

Hosting a video conference event

Tips for sexual assault centres

May 2023



Common video conference events

- Public education and community events, e.g. Take Back the Night
- Information sessions with support seekers
- Group counselling and peer support
- Volunteer and staff trainings
- Fundraising events



In this presentation

Making a plan

Choosing a video conference tool

Creating safety.

Promotion & registration

Including everyone

A polished performance

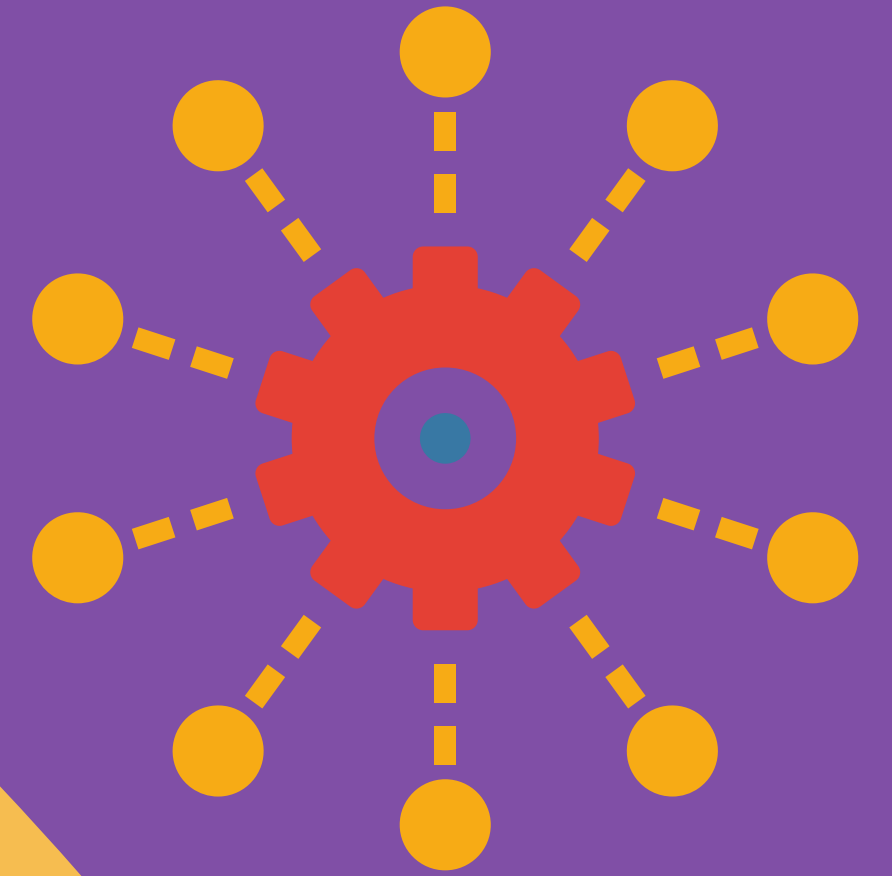
Wrapping up



Making a
plan

Establish a framework

- What do you want to **achieve**?
- What's the **budget** for the event?
- What **internal expertise** is available?
e.g. facilitation, tech support
- Will **external expertise** be needed?
e.g. speakers





Think about your capacity

- Staff's skills and experience
- Number of staff available for the event
- Ability to provide appropriate security
- Organization policies
- Funder requirements

To best manage security, the technology and any crises,
have **at least two facilitators** for any group event.

Assign areas of responsibility

- Researching the audience's interests and needs
- Developing the event program
- Inviting and coordinating presenters
- Presenting the material
- Developing slide shows, handouts and other supplementary material
- Facilitating discussion, the chat and other forms of engagement
- Promotion, registration and managing participants
- Selecting and running the video conference tool
- Ensuring a safe environment



Learn about your audience



- What they want to learn or do
- How they like to engage, e.g. presentation, discussion, workshop
- Privacy, safety and accessibility concerns
- Access to an internet connection, camera, headphones, private space
- How they will join, e.g. phone from their car, laptop from home
- Comfort with video conferencing, e.g. camera on or off
- Preferred video conferencing tools
- How many are likely to attend

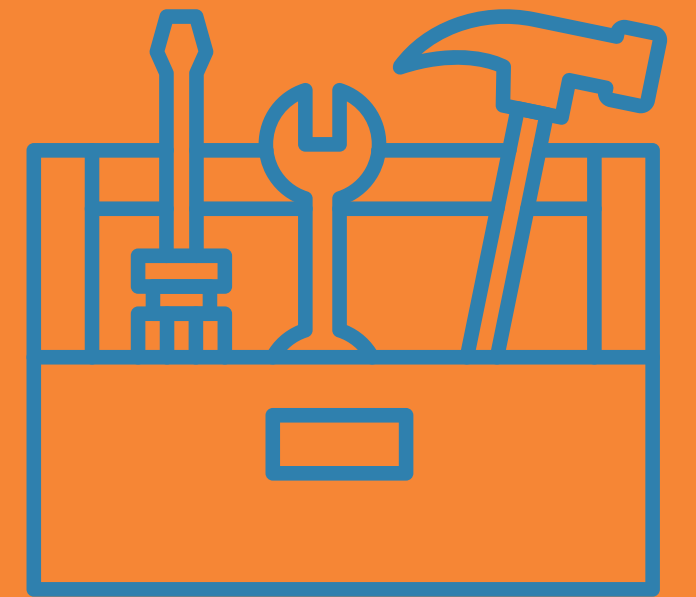
Choosing a video conference tool



There are a lot of video conference tools out there

The following is a summary of tools we know organizations are using currently with a focus on cost, security and participant privacy.

If you are interested in exploring open source video conferencing tools, visit <https://opensource.com/article/20/5/open-source-video-conferencing>



Zoom

- Does not require a Zoom account to join an event; for better privacy, participants should use the web-based version only (not the app)
- Free* host account has limited features and security and a 45 minute limit; paid accounts offer many features
- Low bandwidth requirement: fairly effective in most regions
- Familiar to many people and works well with most web browsers

*Free on the internet means you are paying with your data and your participants' data.

Google Meet

- Does not require a Google account to join an event from a computer, but does from a phone, limiting privacy for mobile participants
- Good security (if participants use a Google account) and offers a variety of features
- Low bandwidth requirement: fairly effective in most regions
- Part of the Google Workspace package for organizations using this platform
- Works best with Chrome web browser

Microsoft Teams

- Requires a Microsoft, Google or Skype account to join, limiting privacy for participants
- Good security
- Requires significant bandwidth which may result in poor connectivity
- Part of the Microsoft Teams package for organizations using this platform
- Does not work well with Firefox or Safari web browsers

GoToMeeting

- Participants are registered ahead of time and will need to submit their email address to join but there is a commitment to user privacy
- Long-time reputation for good security
- Requires significant bandwidth so may result in poor connectivity
- Costly host account includes many features





Creating safety

To protect participants & staff from abusive attacks
most GBV events require
security efforts

1. Ensure there are enough **staff** involved with the event to help support security
2. Most video conference tools offer a variety of security features: review the **settings** to learn which are suitable for your event



Very low security

- No registration of participants ahead of time
- Link is made public on social media, website or widely distributed email or newsletter
- No password required to access the event
- No waiting room or other vetting feature
- Host does not have control over audio and video when participants enter the event

Never suitable for GBV work

Mid to high range security

- Participants must register ahead of time
- Registrants are vetted
- Link is shared by email to registrants before the event
- Host controls video and audio

Very high security

- Invitation-only participation
- Safety plan with participants individually before the event
- Share link with participants immediately after facilitators begin the video conference
- Use a waiting room or other vetting process before a participant may join the group
- Host controls video and audio
- Participants share their surroundings with the group

Even with these safeguards, an abusive person may find a way to observe the event



Promotion & registration

Before you promote

- What's the **criteria** for attendance? e.g. If inviting donors, only recent donors? Only those who donated a significant amount?
- How will you **invite** potential participants?
- If creating a contact list, what are the **privacy** considerations for how contact information is managed?
- How many participants can attend the event? If you have a **limit**, will you have a wait list?
- When and how often will you **promote** to participants?
- Is there a **deadline** for registration?



Security & promotion

High security

- Outreach only to a small known group
- Alternatively, personally invite the people you want to attend

Lower security

- Promote more broadly through newsletters, email contact lists, regional groups and organizations, communities of practice

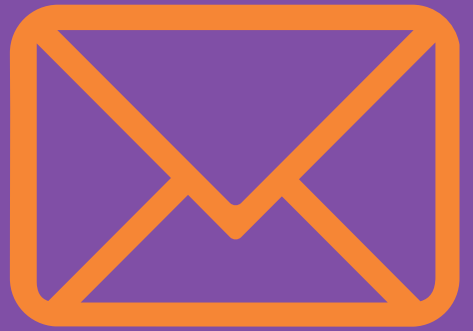


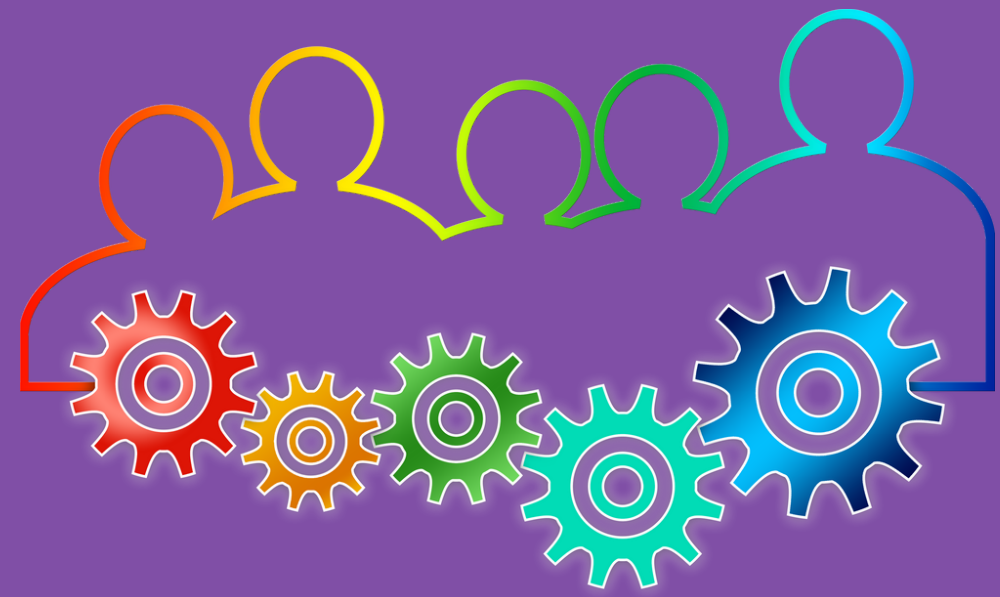
Registration tools

e.g. Eventbrite, Zoom registration feature

- Determine how the information you gather about registrants will be used and maintained by the tool
 - Read the privacy policy
- Send potential participants the invitation through email and allow them to choose to register through the tool
- Participants consent to using the tool by providing their email address when they accept your invitation
 - However, make sure the tool is trustworthy first!

These tools are likely not suitable for vulnerable support seekers.





Including
everyone

Common in rural & remote communities:

Low bandwidth

- Select a video conference tool that
 - Doesn't require high speed internet
 - Provides a phone-in option
- Troubleshooting with a participant has a poor connection? Ask them to:
 - Turn off their video
 - Leave the event and join again





Sharing names and pronouns

Provide a tip sheet or tech support sessions before the event to help participants make changes to how their information is displayed.

Closed captions

- Most video conference tools provide this feature
- Automated captioning will have errors:
have someone provide corrections in chat
- Captioning creates a record that will be saved in the video conference account:
keep this in mind if confidential information may be shared during the event




Language interpretation



- Spotlight **sign language interpreters** -- if this feature is available in the video conference tool -- so they are as prominent on the screen as the speaker
- A **spoken language interpreter** joins the event and calls the participant, interpreting the event over the phone: participant will need to share their phone number ahead of time



To aid interpretation

- Share slides, unique vocabulary and other materials with the interpreter well before the event
 - Invite the interpreter to join the event early to test their equipment and internet connection
 - Share your contact information
 - Speak clearly and at a leisurely pace
 - When a participant wants to join a discussion, provide time for the interpreter to relay the participant's input
- 
- A large, semi-transparent orange circle is positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide, partially overlapping the teal background.



A polished
performance

Who does what during the event?

- Operates/hosts video conference
- Gives participants access
- Provides technical support as needed during the event
- Follows up with absent participants
- Monitors the time
- Introduces the event and speakers
- Delivers the presentation(s)
- Facilitates panels and/or discussion
- Monitors the chat
- Posts information to the chat
- Manages slide shows
- Manages interactive features e.g. launching the polls, white board, breakout groups
- Documents, e.g. number of participants, level of engagement, chat transcript

Practice, practice, practice

- Test **polls**: what looks good on paper may not on the screen
- Do a full **rehearsal** to check timing and to practice activities and transitions
- If possible, presenters using slideshows should have **two monitors**: one for the video conference and the other for their slideshow



Be prepared for tech issues

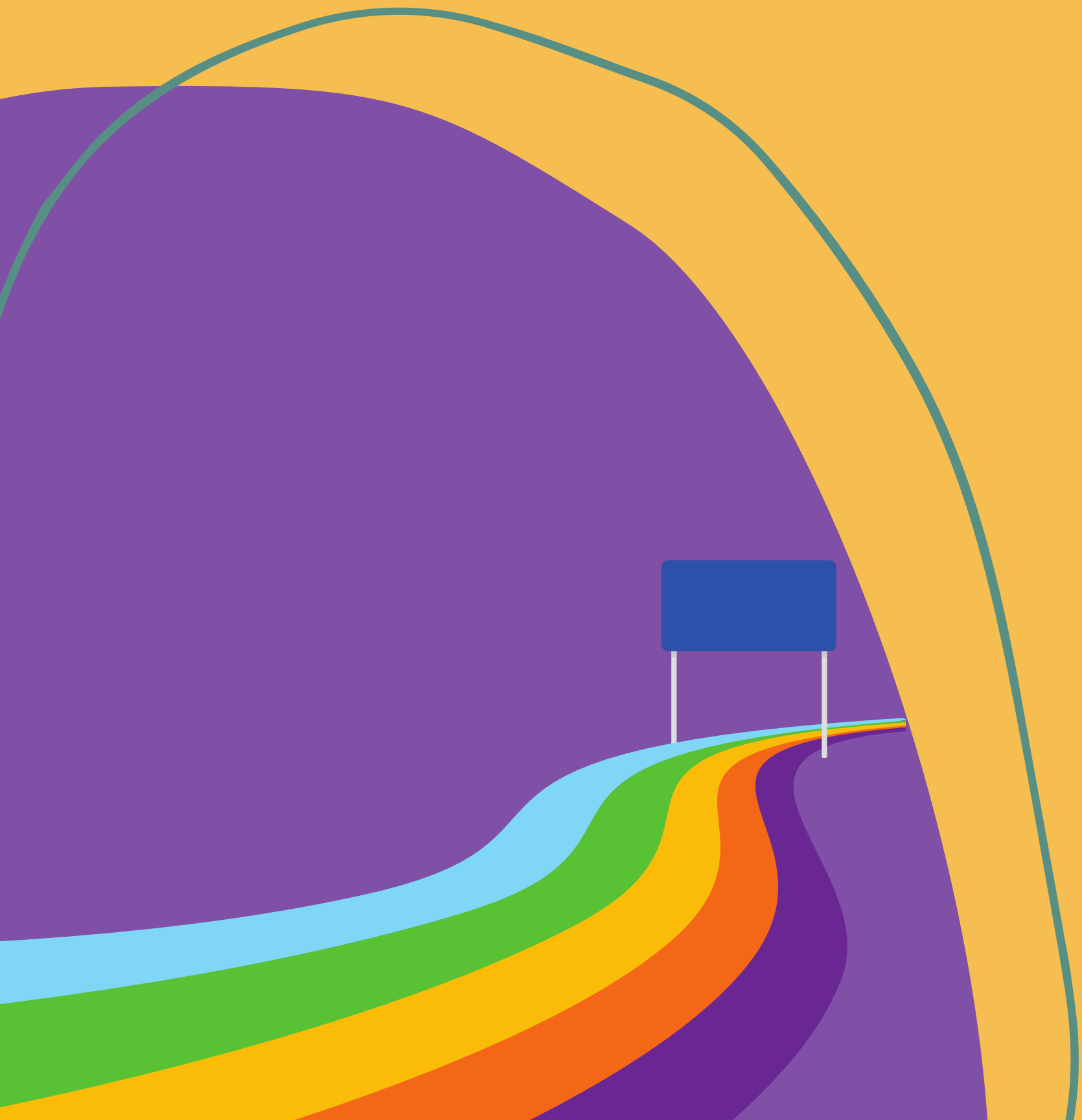
- Have team members log on 15-30 minutes early to ensure everything is working well, e.g. sound, web cams, internet connection
- If there are technical issues for a speaker, turn off video if possible, or have them leave the event and join again



Have a plan B

- Ensure more than one person has access to slideshows and will be ready to show them if needed
- Be ready to chat about a new service or the weather if a presenter is delayed or has tech issues
- Have a co-presenter ask questions if no one else does during discussion periods
- You may want to have an alternative presentation in your back pocket if a presenter can't make it





Wrapping up

Often participants don't complete evaluations after a virtual event...

Incentivize feedback

1. Share the link to your online evaluation survey at the end of the event
2. Explain that upon submitting the survey, participants get access to event material they may download, e.g. slide handouts
3. Provide a link to the material in the final page of the online survey



What did you learn?

- **Reflect** on participants' questions and responses during the event
- **Review** participants' evaluations
- **Debrief** as a team and document what worked and what you'd do differently next time



Final acts

- **Thank** presenters and others who supported the event
- **Share** positive comments from the chat transcript & evaluation with the funder
- **Delete** meeting records from the video conference tool if necessary
- **Celebrate** your great work!



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