COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR UNIT

GSMC University of Scouting

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LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT SOLUTION?

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SORRY – THERE IS NO PERFECT SOLUTION!

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Why is there no perfect solution?

◦ Not every family has access to the internet

◦ Not all scouts have phones or have access to a computer

◦ Using apps & computers is hard for many

◦ So many platforms available for communicating:
  ◦ Phone (land line, IOS or Android)
  ◦ PC or Mac
  ◦ iPad or other

◦ Whatever software you use, it's best to select one or two accessible on all platforms

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Whatever solution you choose…

◦ You should consider multiple apps/programs to get maximum coverage but keep it to a minimum

◦ You will need to train everyone
  ◦ Don't assume scouts can teach their parents or that the parent can teach the scout
  ◦ Recommend you have several meetings to help parents set up whatever communication software you select

◦ Setup standards for online behavior

◦ Teach them how to mute and unmute their sound

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Why not just use the phone?

◦ You must call parent first and ask to speak to their scout

◦ Time consuming even if you have a calling tree

◦ Nothing is in writing for them to reference after the call is over and you can only hope they took good notes

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OPTIONS

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Phones & Texting

◦ Scouts & parents use all the time
◦ Great for quick one on one, but…
   ◦ Not a great way to distribute a lot of information at one time
   ◦ Not easy to set up a distribution list for use
   ◦ Hard to see if someone has been left off a distribution list or not copied
◦ Two deep leadership protocols apply
   ◦ Parents must be copied on all communications with your scout
   ◦ If a scout replies to you without including his/her parent(s), your reply should include the parents.

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The Pros & Cons of Email

Pros

◦ Available on phone or PC

◦ Easiest way to get information out

◦ Somewhat easy to read & referenced back to by parent or scout

◦ Can include attachments (forms to register, etc.)

◦ Can set up distribution lists so you don't miss someone when communicating

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The Pros & Cons of Email

Cons

◦ Scouts don't like to use email

◦ Scouts don't usually check their email regularly (some parents either)

◦ Messages can get lost in the flood of "regular" emails, and most people are not familiar with good "search" techniques

◦ Same rules apply for email as with text messages – you must include parent on any emails to your scout (that's really not a con)

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Popular Programs & Apps

◦ Zoom

◦ Microsoft Teams

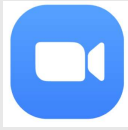◦ Whatsapp

◦ Skype

◦ Google Duo

◦ Marco Polo

◦ Slack

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Zoom

◦ Is only a video conferencing application but is easy to use

◦ Available on all platforms.

◦ EVERYONE MUST download the app to use, on EVERY DEVICE you use, meaning you MUST set up an account BUT IT'S FREE!

◦ 40 minute time limit unless the organizer has the professional version

◦ If you don't have the professional version, no worries. When you are bumped off at 40 minutes, send out a new invite.

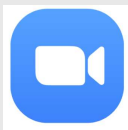◦ Click on the invite link to join on PC, Mac, iPad or iPhone/Android

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Zoom continued

◦ App usage is free (for now)

◦ Up to 100 people at a time

◦ Sessions can be recorded and shared

◦ Chat feature to ask questions so you are not interrupting the speaker

◦ Host can mute and unmute everyone

◦ For groups larger than 4, ask scouts to mute their microphones to prevent "crosstalk" or as the host, you can mute everyone

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Zoom continued

◦ The host can do "on the fly" surveys while meetings are going on

◦ Teach your scouts Zoom etiquette, set standards for your unit

◦ If you need to distribute forms or other information, you will have to use another application like email, text, etc.

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Microsoft Teams

◦ Free app
  ◦ 45 minute limit per session
  ◦ Unlimited chat
  ◦ Up to 100 people can use
  ◦ 10 GB of free cloud storage
◦ Keeps communications in teams, chat groups, threads & folders
◦ Can create folders to drop in documents
◦ Can record your session

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Microsoft Teams

◦ Can share files with Word, Excel, etc.
◦ Can draw, sketch & write on a shared digital canvas during meetings
◦ Customize your virtual background so everyone sits in a digitally shared background, making it feel like you are all in the same room (I recommend this whatever app you use)
◦ Can plan and schedule your meetings in advance
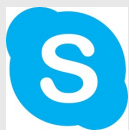◦ Can integrate with other apps such as Zoom

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Whatsapp

◦ Message friends and family for free using internet first, not data for communicating

◦ Group Chat up to 256 people

◦ Can set up multiple chat groups, setup is easy

◦ Can use on any device you prefer but remember functionality is different from device to device

◦ Picture quality is not the best but is OK

◦ Can share files

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Skype

◦ Audio & HD video calling

◦ Call recording with live subtitles

◦ Smart messaging (to get someone's attention)

◦ Screen sharing available

◦ Can call phones or devices

◦ Can have private conversations (follow scouting guidelines)

◦ Had issues at one time but seems to have fixed them

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Google Duo

◦ Installed with Google app

◦ Better quality

◦ Custom groups

◦ Up to 8 on a conference

◦ Free, no time restrictions

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"Other" Apps

◦ Google Hangouts (like Facetime but is Android version)

◦ Google Meet

◦ Facetime

◦ Trello (more for business, has a "task list" you move from one list to another

◦ Houseparty (kids already familiar with but can play games)

◦ UberConference (up to 10 people)

◦ Workspace by Facebook (looks like a Facebook feed but is more for business)

◦ Snapchat

◦ GroupMe

◦ ClassDojo

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MY RECOMMENDATIONS

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Marco Polo

Marco Polo

◦ Simplest app to use for communicating

◦ All video, no text

◦ Most youth are already familiar with this app and have it on their phone or computer

◦ Easy set up for multiple chat groups

◦ Send video chats on your own time

◦ Or you can do "live" chats

◦ Scout/parent can watch when it's convenient for them because it stays until you delete, unlike Snapchat which when viewed is deleted

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Marco Polo Continued

◦ Simplest app for young scouts and folks not comfortable with technology

◦ Just about any age scout/parent can use regardless of tech skills

◦ Don't assume everyone knows how to use it even if they "use" it

◦ Teach them how to use it for your unit, make it a meeting or two

◦ You should teach your unit to turn on notifications so scouts and parents are alerted to a new video message from you

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Marco Polo Leader Tips

◦ Set your chat groups up in advance for live chats

◦ Set up separate chat groups
  ◦ One for parents only
  ◦ One for parents & scout
  ◦ Other sub-groups as needed such as leadership

◦ Plan what to say before starting your video so you don't ramble on. Use a cheat sheet to keep you from rambling

◦ Keep your video chats short - 2 minutes and under.

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Slack

◦ Can be used across all platforms: IOS, Android, PC, Mac, etc.

◦ Think of email but just for your group

◦ Works through dedicated channels and channels are threaded

◦ Must be invited by "owner" to be in group (private or open). You want to set yours up as private – you are the owner and will invite all scouts and parents to join and you can assign additional "administrators" if you wish - which you should

◦ High school students are most likely familiar with it all ready

◦ Can do surveys and other nice features

◦ Can attach documents

◦ Can access conferencing apps such as Zoom or Teams within the Slack app

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Slack

◦ Free

◦ Works seamlessly on phone, PC, Mac or iPad

◦ Utilizes Workspaces, channels & threads

◦ Set up channels in advance and pre-load email addresses into your channels so you don't have to do it each time. Add new as needed, delete as needed

◦ Can send individual messages or can send group messages.

◦ Anyone can send messages within the app

◦ No limits to number participating

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Slack Features

◦ Channels-to organize your space for conversations, folders, tools and people

◦ Can connect with other SLACK teams (i.e. other units in your district)

◦ Messaging is convenient

◦ Voice and video calls

◦ App integration such as Zoom or Teams

◦ File Sharing is easy

◦ Search within the app is easy

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Apps that can interface with SLACK

◦ Zoom

◦ Simple Poll

◦ Dropbox

◦ Google Chrome

◦ OneDrive

◦ Gmail

◦ Outlook

◦ Survey Monkey

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Links to check out

- https://slack.com/resources/slack-101?from=home&utm_medium=promo
- https://www.marcopolo.me/
- https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/teams-for-home
- https://zoom.us/
- https://www.skype.com/en/

- For great resource for training or understanding an application go to "YouTube" for short training videos.

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Thank you for attending today!

To receive a copy of this PowerPoint Presentation or if you have questions please contact Tamsin Miller at:

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