assessing quality. When you're doing virtual observations, some of the challenges there is that you don't necessarily have the benefit of observing body language, and it's harder to tell whether young people are connected or whether they're looking at other things. The approach that we would offer, and just wanted to share as a consideration, is

to bring in additional data points to form a more complete assessment of online quality and engagement.

Some of the things that you could look at in addition to what you're seeing and hearing through the observations are, "Are the youth engaging with some of these add-on features, like the chat box or outside apps or polls?" Almost all of the video-conferencing platforms have analytics reports. Google Meet, Zoom, have analytics related to attendance, retention, engagement with add-ons. Zoom has a report that will actually tell you how many participants responded to your polls. That's a good supplement to understand how the youth are responding. And then additional surveys or built-in polls during your sessions are an opportunity to get direct feedback from youth, which we've heard a lot from the grantee teams is really helpful for shaping and informing your approach.

And then keeping it short, my last point about observations is, beyond just the setting making it harder to do these observations, there are also a lot of alternative explanations for why youth might have trouble engaging, which further complicates being able to assess the engagement and quality of delivery. If you're seeing that there's participants who are checked out, it could be because the program's not resonating with them, but it could also be things like tech disruptions or distractions at home, or maybe they lack privacy, which makes it harder for them to engage in some of the more sensitive conversations.

To address that challenge, we would just encourage you to consider some additional data collection opportunities to help you probe more on what you're seeing in the observation. That could be a one-time survey or focus group to learn more about their experience. Maybe you ask them what their learning environment is like at home, or you could ask them what additional resources they might need to be able to engage in your program. If you feel like you're already doing enough surveys and you don't want to add another one to that, you could also just embed some polls or questions in your session to ask them how easy or hard was it for you to engage in the session today. One of the programs that we mentioned on the slide here is Menti[meter]. It's a really great online polling program, which is free. But you can also use the built-in polling that's part of your program.

I'm sorry to have rushed that, but I think we made it through the key points, and I wanted to wrap up with some contact information. I want to share information for a couple different teams that presented, which is great because I know that there were a ton of questions today. If you did have questions, these are just the teams that we were able to confirm were okay with sharing. You can feel free to reach out. Of course, you can reach out to me or Jane, if we can answer anything further about any of what we discussed. And then we have a couple of resources that we wanted to share with you: Some observation templates that would be a supplement to the TPP observation form that you're using. And a sample survey you can consider if you want to learn more about your students' context—that relates to the point I was saying, if you want to learn about barriers they might have to engaging. And then the tip sheet that I referenced as well.

I'm sorry to have breezed through that, but I think we got you out by two o'clock. I just want to close by saying thank you so much. I'm sorry that we had to cut off some of our co-presenters, because I thought your examples were great and we really, really appreciate your partnering with us on this session. I hope everyone considers coming to our session next week, which, as I mentioned before, is going to focus on asynchronous program delivery. That one's really going to focus more on how might you be able to use asynchronous elements to supplement your program.

Thanks everybody. And I will try to answer some of the questions for anybody who wants to stay a little bit longer. So, will we be emailing the links? That's an open question about whether or not we're posting on Max.gov. I'm not sure if anybody can respond to that.

Yeah. Okay. So, we will either post on Max.gov or, if we don't do that, then, yes, we can email the links out (responding to your question, Dawn).

And to Lauren, we will check on whether we're going to be posting a recording, but, like I said, we can definitely send the slides out.

I just want to mention also that some of the grantee teams are providing their contact information. If you wanted to reach out to anybody who shared today, then you can reach out to them directly. Great. In addition, let me jump back, because I think that people are really interested in reaching out to some of these teams. In addition to Skye and Kara, Carmen, who spoke for Project Vida, she responded privately. Carmen, if you don't mind, because you shared it in there, I'll just share that with the group. If you have extra questions for Project Vida, I'm going to share that with everybody. You can also reach out to her. Okay. Thank you everybody for joining us today.

Okay. We're going to close the meeting now, but we will add contact information for the additional grantees to this slide and make sure that it's on there for when we share the presentation. Thanks so much everyone.