

Structures and Routines for Virtual Advisories

Agreements

Use this opportunity to review advisory agreements that were established before the school closure. Consider what agreements should be added or edited to meet the needs of your advisory in the new learning at home environment.

Circle agreements:

- Speak from the heart
- What happens in the circle stays in the circle
- It's ok to pass
- Only the person with the talking piece can talk

Possible online agreements (adapted from Annie O'Shaughnessy)

- Be fully present. Focus on “single tasking” instead of “multitasking” (checking email, texting, Snapchatting, web surfing, etc.)
- No audio or video recording, screenshots or pictures of the circle/participants
- No online posts about what was said in the circle
- If possible, find a private space, inside or outside of your house; other people should not be around
- Make sure you're ok with the background people will see
- Video Feature: It's ok to turn off your video function if you don't wish to be seen

[Ethos](#) - another resource to consider when creating agreements (or ethos)

Creating a Virtual Circle

Young people are craving connections and the ability to be in community with their peers. It can be awkward to have to unmute yourself during an online advisory/class and having a circle order planned out can encourage more participation and equity of voice.

Ideas for creating a virtual circle:

- Establish a talking order and post it in the chat box. This creates an order for sharing AND remains available for all to see. You can also include the idea of virtually passing a topic piece during your circle.
- [Slide with circle of names](#)
- **WHY create a virtual circle:**
 - To begin each session
 - To establish equity
 - To include all voices

- To provide focus
- To share responsibility and accountability

Openings:

- Start with a **song of the day** - everyone can listen as they join and when the song ends, advisory can officially begin. Have different students take the lead on choosing the daily song.
- Start with a powerful quote or poem.
- Begin with a mindful moment.
 - [Harnessing the Four Elements](#)
 - Two Feet, One Breath by [Annie O'Shaughnessy](#) - *This is our absolute favorite (and easiest)*

Two Feet–One Breath: A technique for bringing our best self to every interaction we have and every task we attempt to accomplish. It decreases mistakes, misunderstandings and lost phones!



Step 1:

Stop what you are doing.
Bring awareness to your two feet on the ground.



Step 2:

Take one breath.
On the inhale check in kindly with what you are feeling in your body.
On the outbreath let go of what you think you know.

From [Circle Keeper Resource](#) by Annie O'Shaughnessy

Share Questions

Creating space for people to share with one another is critical. Choosing one or two questions to offer in the “virtual circle” supports the inclusion of all advisory members and encourages empathy building.

Share Questions (Examples)

- What do you miss most about school?
- What is hardest about the closure?
- What has been reassuring this week?
- What has it been like to try to learn from home?
- How do you know when you're being supported?
- What is a question you wish someone would ask you today?
- What question would you like to have the answer to?
- What subject would you like to be an expert on?
- Describe one thing that gives you joy.
- What is one way that you've made someone else happy?
- What do you want to do after physical distancing?

- What are you most proud of?
- What's your passion? If you don't have one, what are you curious about?
- How do you feel about your name? Is there a story behind why you were given it?
- What gives you hope?
- What change would you like to see in your community? What can you do to promote that change?

Fun, Community Building Activities

We can connect, build community and learn a lot about each other through play. These activities are a source of energy and culture building - giving the group opportunities to build understanding and familiarity.

Fun/Community Building Activities (examples)

- **Two Truths and a Lie:** Tell your advisory three things about yourself - two of which are true and one of which is a lie. Afterwards, your peers try to guess which was the lie. You might choose to tell three everyday facts or three more unusual things - but remember - only one of them should be a lie.
- **Count to 20:** The idea is for the group to count to twenty, one person saying one number at a time. Anybody can start the count. Then a different person says the next number - but if two or more people happen to speak at the same time, counting must start again from the beginning. It is possible to get to twenty if everybody really concentrates - but try and be relaxed as well.
- **Alphabet Conversation:** Have a conversation where each sentence begins with the next letter of the alphabet. This may seem difficult at first, but improves with practice. If you get stuck, you can also use sounds to start a sentence, for example 'Mmmm' or 'tut-tut'. Here is an example:
A: Anyone seen my cat?
B: Black one, with funny eyes?
C: Can't say I remember.
D: Don't tell me you've forgotten what it looks like?
E: Every cat looks the same to me.
F: Fortunately, I found one yesterday
G: Gee, that's great!
You could also try beginning somewhere in the middle of the alphabet. Then when you reach 'Z', return to 'A' until you arrive back where you started. Try setting the scene or location before you start.
- **PEOPLE IN MY LIFE (1-2 minutes per person):** It goes like this - Ask each person in the group take a minute to tell about the person in his or her life who has had the most positive influence. Tell participants that it's not necessary to name this influential person, but please

to share briefly how and why the person influenced their lives. Best time to play: This activity works best once the group has had a chance to get to know each other. It is a good choice because it allows participants to decide how much they want to share with the group.

- **Additional** [Virtual Advisory Community Building Ideas](#)

Closing

Having a routine to close advisory helps create consistency for youth. This also signals the end of the advisory and allows for everyone to experience closure.

Closing (examples):

Appreciation, Apology, Aha (this idea has been adapted from [this resource](#))

As a quick, daily closing activity, participants, in the virtual circle share, an appreciation of one of their peers, an apology, or a light bulb moment. The facilitator models the activity by sharing and then passes it to the next person in the circle order created at the start of the advisory.

Rose, Bud and Thorn (this idea has been adapted from [this resource](#))

Participants take turns sharing one rose (something positive), one bud (something promising/reassuring) and one thorn (something hard/challenging/negative) each. The process takes about five minutes.

A Word

Use a prompt like: *a word to describe how you are feeling after advisory...* Have each participant share around the virtual circle.