

HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES VIRTUAL CARE POLICY*

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Approved by: President & CEO

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CCA Accreditation Standards: ORG-SYS-4.1, ORG-SYS-4.2

Cross Reference: *Client Privacy & Confidentiality Policy, Client Records Policy, Protection, Secure Transfer & Retention of Client Records Policy Reporting Suspicions of Child Abuse Policy, Service Delivery Philosophy Policy*

PURPOSE

To describe the manner in which virtual care will be provided to children, youth, and families by Boost CYAC staff.

DEFINITION

Virtual care is a broad term that encompasses the various ways Boost CYAC employees interact remotely with their clients. Employees may engage with clients by phone, text, email or video conference. This can include, but is not limited to: scheduling sessions; orientation meetings; general check-ins; assessment and/or therapy sessions; court preparation; and post court support.

Electronic Communication is an aspect of virtual care and refers to using telephone, email or text messaging to communicate with clients.

Video Session is an aspect of virtual care and refers to the use of video conferencing to provide a service to a client.

POLICY

Much of Boost CYAC employees' professional work with clients is accomplished through face-to-face meetings; however, Boost CYAC appreciates that at times and for various reasons, phone, text, email and video conferencing is the preferred or only method of communication. While there is some risk associated with virtual care, Boost CYAC recognizes that for some clients and in specific situations, the benefits to offering virtual care outweigh the risks.

Boost CYAC has put the following policy and procedures in place to minimize risk to staff and clients, increase clients' understanding of the risks associated with virtual care and to establish the process to be followed if virtual care is to be used.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Virtual care is subject to the same privacy and confidentiality rules as in-person care. All limits to confidentiality will be reviewed with the client before engaging in virtual care. These include:

- a. the duty to report suspicions of child abuse to a child protection agency;
- b. if documents are subpoenaed by the court (these documents will be given to the judge and will only be released to the court under the discretion of the judge);
- c. if there is a risk to your safety, your child's safety, or the safety of someone else; and/or

*Formerly the *Electronic Communication with Client Policy*

- d. a reportable communicable disease to Public Health (e.g., measles, meningitis, tuberculosis).

POTENTIAL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH VIRTUAL CARE

Although Boost CYAC has protections in place to increase the privacy and security of virtual care, it remains possible that:

- confidentiality may be breached (e.g., the communication is accessed/intercepted by a party not intended to receive it);
- email and/or text messages may be filtered as "spam" or "junk";
- technology applications and/or software used may introduce viruses or malware onto devices; and/or
- privacy may be breached based on the client's access to appropriate physical space.

Additionally, electronic communications during which a client may disclose the potential for harm to self or others or suspected child abuse may not be viewed or responded to in a timely manner if email or text messages are not monitored regularly throughout the workday or are received outside of regular working hours.

If an employee suspects or becomes aware of a technical breach related to the provision of virtual care, they must immediately advise their supervisor and Manager of Human Resources & Administration. The appropriate IT professional will be contacted to provide assistance and direction in addressing the breach and safeguarding the agency from future breaches. Individuals will be notified at the first reasonable opportunity if communications are accessed/intercepted by a party not intended to receive them or if personal information is used and/or disclosed without consent in a manner that is not in line with the privacy policies or procedures of Boost CYAC (see *Client Privacy & Confidentiality Policy*).

POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO VIRTUAL CARE

While it is understood that virtual care can provide *increased* access to service for many clients, Boost CYAC recognizes that some individuals may face barriers to accessing virtual care, including but not limited to:

- required access to technology (e.g., phone, tablet, computer);
- required high speed Internet/data connection; and/or
- inability to maintain privacy/confidentiality at home/other settings.

If these or other barriers are identified, Boost CYAC employees will work collaboratively with the client/family to problem solve and develop practical solutions, where possible.

CONSENT TO VIRTUAL CARE FORM

Prior to engaging in virtual care, clients must read and sign the *Consent to Virtual Care* form (Appendix A). Verbal consent provided over the phone, followed by an email confirming such is sufficient in the absence of a face-to-face meeting. By signing the *Consent to Virtual Care* form, clients acknowledge that they have been informed of and understand the risks and benefits associated with virtual care and agree to follow the related procedures that Boost CYAC has in place. Further, they acknowledge their understanding that the limits to confidentiality noted above apply to all forms of virtual care.

Electronic communication is one aspect of virtual care; it refers to the use of email and/or text messaging to communicate with and provide support to clients.

APPROPRIATE USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION WITH CLIENTS

When communicating with clients using email and/or text messaging (electronic communication), staff may only use their Boost CYAC email address and cellular phone number. The use of a personal email address or phone number is not permitted. Boost CYAC reserves the right to cease the use of electronic communication with a client if it is deemed inappropriate or unsafe to continue.

1. Type of Information Shared

Staff will most often engage in electronic communication for the purpose of scheduling meetings, meeting reminders and following up on missed appointments. Emails and text messages are not typically used to check in around a child/youth's mental health. When using electronic communication with clients, staff should, as much as possible, limit the information shared and request that the client follow up for more detailed discussions via telephone or a scheduled meeting, when possible.

The client's full name or details such as date of birth, address or clinical information should not be sent via email or text message.

2. Language

When sending texts and emails to clients, staff should carefully consider the language they use (words and phrases) as there is no intonation in electronic communication and a client's interpretation of the message cannot be predicted. Additionally, staff are expected to maintain the same level of professionalism used in other forms of communication with clients (written or verbal), as all texts and emails form part of that child/youth's record at Boost CYAC and may be included in any disclosure of our records. For the same reasons, emoticons/emojis are not to be used by staff when communicating electronically with clients.

3. Monitoring Communications

When working regular hours, staff are expected to monitor their email and text messages throughout the day and to respond to messages from clients in a timely manner. If a staff member is away from the office or unable to monitor their messages (e.g., vacation, lengthy training session), "out of office" auto-responses are to be enabled on both their email account and text messaging system.

4. Limits to Confidentiality

If information relating to alleged, witnessed or suspected abuse of a child is received electronically, staff and students must adhere to the procedures outlined in the *Reporting Suspicions of Child Abuse Policy*.

5. Safe Words

A "safe word" is a word serving as a prearranged and clear signal to end communication with a client immediately. This word can be used by the client to cease communication if they are in a situation that does not afford them the privacy or safety to engage in electronic communication. Staff may choose to determine a safe word in advance of any electronic communication, particularly when working with a client in a high risk situation.

RETENTION OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

All electronic communication sent to and received from a client will form part of that child/youth's record at Boost CYAC. All information in client files is confidential and is maintained by Boost CYAC in a safe and secure manner (see *Client Records Policy and Protection, Secure Transfer & Retention of Client Records Policy*). Access to confidential information is limited to Boost CYAC staff and consultants who require it to perform their duties, or to those individuals for whom consent is provided. If Boost CYAC receives a subpoena for a client record, all electronic communication is included in the record. Once all communication is stored in the client's record and the file is closed, all emails and text messages must be deleted from the employee's cell phone.

PROCEDURES FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS WITH CLIENTS

1. Direct service staff must set the following automatic response on their text messaging application and in their email signature: *Boost CYAC is not an emergency crisis service. In the case of an emergency call 911 or go to your local hospital.* Instructions to set up automatic responses on iPhones and to edit email signatures in Outlook can be found in Common Directory>Office Administration>IT Support.
2. If the employee determines that text messaging or email is the preferred method of communication with a client, the employee must discuss with the client the risks and benefits of this form of communication, identify the need for informed consent and review the components of the consent form with the client.
3. The *Consent to Virtual Care* form (Appendix A) is reviewed with and signed by the client and filed in their record before electronic communication begins.
4. Clients will be advised that electronic communication is not to be used for after hours or emergency support; a list of local emergency services will be provided by the Therapist/Advocate.
5. Clients will be advised that they may withdraw consent with a verbal, written or email request at any time, and the transmission of email and texts will cease immediately.
6. The first email and text message from Boost CYAC staff to a client is to be a test message to ensure that the email address and/or telephone number in the record is correct.

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION WITH CLIENTS

Boost CYAC staff are not permitted to contact or communicate with any current clients through their personal social media accounts (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram). If current clients are interested in keeping informed about Boost CYAC activities, they are encouraged to follow Boost CYAC's official accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn (@boostforkids).

APPROPRIATE USE OF EMAIL COMMUNICATION WITH THIRD PARTIES OR OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS

With informed consent, Boost CYAC staff may communicate electronically with third parties and service providers involved with clients for the purpose of setting appointments or clarifying specific information. If personal health information about a client is being sent by email, Boost CYAC asks third parties and service providers to password protect all documents and provide the password over the phone. All emails to and from third parties and service providers will form part of the client's record.

If information is received beyond the scope or intent of Boost CYAC services or contains information that is not relevant, then the sender will be informed that the information cannot be accepted and Boost CYAC will delete the information. A note in the file will be placed that an email communication was received by a provider and it was refused by Boost CYAC.

ZOOM HEALTHCARE

Boost CYAC uses a video conferencing platform called Zoom Healthcare to engage in video sessions with clients. Zoom Healthcare offers secure, web-based video conferencing, messaging and content sharing on a variety of technologies. The platform was chosen based on its compliance with Canadian privacy legislation (*Personal Health Information Protection Act* (PHIPA) and the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA)), the level of security offered and its ease of use. Boost CYAC does not record any video sessions conducted on the Zoom platform; this feature is disabled for all users. .

When engaging in video sessions with clients using Zoom Healthcare, staff may only use their Boost CYAC cell phone or computer. The use of a personal device is not permitted. Boost CYAC reserves the right to cease the provision of video sessions with a client if it is deemed inappropriate or unsafe to continue.

Prior to engaging in video sessions, employees will share with clients a *Zoom Information Sheet* to provide assistance in using the platform (Appendix B).

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGAGING IN VIDEO SESSIONS WITH CLIENTS

At their earliest opportunity, staff must consult with their supervisor when video sessions are being considered for a client in order to discuss why they believe it is required, how it would be beneficial for the client, and any potential issues that may contraindicate the use of video sessions. Most importantly, employees and their supervisors must consider, under the client's current circumstances, if the potential benefits of engaging in this form of virtual care outweigh any potential risks.

Prior to engaging in video sessions, employees must have a discussion with the client around safety, security and confidentiality while engaging in video sessions. Emphasis should be placed on the fact that, as with other forms of virtual care, there are risks associated with video sessions.

Factors to consider include, but are not limited to:

- employees's access to privacy/confidentiality in their physical space (e.g., booking an appropriate room at the office, establishing privacy in a personal space (home));
- employee's access to a neutral space/background for all video sessions (e.g., free from personal effects);
- client's access to privacy/confidentiality in their physical space;
- client's access to technology (e.g., phone, tablet, computer);
- client's phone/data plan;
- client's technical knowledge/skills;
- client's developmental stage and ability to participate;
- client's symptom presentation (e.g., level of dysregulation, technology as a trauma trigger);
- who will participate in virtual sessions (e.g., child/youth alone, joint session with a caregiver, check in with a caregiver at the beginning or end of session); and
- the presence of family violence in the home.

PROCEDURES FOR PROVIDING VIDEO SESSIONS

1. The employee must consult with their supervisor when video sessions are being considered.
2. If video sessions are deemed appropriate, either exclusively or in combination with in-person sessions, the employee will have a phone conversation with the client about this option, and will discuss:
 - a. known risks and benefits;
 - b. *Consent to Virtual Care* form;
 - c. *Zoom Information Sheet*; and
 - d. the need to establish safety plan for each session (see *Client in Crisis* heading in *Managing Challenges During Virtual Care* section below)
3. Following the call, the *Consent to Virtual Care Form* will be provided to the client (in person or electronically) and written or verbal consent is provided by the client before virtual care begins. Clients will be advised that they may withdraw consent with a verbal, written or email request at any time, and video sessions will cease immediately.
4. Employees will explain to clients that virtual care is subject to the same privacy and confidentiality rules as in-person care. All limits to confidentiality will be reviewed with the client before engaging in virtual care, including:
 - a. the duty to report suspicions of child abuse to a child protection agency;
 - b. if documents are subpoenaed by the court (these documents will be given to the judge and will only be released to the court under the discretion of the judge);
 - c. if there is a risk to your safety, your child's safety, or the safety of someone else; and/or
 - d. a reportable communicable disease to Public Health (e.g., measles, meningitis, tuberculosis).
5. The video session date and time will be scheduled with the client in advance. Approximately 15 to 30 minutes prior to the session, the employee will send an email to the client noting the Zoom meeting ID and the unique meeting password (both are required to join the meeting).
6. When providing video sessions using Zoom Healthcare, employees will do the following to increase security and privacy:
 - e. enable the waiting room feature;
 - f. use a unique meeting password for each session;
 - g. lock the meeting once all expected parties are present; and
 - h. use headphones or earbuds during all sessions.

MANAGING CHALLENGES DURING VIRTUAL CARE

Boost CYAC acknowledges that providing care virtually can present its own unique challenges. Below are some anticipated issues that could arise and the recommended strategies to manage the situations.

1. Phone call disconnects

If the phone call disconnects, the employee will first try to reconnect to the call. If this attempt fails, the employee will email or text message the client to make arrangements to reconnect.

2. Video session disconnects

If the video call disconnects, the employee will first try to reconnect to the meeting. If this attempt fails, the employee will contact the client by phone to make arrangements to reconnect.

3. Audio problems during video sessions

If the audio is not working for either the employee or client, the employee will contact the client by phone and instruct them to disconnect and reconnect to the video platform. It is best to remain on the phone while attempting to reconnect. If audio fails a second time, the employee and client can discuss the option of a phone session.

4. Third party (family member) unexpectedly appears on screen during video session

If an unexpected individual (e.g., family member) becomes visible on screen during a session, the employee will stop the discussion immediately; they will engage the client in a conversation about the importance of privacy and confidentiality during video sessions and explore if or how this can be achieved for the remainder of the session. If it is not possible, the session will be ended. Prior to scheduling another video session, the employee will have a phone conversation with the client and/or caregiver to explore ways in which privacy during video sessions can be achieved.

5. Client in crisis

Boost CYAC acknowledges that a client may experience a crisis while engaged in virtual care. In order to mitigate risk and prepare for such a situation, at the beginning of every session, the employee will:

- confirm the client's location, including street address;
- confirm the client's telephone number;
- confirm who else is in the physical space (house, apartment, etc.); and
- determine the emergency contact and their telephone number.

Remind the client that if they unexpectedly leave the call/sessions, run away, and/or disconnect, the employee will:

- phone the **client**

If that is unsuccessful, they will:

- phone the **emergency contact**

If neither are successful, the employee will:

- contact **emergency services**

Appendix A

CONSENT TO VIRTUAL CARE

Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre (Boost CYAC) offers virtual care when face-to-face services are not possible. Virtual care can include phone calls, email communications, text messaging, and/or video sessions.

Please read below and indicate “Yes” or “No” for each item. If “No” is checked for any items, your Therapist/Advocate will review the information before *Consent to Virtual Care* is signed.

My Therapist/Advocate has explained Virtual Care to me, including benefits and risks, and I/we have had the opportunity to think about the information provided. Yes No

I/We have had the opportunity to ask questions, and are satisfied with the answers. Yes No

By signing below or providing verbal/written consent, I understand and agree to the following statements:

1. In-person sessions are always preferred. Boost CYAC offers virtual care when face-to-face sessions or communication are not possible for any number of reasons. I/we understand that virtual care may not work for everyone. I/we understand that if my Therapist/Advocate and/or I/we decide that virtual care is not the right fit for me/us, we will discuss other options to access services at Boost CYAC.
2. I/we will work with my Therapist/Advocate to decide on a different method of care if video sessions fail (e.g., a phone session if the video fails).
3. Electronic communication sent and received by my Therapist/Advocate will be printed and form part of my client file at Boost CYAC. All information in my file is confidential and is maintained by Boost CYAC in a safe and secure manner. Access to my information is limited to Boost CYAC staff and consultants who require it to perform their duties or to those individuals for whom I/we provide consent.
4. Confidentiality is extremely important to Boost CYAC and will be maintained at all times, except as permitted or required by law, as listed below:
 - a. the duty to report suspicions of child abuse to a child protection agency;
 - b. if documents are subpoenaed by the court (these documents will be given to the judge and will only be released to the court under the discretion of the judge);
 - c. if there is a risk to your safety, your child’s safety, or the safety of someone else; and/or
 - d. a reportable communicable disease to Public Health (e.g., measles, meningitis, tuberculosis).
5. I/we will provide the required technology to engage in virtual care (e.g., phone, computer, tablet, software). Additionally, I/we will provide a space with adequate privacy to participate in virtual care
6. The security of virtual care cannot be guaranteed. I/we understand that although Boost CYAC has protections in place to increase the privacy and security of virtual care, it remains possible that:
 - a. confidentiality may be breached (e.g., someone who was not invited/intended may be able to hear, see or read our communication);
 - b. email and text messages may be filtered as “spam” or “junk”;
 - c. technology applications and/or software used may introduce viruses or malware onto devices; and/or

- d. someone may be able to hear, see or read communication within my home if they walk into the room or are close enough to hear us talk.
- 7. I/we will make all efforts to protect the privacy of my communications, including but not limited to, not sharing email accounts and passwords and not leaving email accounts open.
- 8. I/we will not video or audio record any of the virtual care sessions; nor will my Therapist/Advocate.
- 9. If messages are sent from any email address or phone number, I/we give permission for my Therapist/Advocate to reply to that address/phone number unless otherwise stated in the body of the message.
- 10. I/we will not include my Therapist/Advocate's email address on any mailing lists. If this occurs, I/we understand that I/we will be asked to remove my Therapist/Advocate's name from that list.
- 11. My Therapist/Advocate will check email or text messages during agency business hours (8:30am to 4:30pm). Emails and/or text messages that are sent or received after hours will only be read and responded to on the next business day.
- 12. I/we will provide my Therapist/Advocate with accurate contact information at the start of each virtual care session (phone or video), including my full street and address and phone number. I/we understand that at the start of each virtual care session, the safety plan will be reviewed. My/our Therapist/Advocate may require that a supportive adult be present in the home during and after virtual care sessions in case immediate support is needed. I/we will remain in one location for the duration of all virtual care sessions.
- 13. I/we will be dressed, will behave and will communicate as if I/we were attending in-person sessions.

I/We understand that participation in any form of virtual care is voluntary and that I/we are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, which will not impact participation in any other Boost CYAC programs or services.

I/we have read, understand, and agree to the statements above and consent to engage in virtual care.

Client's Signature

Date

Parent/Caregiver Signature (if applicable)

Date

Therapist/Advocate's Signature

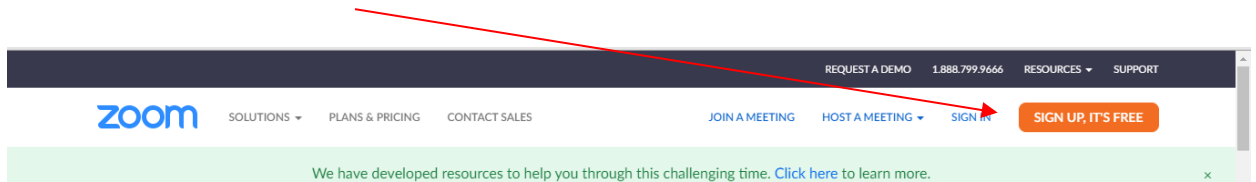
Date

Appendix B

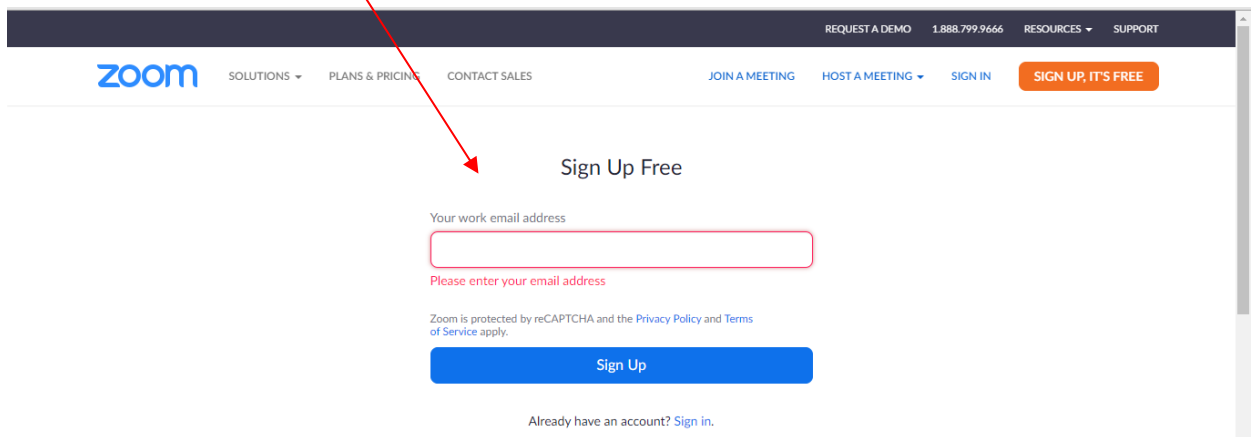
ZOOM INFORMATION SHEET FOR CLIENTS

In order to engage in video sessions, clients must have access to a Zoom account. This can be a basic (free) account or a paid account. Zoom requires account holders to be 16 years or older. To sign up for free, follow the steps below:

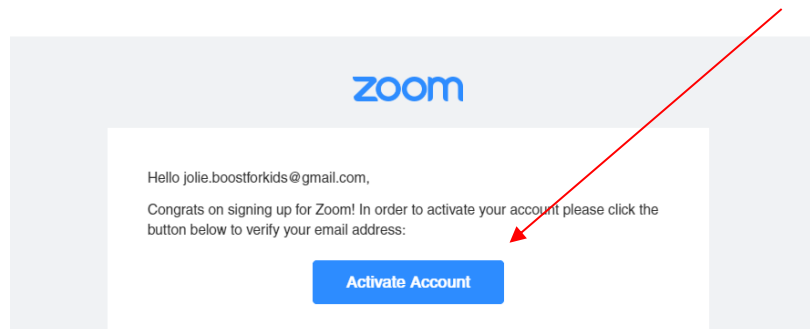
1. Visit the Zoom website (<https://zoom.us/>)
2. Click "SIGN UP, IT'S FREE"



3. Enter your email address. Even though it says "Your work email address", you can use any address.



4. Check your email. In the confirmation from Zoom, click Activate Account and follow all prompts.



BEFORE YOUR VIDEO SESSION

1. Ensure you have the required technology: smartphone, tablet or computer with camera and speakers, high speed Internet access.
2. Ensure you can access the privacy required to engage in your video session. Using headphones or earbuds is a good way to increase privacy.
3. Ensure you have set up a Zoom account.
4. The date and time of your video session will be arranged ahead of time with your Therapist/Advocate.
5. 15 to 30 minutes prior to the session, you will receive an email from your Therapist/Advocate that includes the:
 - link to the Zoom meeting;
 - meeting ID; and
 - meeting password.

TO JOIN YOUR VIDEO SESSION

There are 2 ways to join a Zoom video call:

Using the meeting link

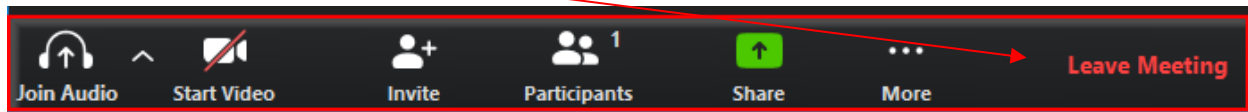
1. Click the link in the email
2. Click "Open Zoom"
3. If your Therapist/Advocate has not started the meeting, you will see the message, *"Please wait for the host to start the meeting."*
4. When your Therapist/Advocate has started the meeting, you will be placed in the "waiting room" and will see the message, *"Please wait, the meeting host will let you in soon."*
5. When your Therapist/Advocate admits you to the meeting, each of your images will appear on your screen, side by side.

Joining the meeting from the Zoom application

1. Double-click the Zoom icon on your desktop.
2. Click "Join"
3. Enter the **meeting ID** (sent by your Therapist/Advocate) and click Join
4. Enter the **meeting password** (sent by your Therapist/Advocate) and click Join Meeting
5. If your Therapist/Advocate has not started the meeting, you will see the message, *"Please wait for the host to start the meeting."*
6. When your Therapist/Advocate has started the meeting, you will be placed in the "waiting room" and will see the message, *"Please wait, the meeting host will let you in soon."*
7. When your Therapist/Advocate admits you to the meeting, each of your images will appear on your screen, side by side.

LEAVING YOUR VIDEO SESSION

When you are ready to leave your session, click the red button on the bottom right of your screen that says "Leave Meeting."



ZOOM FUNCTIONS

Once you're in the meeting, you will see function buttons at the bottom of the screen.



Mute/Unmute: turns on or off the ability for the other participant(s) to hear you.

Start Video/Stop Video: turns your camera/image on or off

Participants: allows you to see who is in the meeting

Share Screen: allows participants to share their screen with each other.

Chat: allows participants to communicate via texting, on the Zoom platform.

Record: if enabled, allows participants to record the session. The recording feature is disabled on Boost CYAC's Zoom Healthcare account.

Invite: allows the host only to invite other participants to join the call.

STAFF TIP SHEET FOR PROVIDING VIRTUAL CARE

STANDARD OF CARE

- The same high standard of care and service delivery philosophy applies to the provision of virtual care as in-person care (see *Service Delivery Philosophy Policy*).
- As with in-person services, virtual care will be conducted and documented in compliance with PIPEDA and PHIPPA.

WORKSPACE SET-UP

- Ensure you are using a password-protected, secure internet connection, not public or unsecured Wi-Fi.
- Check that the anti-virus/malware on your device(s) is up to date.
- Ensure your workspace is private; this means a room with a door that can close.
- Ensure you have good quality headphones or earbuds to increase privacy. Posting privacy signs can be helpful for others in the area to be aware that a confidential session is taking place.
- Ensure you are in a quiet space with no background noise.
- A messy or cluttered background can be distracting. Ensure that your workspace is simply decorated, clean and tidy.
- Make sure that no personal information such as family photos or other information can be seen in your background.
- Position your camera so that the client can see you clearly (e.g., sitting with a window behind you can put your face in shadow). Ideally, you should sit with a wall behind you.
- To improve eye contact during video sessions, position your camera so that it is easy to look at the camera and the client on screen. Be sure to sit up straight but not too rigidly. The camera should capture you from your shoulders up throughout the session.
- Confirm that anyone else in the general vicinity (employee's home, Boost CYAC office) while video sessions are taking place agrees to respect the privacy of the client; interruptions during this time are not acceptable unless it is an emergency.

PRE-SESSION – SCREENING, CONSIDERATIONS AND CONSENT

- In collaboration with your supervisor and/or the Clinical Manager, carefully consider the developmental level of your client, as well as their clinical needs and symptom presentation to determine if they can safely and effectively participate in virtual care.
- In collaboration with your supervisor and/or Clinical Manager, develop a safety plan that meets the individual needs of the client. Client and caregiver(s) or other supportive adult must agree to the safety plan prior to engaging in virtual care.
- Discuss with your client whether they have an appropriate space to engage in virtual care (i.e., can provide privacy/confidentiality).
- Determine that your client has the technology resources to engage in confidential virtual care (e.g., computer, smartphone, headphones or earbuds, high speed Internet).
- Provide clients with instructions on how to use the technology.

- Discuss with your client the benefits and potential risks of participating in virtual care.
- Provide your client with the *Consent to Virtual Care* form (via email or regular post) and review it with them, answering any questions they have.
- Obtain informed consent from your client to participate in virtual care and document consent in their clinical file.

BEGINNING VIRTUAL CARE SESSIONS

- Assume you are always “on” when in the vicinity of the equipment and behave professionally. Ensure when you start and terminate the session that the mic is on mute and the camera is not on. Only when you are ready to begin should you turn it on. It is possible that if the mic is on, but the camera is off and vice versa, the client could hear your personal conversation or see private spaces in your home.
- At the start of each session, confirm that the audio and/or video quality on your device is clear and that no one is muted.
- Using *Advanced Sharing Options*, ensure that only the host (you) can share your screen.
- Be sure to turn off all applications and notifications on your device and ask your client to do the same.
- Assure your client that no other individuals are watching or listening to the session and that the session is not being audio or video recorded.
- Ask your client to confirm that they are not recording the sessions (using a separate device) and assure them that you are not either.
- At the start of video sessions, remind your client that all individuals participating in the session must be within view of the camera, so that the clinician can monitor participation.
- Before engaging in therapeutic work, review with your client the importance of confidentiality at the client’s location and confirm that they are in a private space.
- Before engaging in therapeutic work, confirm the following information: location of the client (street address) and phone number; who else is in the home; and their emergency contact (including their phone number). Document this information and remind your client of the steps you will take in the case of an emergency (see *Managing Challenges During Virtual Care* section above).
- Confirm with your client that they will remain in their current location for the duration of the session.
- Obtain an alternate mode of communication (e.g., landline or mobile phone number) in the event that the video session fails or there is an emergency.
- Throughout the session, use your professional and/or clinical judgement to determine if you should terminate video sessions and recommend phone or in-person sessions as appropriate.
- Ensure you can access necessary communication technology (i.e., landline or mobile device) in order to communicate with relevant clinical supports or emergency services in case of a crisis situation.
- Conduct the session as you would an in-person session. Be yourself.