Zoom Learnings *updated 3rd March 2021*

You can now let young people in from the Waiting Room from a Breakout Room

If you haven't updated your Zoom for a while, do it now (it may not update automatically). Update 5.4.9 includes the ability to let participants in from the Waiting Room while you are in a Breakout Room yourself. Then you can go to your Participants tab and place the newcomer in a Breakout Room. You no longer need to leave your own Breakout Room to let them in. Just click on 'Admit to Main Session' which appears at the top of your screen.

Returning from Breakout Rooms early

If you want participants to be able to return from their Breakout Room before you as Host end them you need to tick a box! Otherwise, participants will have to leave the Meeting and rejoin. That's a disaster if you are playing Team Charades (not played it yet? Download *Games, ideas and resources*), as we discovered, or doing a timed Escape Room. Before you open the rooms, check the options on the Breakout Rooms. Make sure that 'Allow participants to return to the main session at any time' is ticked in Breakout Room Options (see right).
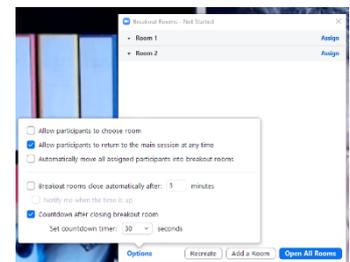
Reducing the risk of meetings being Zoombombed (people sharing unwanted material etc.)

The more widely advertised your Zoom meetings are, the more potential there is for things to go wrong. As much as you can in your context, control the sharing of your Zoom URL or meeting ID and password. If you want to just operate with the youth you are familiar with, and this is safer, send links personally to the parents of the young people you know and ask them not to share the links with other people. We email our meeting URL to parents of young people in the group and put it in the bio of our closed youth Instagram account.

Enable your Waiting Room and have all participants, not just guests join the Waiting Room.

Even with a privately-shared URL, any meeting may become an open meeting if young people or parents share the link you sent so always beware. If the young people want to invite friends, ask them to ask you first. Then, when a new person arrives in the Waiting Room, you will be able to welcome them appropriately.

Ask parents and young people to make it clear on their Zoom name who they are and be especially careful if you don't recognise a name. *Bugs Bunny* won't get in, but what about *Jon's phone*? I had someone sitting in the Waiting Room called *Jono*. We don't have anyone called Jono in the group. I eventually realised we do have a Jonathan Owen, but he didn't get in before I worked it out. If you don't recognise a name in the Waiting Room, one of the options for Chat (as well as messaging everyone or different individuals) is to Message Waiting Room. You can always message, *'Welcome to SCYG. Thanks for coming. Please make sure we can recognise your name. Thank you.'*

You will need to decide, what you do with a name you don't recognise. Whatever you do, don't just let them in and leave them sitting there while you get started. If you let them in, assume that they're a danger. If it's an unknown name sitting behind a black screen, be especially aware. You can send them a private message, welcoming them and asking them to turn on their camera, so you can verify their identity. If they don't reply, you can send them back to the Waiting Room.

If yours is a medium to large gathering, have as many Co-hosts as you can. Use a desk/laptop if possible. On a desktop computer, you will be able to see 25 people's behaviour (so have as many of your Co-hosts on desk/laptops as possible). Co-hosts will have a further reach – for positive welcome as well as for discipline.

Before you start, make sure you and the Co-hosts know where the Remove function is (and make sure you have put on your settings that those removed can't re-enter the same meeting, though they can enter a different meeting later). You can remove people under 'Manage participants', but the faster way (faster than finding the offending participant in a large group) is to **right click the participant's screen and click 'Remove'**. Note that if you close the Meeting Room, it only solves the problem momentarily. Anyone who was in the first meeting (even if removed) can rejoin when you reopen it, so don't panic, just remove someone or multiple people if necessary. If you need to 'Suspend participant activities' or 'Mute All' (see below) while you work if there are multiple people behaving inappropriately, then do that. If you have multiple Co-hosts (and you should have), one of you work on muting, others work on removing, turning people's cameras off or spotlighting a safe person. And let Zoom know that you had a problem. Click on the Security tab, click Report and name the person you want to report. You can add in comments and even screenshots.

I'd suggest if you're expecting a large group, under 'Manage Participants' you can 'Mute All' and when you do this, you have the option to allow participants to unmute themselves which is ticked by default. If you untick 'Allow Participants to Unmute Themselves' as I have done here, then click 'Yes', everyone is muted unless the Host or Co-hosts unmute people. In a smaller group that stops the warm welcome that is really nice in Zoom meetings, but it stops an unwelcome guest shouting obscenities as soon as they arrive. Note that this is different to having participants muted on entry in your general meeting settings before you start the meeting. That setting still allows participants to unmute themselves.
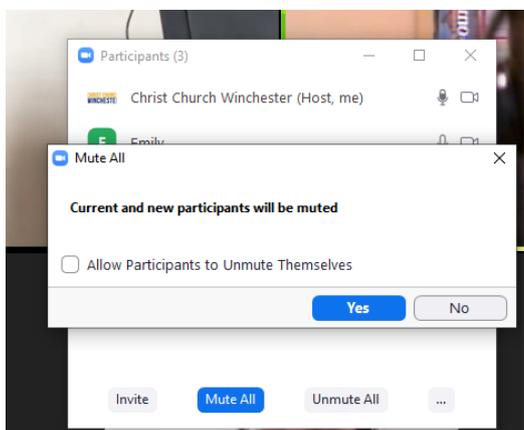
BUT, if you have unticked this box then move people into Breakout Rooms, people can then unmute themselves and talk to each other. If you bring them back to the Main Meeting, they are muted again unless you unmute them. This is really significant for managing a really large group on Zoom.

We ran a quiz with over 200 people on Zoom and this key learning enabled the quiz to happen. Everyone was muted out of groups but could unmute themselves in Breakout Rooms, so people listened to the questions and took notes, then discussed each round in their team in a Breakout Room. Each round's questions were also on a webpage which we sent to people via the Chat before they went to their Breakout Rooms. Watch your maximum numbers. We found the day before the quiz that our maximum was 100 participants and had to pay for more.

Remember if you're running Bible studies or prayer groups in Breakout Rooms, send questions and prayer pointers to Everyone on chat before they go into Breakout Rooms. This Chat will stay on people's screens after they have left your room. Chat generally only works with people in your room. If you try to send prayer pointers on chat after they've left the meeting room, they won't receive them.

If you're not sure where noise is coming from, remember that a yellow box around a photo shows the primary speaker and a yellow line under someone's photo shows there is sound coming into that person's microphone.

Having a spotlighted video means that someone doing something outrageous during a meeting won't get the centre-stage they might want.

Use your meeting settings well to safeguard children and to facilitate the meeting

Ticking "Always show meeting control taskbar" in your settings before you start the meeting will help you as the Host to get to 'Manage participants' faster.
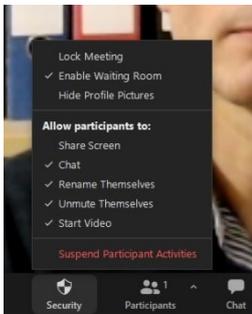
Zoom has a Security tab at the bottom of the Host's screen, as well as those of any Co-hosts. This gives you the ability easily to allow/disallow participants sharing the screen, chatting or renaming themselves. Better for security and also means you can lower distractions. We had one participant changing their name something like fifty times during the meeting. If you've forgotten to enable the waiting room, you can do it here. Check them when you start the meeting. Lock meeting means that no one else can enter, so if you're only expecting a certain number and they're all in, you can use this.

Here's a key button on the Security tab: Suspend Participant Activities. Pressing that brings up this box:
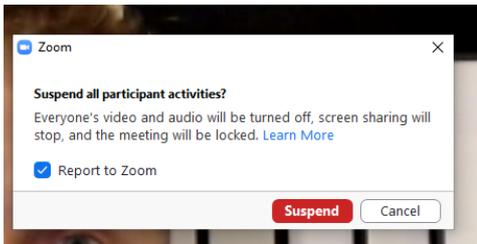
So, if someone is doing something inappropriate on Zoom and especially, if more than one person has Zoombombed your meeting, this button will really help you. You can choose whether or not to report people to Zoom, but once you press Suspend, no one else will be able to join until you unlock, no one can screen share, nor can anyone say anything or be seen. This buys you time and people won't get the attention they were wanting. People can still here you, so let them know what's happening, but you can now add people back in one by one and remove people you want to remove.

In a small group and in a private group, this isn't as important, but young people will find the functions you have missed, which can be funny but may be distracting or mean. Here are some you may want to change:

Backgrounds. Can be fun when they're in San Francisco, less fun when they're putting up photos of other people in the chat morphed to look like babies/the other sex etc. I've now turned off backgrounds. When they're talking golf balls or pickles during a Bible study, it can become tiring. This is an app called Snap Camera but, as the Zoom Host, you can't disable this, although you can just mute their video feed for a while and hope they get the message.

Annotating shared screens. This is great if you want young people to underline a Bible passage with bits they don't understand or things that strike them, less good if they are drawing rude pictures on what you're sharing.

Sharing files. Turn that off.

Screenshare. It's great as Host or Co-host to be able to share your screen. It means you can put words up on people's screens if you want them to join in with sung worship or show a video to the group. **This is sometimes misused.** I turn this function off for everyone but the Host (which also covers Co-hosts), but you can still, as the Host, enable it as you go along.

Caution: Data Protection Breach ahead

There is a very real danger of a data protection breach in screen sharing. To avoid sharing something incorrectly, be careful what you have open during a Zoom meeting. As I write in Raising the Bar – think WORST CASE SCENARIO! Close everything you don't need open before you start your Zoom call. I'd suggest never, ever having a database open on your computer, if you are planning to Screenshare. Double check before clicking on the screen you want to share. Remember if you are planning to Screenshare a page on your web browser, Zoom will share the tab that is open, so check the correct tab is open, not your church's database or your Instagram account. Once you have shared your screen, don't multitask! if I want to share a video from a well-known video-sharing website, I Screenshare, play the video and the young people are watching the video. Then I click onto my emails. I can still hear the video playing and think the young people are watching the video, but they are now reading my emails. And even if you have been as careful as you could be... I screenshared a video, plugged in my phone to a charger on the PC and the video went off and WhatsApp came on without me touching the keyboard or mouse.

Once you've shared your screen, people can choose to view it side-by-side, seeing your Screenshare on one side and still the gallery/speaker view on the other.

Note during Screenshare that your control bar as host has now moved to the top - you don't have to return from your screen share to start Breakout Rooms, or to share another screen etc. Most importantly, your security settings are still there.

Remember too that there are things you can do on your screen while Screenshare is going on. If you open your top bar for example, that does not appear on everyone's screen. It feels like it does, but I've tried it, it doesn't. Similarly, your chat box doesn't appear on the screen, so you can chat away and it won't appear on everyone else's screen.

If participants can't see all of the Screenshare because the gallery is covering the right-hand side of it, there is a line and various small boxes at the top of the photos (see right). Clicking on the single box shows only the active speaker video rather than the gallery, covering only a small proportion of the screen,

the line hides the thumbnail video and just shows the name of the speaker. You can also go up to your three dots at the top of the screen and click on 'Hide video panel'. That removes all the videos while you're screen sharing.
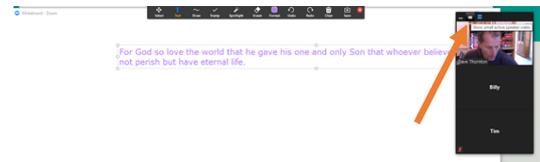
Even though you have Screenshare disabled for participants, people can still share their screen within Breakout Rooms so you might still get a shock.

I tried to show a video clip with Screenshare and the sound quality was awful. When you click 'Share screen' a window appears from within which you select the item you want to share. In your sharing window, at the bottom left, you will see a box saying, 'share computer sound'. Tick that before pressing 'Share'. A few people have said to me that sometimes the sound still doesn't work. It's worth then checking while you're on Screenshare by going to the control bar at the top of your screen, clicking on More as shown above, then checking Share Computer Sound is still ticked.

Whiteboard. This is excellent for engagement from all participants, even the ones who often struggle to say things. It can encourage some silence (difficult on Zoom) as people think. It can be used for games like Hangman, but also to get people to engage with what has been said. Young people can write their feelings down after they've read a Bible passage or write down questions or ideas. The downside is that they can become a distraction. You're trying to share an important Bible point, and other people are drawing a picture of you on it. If you use Whiteboard in a Breakout Room, make sure you save the whiteboard before you leave the Breakout if you want to refer back to what was written down. There is a simple explanation of how whiteboards work in Breakout Rooms here: https://blogs.otago.ac.nz/zoom/breakout-sessions/how-to-use-a-whiteboard-in-a-breakout-room/

Waiting room. I have enabled the waiting room by default. No one can enter before the Host lets them in. This keeps out, hopefully, anyone you might not want in. If you don't enable the waiting room, you should disable people joining before the Host.

Breakout Rooms are excellent for larger groups. We have two leaders in every group for safeguarding reasons and we use these often. Sometimes, we use them right at the start and just quickly divide people into smaller groups

to allow more easy conversation to find out how people are. Our 14-18s meet in their regular small groups using this.
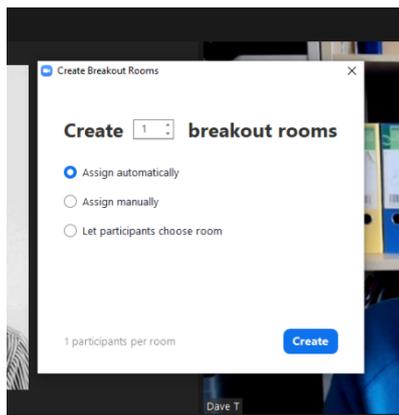
Until recently, it always took a lot of time to get people into their groups if there were a lot of young people. Recent changes have made this easier but be aware of the downside.

There is now the option to 'Let participants choose room'. This is great for speed. Press 'Breakout Rooms' at the bottom of your screen and the left screen will appear, click on 'Let participants choose room', and press 'Create'. Or alternatively, if you change your mind and want to let participants choose room later, press 'Breakout Rooms' then 'Options' (see right) and select the top choice there. Now young people can choose their own room. They can pretty much always remember their age or what year they are in, or who their leader is and it saves you time. If they can't choose their own Breakout Room, you can still assign them, but they may want to update Zoom on their device.
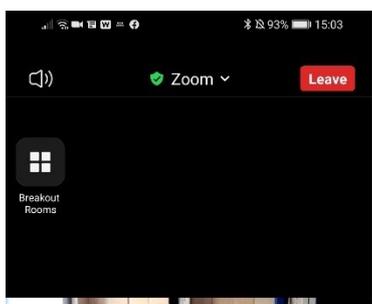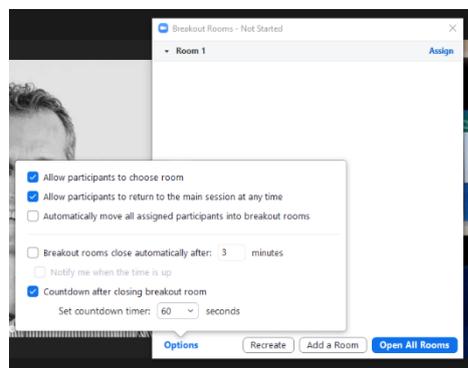
If you have opened your Breakout Rooms before they arrive at the Meeting, this box (left) will appear as people join. If people are already in the Meeting, it will appear on the young people's screens when you open the Breakout Rooms. **Be aware that there isn't a big banner that appears across the screen, saying, 'Join a group'.** When a young person touches 'Breakout Rooms' (left), this will come up (right). They select their group, click 'Join' and are taken to their group.
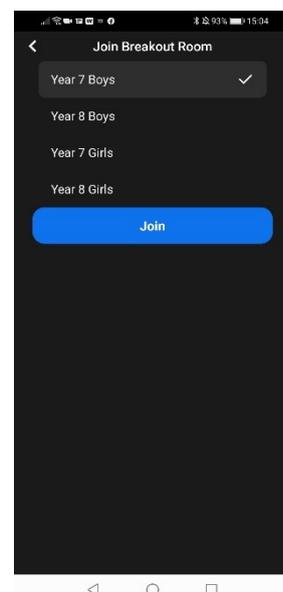
We are finding some people are struggling to join a Breakout Room themselves if they are on a laptop, rather than a phone.

This is also great if you have groups they can drift into. Perhaps you have a craft Breakout Room, a game Breakout Room, etc. When they are finished in one, they just touch their screen and the screen above and to the left appears. They simply select a new Breakout Room.

If some people find it uncomfortable to be in the big group, potentially this is a great step forward as they can enter their Breakout Rooms as the Meeting opens. They need never be in the large group. They still need the initiative though to press 'Breakout Rooms'!

But the downside is that the Host cannot lock the Breakout Rooms once everyone has chosen a room. That's not a problem if you want people to drift between groups when they like. It can become a problem if a Year 8 Boy suddenly decides to Zoombomb the Year 8 Girls group. If this becomes a regular distraction, you may decide to go back to putting people in groups yourself. That way, they can only change group via the Meeting Room.

Only the Host can place people in Breakout Rooms, so if you choose to assign people to groups yourself, have something else that people can do while the Host works on this.

Make sure you have update 5.4.9 on Zoom, otherwise, if you are in a Breakout Room and you are operating a Waiting Room, you will get a notification saying there is now someone unassigned to a Breakout Room. You

can assign a Breakout Room to new arrivals and think they have gone to their group BUT they won't have because they are still in the Waiting Room.

Make sure you haven't changed your notification settings. If you have turned on Focus Assist on Windows so you don't receive notifications when you are using an app in full screen mode for example, and then you are screen sharing, you will not receive a notification when someone enters the Waiting Room.

You can also, as Host, send messages to all Breakout Room participants, and close the groups which gives people 60 seconds to leave before they are thrown back into the Main Meeting. If you want to have a longer or shorter warning for the groups being closed, you can change that by clicking Breakout Rooms then Options, but the maximum is 120 seconds. You can also set an automatic close after a certain time, so if you want to only have five minutes in Breakout Rooms, set this here. Using this function will start a timer in the top right of everyone's screen so this can be a distraction.

Private chats. We have disabled the person-to-person chat function. This means that leaders can never have private chats with young people, nor can young people send others distracting or hurtful messages, and it means we can keep people focussed. It also stops the awkwardness of not replying to a young person who sends you a private chat message. The problem with this is that if your account is used by others in the church, they may want to be able to direct message other participants, say in a prayer meeting, to ask how their son is, etc. If the setting in your account stops people direct messaging in Chat, you cannot turn on the function in an individual meeting. It the setting allows it in the main account, you can turn it off (see right). To turn off participants chatting with others directly, go to Chat, click the three dots, then tick 'Everyone publicly'. If you want to disable Chat completely, click on 'No one'.
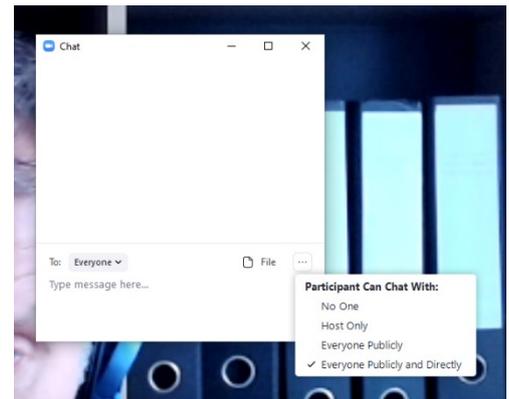
Co-hosts. Allow Co-hosts to give any co-leaders you have more functions. This takes pressure off the Host.

Turn on video on entry. This means we know who people are when they join.

Mute. Mute people during sung worship (!) apart from the person leading. Mute people when they need to be listening to someone else. Be aware that if you unmute all, they stay muted if they muted themselves in the first place. You can choose under manage participants whether they can unmute themselves or if you need to unmute them. If you're someone who has a tendency to talk too much, mute yourself. This sends a useful signal to participants – you're not going to fill the space. It might encourage others to take a risk and talk. This is really helpful during something like a Bible study. One of the leaders asks a question and all the leaders mute themselves and wait. The young people now know that they need to answer the question. You're not going to move on or answer it yourself. Try it and see what happens.

I'm starting a new run on Zoom - do I need to change my URL?

Aargh, you've arrived on your Zoom account, but your meeting has disappeared. You have had it running for seven weeks or twenty weeks and it's reached the end of the recurrences or someone has deleted it by accident. Young people are turning up in twenty minutes and it looks like you need to create a new meeting and get a new ID or URL to them. Now might be a good time to change the link to improve your security going forward if it's easy to get a message to people in time. If that's not easy to do, you can keep going with the same details. Normally you are on a tab that says, 'Upcoming meetings'. Next to it is a tab called, 'Previous meetings'. Click on that one, find your last meeting and change the recurrence, maybe put a final date well in the future and you're good to go again with the same Meeting ID, Password and URL.

Joining in

Young people need to download the Zoom app. Children under 16 can't open their own Zoom account, but they can join your meeting.

For over 13s, we put a link on our private Instagram for young people to click on to join Zoom. Without Instagram, we emailed a link to parents.

Getting people into the meeting, especially at the start, especially if you use the waiting room function, takes time. Practise with other people beforehand to make this as smooth as possible when you invite young people. Schedule the conference. Go into your account profile, and the option is there. A good feature there is that no-one can join before the Host, and you'll find the waiting room option too. Co-hosts can allow people in from the Waiting Room too. Encourage them to do that.

You can schedule the meeting at 7, say, then start the meeting earlier from your account. So, leaders can meet at 6.45. In the account settings [under Account Management] you can set up a "waiting room", so all the young people can be added at once and you can check you know people who are joining. You can message the waiting room to let them know you know they're there! You can set it so that everyone is muted on entry, so as not to overwhelm people and they can choose their engagement level. You may want to set it so that people's videos are on by default so blank screens don't appear with names you're not sure about.

All Zoom meetings now need a **password** attached to them. If you share your Zoom meeting URL, people won't need a password to join in, because the password is contained within the URL. If people try to sign in using the meeting ID, they will need the password. Which do you share – URL or Meeting ID and password? It doesn't matter. Neither is more secure. I share the Zoom URL because it makes it easier – people can just click and go. The introduction of essential passwords means that people can't just guess meeting IDs until they find one that's open then make mischief.

If you're someone who delights in everyone seeing your antics on Zoom, try to think about other people who might find it more difficult. I recently sent out this message:

"If you find Zoom your worst nightmare, I hope we can help. From my point of view, I need to know who you are for security reasons before admitting you from the Waiting Room, but after that, I'm very happy for you to keep your camera off and for you just to watch if you prefer that. Sunday nights are probably easier for that than small groups on Thursdays - it's generally easier on Sundays just to watch and not feel you have to engage or have something to say. I'll ask leaders that they never ask anyone a direct question in a big group on Zoom without first saying, 'If you don't mind answering this question, unmute yourself.' Would that work? We'll also try to use the Chat function more in the big group. We would love to see you (or have you attend!) even if you're not really feeling it and you don't want to engage. It's nice just to have you there."

That does make things more difficult for us as leaders, but I wonder if it gives permission to people to attend and trust that we won't put them on the spot and embarrass them.
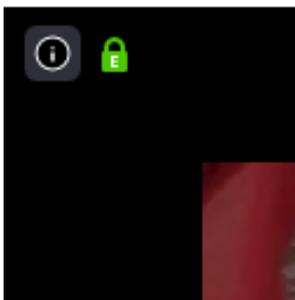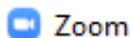
Often, you are in a Zoom meeting and someone sends you a message saying they can't join. Then there is a frantic search for the link from the WhatsApp or email from three weeks ago. Instead, as the Host go up to the 'i' in the circle at the top left of the screen (see picture). Click on it and it brings up a list of settings including the Meeting URL and a button saying, 'Copy Link'. Copy the link, send it to the person.

You can even change your settings before you open the meeting so that the URL link is automatically copied whenever you begin a meeting.

Making people feel welcome

It is still quite strange doing teleconferencing with young people, but try to say hello to everyone and to say goodbye to everyone.

Don't be afraid to point out what you think is obvious. If you're using Zoom daily and the young people only once a week, they may not have noticed things you found weeks ago - different views, say. Tell them how to change the view so they can see other people, to put something on the chat, or to mute themselves. Why not talk young people through what they can do next time you meet so that everyone is at the same level?

You can set up polls (they haven't worked perfectly so far), whereby people can say how their week has been, by comparing it to, say, an animal. You choose the animal when you set up the poll. It's another way to engage people. If you can't do what you want to do with polling in Zoom, try Kahoot or sli.do.

Encourage people to click on gallery view while you're chatting, speaker view when you want people to be paying attention to the Host.

Encourage leaders and older young people to work hard on noticing people and welcoming them. If you're taking the register, it's hard also to be asking how people's weeks are going.

Managing the initial few minutes

If you're trying to put a larger group into Breakout Rooms by year group it will be challenging and take some time. Make this easier for yourself by having people rename themselves (they'll soon get used to this). So, Ollie renames himself 10 Ollie. This will halve the time it takes for the Host to assign people into Breakout Rooms when the rooms are named: 'Year 10s', 'Year 11s' etc.

One of the things that has been lost in Lockdown is social interaction, another is freedom to choose what to do. Pre-Lockdown in our group, some people would sit around tables chatting, others would go for more active pursuits. You can work this into Zoom by having people join one or more sit-around-and-chat Breakout Rooms with leaders (perhaps years 12-13 in one, years 10-11 in another) while other people stay in the Meeting Room to play a game. Check out 'Games, Ideas and Resources' for more ideas.

Other thoughts

1. Check permissions for attendance.
2. Use other people if you can, giving different people responsibility for different bits of the programme, including taking the register.
3. If you want people to be watching you/speaker/live game on screen, then mute everyone and share your screen, otherwise the screen other people are watching jumps around to whoever moves, coughs or talks. So **mute people unless you want their input**.
4. You can also **Spotlight** someone's video link by right clicking on their video feed and clicking 'Spotlight video'. They will also get a message saying you have done that. This is particularly useful if someone is leading worship, or leading part of your meeting and you want to keep the focus on them, even if other people are unmuted. To cancel the spotlight, click on the box at the top left-hand side of their video. Some young people hate this, so use it sparingly. You don't always have to spotlight the person speaking. Compare it to a small group - you sit in a circle, but you don't ask people to stand up and come to the front every time they speak.
5. In larger groups, use hand raising feature to allow people to talk who otherwise you might not see. This is not the same as the reaction 'thumbs up' or 'clapping'. This is especially important if your default setting is to mute participants or if you are doing a talk where someone may not want to interrupt you but wants to ask something at a convenient moment. This blue hand up will be seen by the Host. Hosts, if you're

looking for it, you won't find it as you never need to put your hand up to get your attention. Participants can find it on the Participant's menu.

6. Many young people are saying that they struggle more to be real online. If you can do very small Breakout Rooms, with 2-4 young people and 2 leaders, this will help, even if you can't do it every week.

7. If young people hate seeing themselves, or if you get distracted by looking at yourself, click on the three dots at the top right of your picture and on some devices, you can click, 'Hide self-view.' Brilliant to keep you focussed and to let you feel more real. Again, comparing with a regular small group, you don't have people sitting in some chairs and a mirror in the one next to you. Hiding yourself makes it more real.

Possible running order for Zoom meeting

7.00   Rolling start/welcoming people – this takes time, and is generally just quite fun anyhow.

7.15   Welcome/opening prayer

Game e.g. Bring me a…. game (e.g. something beginning with J or a sponge). People leave their camera (avoiding the 'Dad's just got out of the shower moment'), run to get something, come back. We're giving out points that keep going from week to week for attending online and for winning games.

7.23   Reading

7.26   Memory verse – first time we used a Powerpoint on a laptop and focussed a phone on it – which worked well enough but it's better to share your screen. You can also have a Split Screen, with a shared screen on one side and your face or the gallery view at the other side.

7.30   Talk.

7.35   Prayer time with people unmuting to pray

7.40   Game e.g. Jenga - people chose which numbered block to remove.

7.45   End.

For parents to be aware of

1. The URL for the Zoom meeting is not shared publicly. Please do not share this URL with other people. If your child wants to invite a friend, please let us know their name so we can welcome them in properly from the Waiting Room.
2. There are always at least two regular DBS-checked group leaders in the online meeting before any young people join. We will exit all the young people before any leader leaves.
3. Leaders will never contact your child via Zoom outside whole group meetings, nor will leaders DM them during the session, unless they are asking about the running of the Zoom call e.g. 'Please can you turn on your camera for a moment, so I can see who you are, thank you.'
4. We will never record a Zoom meeting and we ask you to ensure your child doesn't record it either.
5. Our Safeguarding Lead and our Church Leadership have agreed to us operating a Zoom meeting with young people.
6. We would like to ask your permission to do Zoom meetings involving your child. Please reply with the word **'Agreed'** in the heading to give your permission for them to be involved.
7. Children need to be fully dressed. This is normal youth group clothes rather than pyjamas please.
8. Please consider the background. We would suggest setting them up with a wall/curtain behind them. This will mean no-one else will accidentally walk behind them.

9. Please encourage your child to use a name that we recognise. *The Rock* might be amusing, but they will probably be left in the Waiting Room. Similarly, *Dad's phone*. They can rename themselves very easily on Zoom.
10. Please encourage your child to leave their camera on, at least at the start, so we know who they are.
11. Please encourage your child to arrive on time. We will probably still find them, but it might take longer in the Waiting Room than they would like.
12. We have disabled screenshare and file share for participants for security reasons. For distraction reasons, we have disabled changing backgrounds. We can't disable filters, but if a young person is distracting with filters, we may turn off their camera for a while.
13. We are aware that being on Zoom can make young people very self-conscious. Do please encourage them that this is totally normal – everyone who is on the call, including the leaders, will face this battle. Few people love seeing themselves on Zoom or in the mirror, for that matter.
    a. We are happy that they turn off their camera after we know who it is. We'll DM them if we're not sure it really is them asking them to turn their camera on for a moment.
    b. **On some devices, you can also 'Hide Self View'. Click on the three dots at the top right of your picture. Click on 'Hide Self View'. Now others can see you, but you can't see yourself.**
    c. We will try very hard not to put them on the spot. Please talk to us if your child is particularly nervous about this or if they have a bad experience.

Coping with Zoom Fatigue

I am exhausted at the end of Thursdays when I've had two youth meetings on Zoom. Here are some learnings that I've made and read about that help avoid Zoom fatigue:

1. **If possible, use Speaker View.** As the Host/Co-host you can help this by Spotlighting the person speaking. Why does this help? First of all, it stops you worrying about what you look like as you stare at the tiny you on the screen and secondly, because otherwise your brain has to take in a large number of people who are very small and try to read them and it has to take in a large number of backgrounds (why doesn't my house look like that?). You never do this in your normal youth setting! Focussing on one person and one background is enough. Your brain is clever but give it a break. Go for speaker view.
2. **Split tasks between people.** If you're managing the people coming into the session, don't also be leading/speaking unless you can't avoid it. Include in that who's going to help those people who are struggling to join the meeting. We had one meeting where four people were doing this. Decide one person and leave it with them.
    a. **Include in this the task of welcoming people.** Remind leaders that you are expecting them to take part in this. Ask them beforehand to name names and say, 'Hi'. If they are not stepping up, maybe turning off your microphone will send other leaders a clear message. Rest your voice when you can. You may even need to walk away for a minute.
3. **Try not to multi-task.** Don't be answering emails etc at the same time. Focussing on that person on the screen who's talking is enough for now.
4. But **don't be afraid of zoning out** for a moment, let your eyes wander to the book/game shelf, put your dog/child on your lap, peel and eat an orange or turn off your microphone and camera for a moment. Don't worry that you're not looking directly at the camera and look at the screen instead. Give yourself a break.
5. **Get up** and walk around if you can. If you're on a mobile this is easier. Don't plan back-to-back meetings if you can avoid them.
6. **Use the phone** rather than Zoom sometimes. Then you don't have to care what you look like and you'll only be able to imagine how beautifully-decorated and tidy someone else's house is.

7. **Plan a break.** Give young people five minutes to find the thing in the house that is most comfortable or most unusual. Share a 5-minute countdown timer on your screen, rest a while from Zoom and let everyone else do the same.
8. **Give people permission and go easy on each other, even in jest.** If someone turns their camera off for a moment or even leaves it on and vanishes, don't mention it when they come back.

Using Zoom with Instagram Live

If you want to benefit from the personal interaction on Zoom while also using the ubiquity of Instagram, why not go Live on Instagram and tell people you are about to start on Zoom? They get the notification and a reminder they can join in on Zoom. Alternatively, you can put your talk that you did on Zoom on your Instagram story or IGTV.

Do please let me know if you think I've missed something.

[with thanks to Tim Taylor, Youth Pastor at Highfield Church, Southampton for his ideas]

Dave Thornton www.churchyouthministry.com