8 Steps to Delivering NFI Programs Virtually… and Successfully!

24:7 DAD

24:7 DAD KEY BEHAVIORS WORKSHOP

Inside Out DAD

UNDERSTANDING DAD ™ An Awareness & Communication Program *for Moms*

1 Choose a virtual meeting system.

Commonly used: Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, GoToMeeting/GoToWebinar. Choose a system that balances your needs/the organization's needs (e.g. cost of a system) and the ability of program participants to use it. Get input from the participants who will or are enrolled in the program (e.g. their experience with different systems, how they'll access/log into virtual sessions, and the best time of day for them to participate). Complete the system's tutorials to thoroughly understand its functionality.

Tip! { *Ensure the selected system can accommodate the session lengths that you plan to offer. Some free systems only allow 45-minute meetings.* }

2 Identify the primary facilitator.

Use a co-facilitator whenever possible and to ensure that virtual sessions can continue if the primary facilitator loses connection. Identify staff who can provide help to participants if they experience a problem using the technology platform, such as difficulty logging in, hearing or seeing facilitators or other participants, etc. (The facilitator/facilitation team might have to provide this assistance.)

3 Prepare ahead of time to deliver the program virtually instead of in person.

➢ Thoroughly review the program's content to identify modifications for delivering in a virtual environment instead of in person.

➢ Create slides or images to share on screen to keep participants engaged. Use icebreakers to engage participants from the start.

➢ The facilitator/facilitation team should practice delivering sessions, including turning on the camera and sharing screens.

➢ Consider using "teach-backs" in which co-workers participate as program participants during practice sessions. After these sessions, ask co-workers to provide feedback to the facilitator/ facilitation team. Record these sessions so facilitators can look for ways to improve and supervisors can review them for coaching purposes.

4 Document group input, virtually. Options:

➢ The facilitator/facilitation team uses a virtual "whiteboard," or other similar function in your meeting system, as the flip chart or whiteboard the facilitator/facilitation team would normally use. The participants will be able to see the entry of their responses.

➢ The facilitator/facilitation team shares his or her screen, then types participants' responses into a document (e.g. Microsoft Word) so that the participants can see their responses.

➢ The facilitator/facilitation team sets up a flip chart or whiteboard beside or behind them so that the participants can see the their responses and the facilitator writes them down. (Practice positioning the flip chart or whiteboard to ensure the participants can see it.)

➢ The facilitator/facilitation team writes participants' responses on a sheet of paper and then, after the facilitator records all the responses, reads the responses to the participants.

5 **Equip participants with handbooks.**

Tip! { *If you haven't already given participants the program handbook, order them individually from NFI and have them shipped to the participants' home addresses.* }

6 **Tell participants the rules for participation in virtual sessions and how to use the technology platform to participate fully.**

➤ Rules should include when they should engage and disengage their webcam/video, when to mute or unmute themselves, when to use question and chat functions, eliminating as many distractions in their home/location as possible, how to protect their privacy/safety, and who on staff can help them if they experience a problem with the technology platform.

➤ Hold a brief introductory virtual meeting to show participants how to use the technology platform and its participant "control panel." If you can't hold such a meeting, include enough time at the start of the first session to do this. Cover materials and supplies (e.g. pens) that participants will need to complete program activities.

7 **Choose the days and times for your sessions (ideally the same each week) and email participants the information and link to access the meeting.**

Tip! { *Send a calendar invite for the session day/time (e.g. using Google Calendar) and include the virtual meeting link in the invitation. Create a meeting invitation to recur for the number of weeks you will meet to complete the program (e.g. 12 weeks).* }

8 **Host virtual sessions.**

➤ The facilitator/facilitation team should log in early to start the meeting so that when participants join the facilitator can place them into the "meeting room" rather than a "waiting area," which could cause confusion.

➤ Eliminate feedback and background noise by asking participants to mute their line when only the primary facilitator is speaking. (Depending on the system, the facilitator/facilitation team may also be able to mute participants.)

➤ Be respectful of everyone's schedule and end the sessions on time.

➤ During sessions the primary facilitator should note anything that ran smoothly or poorly. The co-facilitator should do the same. The facilitation team should debrief after the session to identify areas for improvement. It's ideal to record sessions. (If required, ensure that you get participants' written approval prior to recording them.) Facilitators can review their performance to spot ways to improve. Supervisors can also review recordings for coaching purposes.