



Virtual Family Health Forum (FHF) Guidance

Virtual Family Health Forums (FHF) provides Special Olympics Programs the opportunity to engage parents, families, and caregivers in educational and discussion-based sessions. This toolkit outlines recommendations for hosting a virtual FHF.

Purpose and Objectives

Supported by Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF), the FHF initiative is designed to engage the family members of people with intellectual disabilities (ID) in Special Olympics and offer an environment where parents and caregivers can gain direct access to health information, resources, and support. The objectives of the FHF initiative are to:

- Provide families of Special Olympics athletes with direct access to community leaders, health care professionals, and social service providers.
- Provide orientation to new families as to what Special Olympics is, the services provided through such initiatives as Healthy Athletes and Young Athletes, and other community-based programs for people with ID.
- Provide health care professionals, community leaders and social service providers with the opportunity to learn more about the challenges that athletes and their families face and explore ways to help facilitate better access to health care, education, and inclusive activities.
- Provide LCIF an opportunity to share information on their services, programs and products that are relevant to family members.

FHF can also be a great opportunity for Programs to build a foundation for or integrate with Healthy Athletes, Healthy Communities, Young Athletes, or Fitness programming.

Registration + Tracking

Below are suggested methods to register and track participants attending the virtual FHF. Select the best possible method for your Program.

1. **Excel:** Create an excel spreadsheet to collect participants information. When announcing the virtual FHF, request participants to email or call with the information (e.g., Name, contact email, name of athlete, if relevant, and if they are a current participant in Special Olympics). Then, manually add that information to the Excel spreadsheet. Alternatively, attach the spreadsheet to your event email announcement and have participants complete and return.
2. **Online Registration Tools and Forms:** For advance registration electronically, tools such as SmartSheet (Click [here](#) to see an example), Google Forms, and Survey Monkey can be used. Feel free to use other familiar systems not listed here. Creating an online form allows families to register directly for the event and provides the event host with a table of information for all registered participants.
3. **Chat Feature in Zoom:** If advance registration is not possible, participants' names can be collected through the Chat feature in Zoom during the session. For tracking actual number of attendees, Zoom will show the number of participants present.



Technology Systems

There are a variety of systems that can be used to host virtual FHF such as Zoom and possible social media extensions. Programs should select the best system for them.

Zoom

Zoom meetings are ideal for hosting interactive sessions where attendees can participate in the discussion. Zoom has the capability for closed captioning, recording, annotation, and pre-registration. The host will need a license to host sessions on Zoom. Zoom meetings can also be livestreamed on Facebook, YouTube, and more. Breakout rooms and polling are also great features to use for FHF. Find more information about Zoom features and tips below:

- [Breakout Rooms](#)
- [Polling](#)
- [Registration](#)
- [Managing Participants](#)
- [Best Practices](#)

Safety and Security

To ensure the safety and security of your event:

- Consider having participants register via the recommendations above.
- Use a new meeting ID instead of your Personal Meeting ID (PMI) to schedule meetings
- Add a password to Zoom Meetings (see screenshot to right).
- Use the waiting room function.
- Have a separate person, that's not the main speaker, on the call to manage participants and chat.

The screenshot shows the 'Schedule Meeting' window in Zoom. The 'Topic' field is set to 'Online FHF: Online Meeting'. The start time is 'Thu April 2, 2020' at '11:00 AM'. The duration is '1 hour' and '0 minute'. The 'Recurring meeting' checkbox is unchecked. The 'Time Zone' is set to 'Pacific Time (US and Canada)'. The 'Meeting ID' section has 'YES' selected for 'Generate Automatically' and 'NO' for 'Personal Meeting ID'. The 'Password' section is highlighted with a red box, showing the 'Require meeting password' checkbox is unchecked. The 'Video' section has 'Host' set to 'On' and 'Participants' set to 'Off'. The 'Audio' section has 'Telephone and Computer Audio' selected. The 'Calendar' section has 'Outlook' selected. The 'Advanced Options' section is collapsed. The 'Schedule' button is highlighted in blue.

Other Systems Similar to Zoom

- [GoToMeeting](#)
- [Google Meet](#)
- [Microsoft Teams](#)

Social Media Platforms

Using social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram may be appealing for hosting virtual FHF. It can be an easier way to get in touch with a broader audience. Through Facebook Live, you can broadcast from a profile, page, group, or event using the Facebook app. Through Instagram, you can broadcast from a profile.

While these options may make it easy to get in touch with an audience, hosts are unable to share their screen while livestreaming from Facebook and/or Instagram. Additionally, it can be challenging to have an interactive session where questions or discussion can be held via social media platforms. Facebook provides an option to livestream a Zoom meeting or webinar. More families may be reached by sharing the Zoom meeting through Facebook groups! To learn more about this option, click [here](#).

Important Notes and Support

Create a Virtual FHF Experience

Plan a 1 hour 30-minute event focused on your families' needs. Incorporate your health topic throughout and include a Q&A session for interaction.

**Use the Chat for Engagement**

Encourage participants to use the chat for introductions, sharing ideas, and asking questions. Check that the chat is active before starting your Forum.

Pacing is Key

Keep presentations focused and monitor timing to ensure the event ends on schedule. Allow time for discussion and Q&A.

Partnerships and Collaboration

FHFs are an opportunity to engage partners in the community who can serve as resources for people with intellectual disabilities to access key health, educational and social services. Hosting a virtual FHF can open access to new partners and speakers who may be in different locations and unable to attend in person.

Support and Guidance

If you have any questions related to the implementation of your FHF, please contact your Regional Health Manager.