



# DIGITAL EVENTS

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FOR

# LGBTQIA+ YOUTH

**MINUS18**



## **MINUS18** CHAMPIONS FOR LGBTQIA+ YOUTH

Australia's charity for LGBTQIA+ youth,  
changing lives through events, education  
and campaigns.

**MINUS18.ORG.AU**

**f @ MINUS18YOUTH**



Our office is located on the land of the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung people, Australia's First People and Traditional Custodians. This always was and always will be Aboriginal land.



Our work wouldn't be possible if not for the tireless activism from the LGBTQIA+ heroes who have come before us. Their advocacy and protests have pathed the way for Minus18 — we stand on the shoulders of giants.



# DIGITAL EVENTS FOR LGBTQIA+ YOUTH

## **SURVEY AND GUIDE**

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## INTRODUCTION

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Since the global outbreak of COVID-19, organisations have looked towards hosting digital events as a way of keeping our community connected.

During this time, we've learnt that there is just as much planning and effort that goes into putting on a seamless, interactive digital event, as there is for a located one.

This guide will give you an insight into how we've approached online events at Minus18; our process and considerations, as well as what our young people shared that they are looking for.

We began our venture into digital events by asking young people what they want to see and experience online, as well as how they're feeling amidst the pandemic.

We put together a survey and circulated it to our entire youth community via our social media platforms and email channels. Young people were given 1 week to complete it, and the results have entirely shaped our digital event strategies and programming moving forward. We hope that these insights can help you and your organisation too!

# YOUTH SURVEY

## ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

**244**

**YOUNG PEOPLE COMPLETED  
THE DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT  
SURVEY.**

**12 - 19**

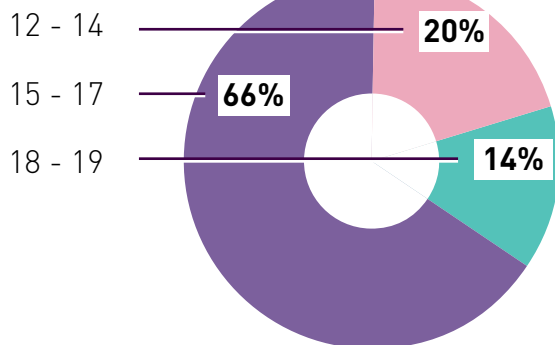
**YEARS OLD**

**THE AGE RANGE OF  
PARTICIPANTS.**

**21%**

**FROM REGIONAL OR RURAL  
AREAS OF AUSTRALIA.**

### AGE RANGE



### LGBTQIA+ IDENTITIES

Bisexual	32%
Queer	31%
Lesbian	25%
Nonbinary	25%
Pansexual	20%
Trans	20%
Asexual / Aromantic	12%
Unsure / Questioning	13%
Gay	12%
Intersex	1%
Straight	1%

### LOCATION

Victoria	54%
NSW	30%
South Australia	7%
ACT	2%
Queensland	2%
Tasmania	1%
Northern Territory	1%
Western Australia	1%

### INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES

Neurodiverse	14%
Person of Faith	10%
Person with a Disability	9%
Person of Colour	8%
Culturally, Linguistically Diverse	8%
Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander	3%

# THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Young people were given the option to select words that best describe how they were feeling amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. They were able to select more than one option.

**76% FELT**

**LONELY**

**64% FELT**

**BORED**

**38% FELT**

**WORRIED**

**56% FELT**

**STRESSED**

**7% FELT**

**NO DIFFERENT**

## OTHER OPTIONS INCLUDED

Anxious, unmotivated, left-out, tired, depressed, restless and frustrated.

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**89%**

**SAID THEY'VE FELT LESS SOCIALLY CONNECTED  
SINCE THE IMPACT OF COVID-19**

## HOW CAN WE SOLVE THIS?

89%

**HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN  
ANY LGBTQIA+ ONLINE SOCIAL  
PROGRAMS OR EVENT.**

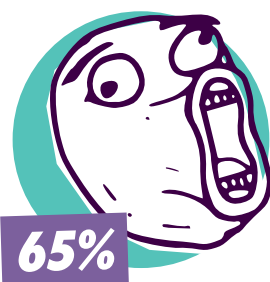
100%

**WANT TO SEE MORE ONLINE  
PROGRAMS AND EVENTS FOR  
LGBTQIA+ YOUNG PEOPLE.**

### THEIR SOLUTIONS



**WANT ONLINE  
SOCIAL EVENTS**



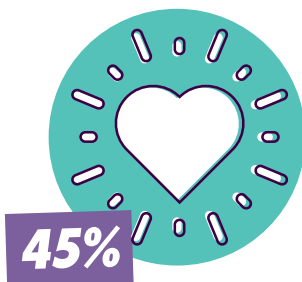
65%

**WANT MEMES AND  
ENTERTAINING CONTENT**



54%

**WANT WORKSHOPS  
AND LEARNING GROUPS**



**WANT WELLBEING  
INFORMATION & SUPPORT**



40%

**WANT FACEBOOK  
GROUP FACILITATION**

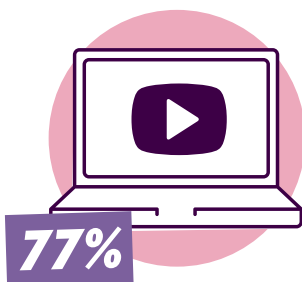
#### **OTHER IDEAS INCLUDED:**

**MUSIC PLAYLISTS  
Q&A LIVESTREAMS  
CHATROOMS  
ONLINE GAMES**



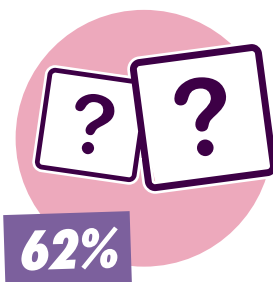
# TYPES OF DIGITAL EVENTS

There are a variety of different types of events that young people desire.  
Here's what they selected.



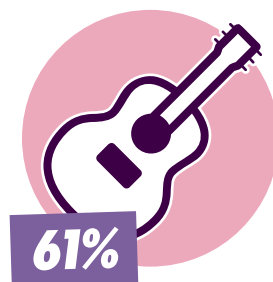
## MOVIE OR TV WATCHING PARTY

An LGBTQIA+ themed movie for everyone to watch together.



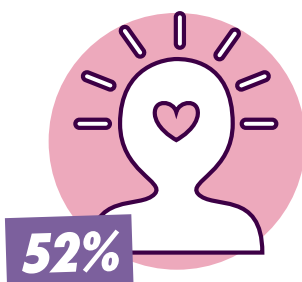
## INTERACTIVE TRIVIA EVENT

Create the questions and think of creative prizes.



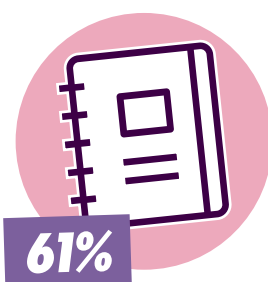
## LIVE MUSIC EVENT

Collaborate with a musician to stream their live music.



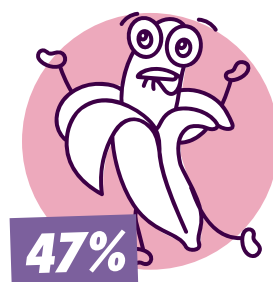
## DE-STRESS WORKSHOP

Share practical techniques to reduce stress and maintain wellbeing.



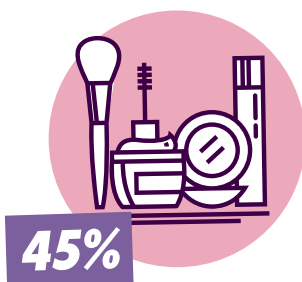
## WRITING WORKSHOP

Collaborate with a writer to share tips for writing and journaling at home.



## DRAWING TUTORIALS

Collaborate with an artist to learn to draw together.



## MAKEUP GUIDES AND TUTORIALS

Collaborate with a makeup artist to learn everyday or drag techniques.



## LOUNGE ROOM DANCE PARTY

Collaborate with a DJ or musician to stream a dance party.

## OTHER IDEAS INCLUDED:

FITNESS SESSION  
GROUP YOGA  
TABLE TOP GAMING  
ROLE PLAYING GAMES  
DISCUSSION GROUPS  
FASHION TIPS  
LIP SYNC BATTLE  
FRIENDSHIP FACILIATION  
LGBTQIA+ HISTORY

# HOSTING DIGITAL EVENTS

## A GUIDE

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## WHY HOST DIGITAL EVENTS?

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### ACCESSIBILITY

There are a number of reasons why a young person might not be able to attend a located event; they may have be living with a disability that makes it difficult or impossible to attend, they may not be 'out', they may struggle with anxiety or they might be unable to get there. Whatever the reason, hosting digital events allows you to include a broader range of people by removing the barriers they face in connecting with other LGBTQIA+ young people and services.

### CONNECTION

Digital events keep young people connected. Being a young person (and an LGBTQIA+ one at that) can feel extremely isolating... when you add a global pandemic and social distancing laws, young people can feel even further away. Digital events play a crucial role in connecting young people who are stuck inside feeling alone.

### DIFFERENT APPROACH

Digital events make you think outside the box. As a service or organisation, you may have a standard approach to coordinating all of your located events and programs. Online events can be executed on a number of platforms in many different ways so there's more room for experimentation and creativity. It's a chance to explore doing things differently!





## STEP 1

# PROGRAM YOUR EVENT

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### EVENT PURPOSE

Begin by deciding on the purpose of your event, and what you would like your audience to leave with. Your audience will have its own unique desires, and where possible, you should consult with them. Of the 244 LGBTQIA+ young people we surveyed, they preferenced the following event styles:

- 92% Social Connection:** Programming that connect them with their peers.
- 65% Entertainment:** Programming that is funny, lighthearted, and entertaining.
- 54% Learning Skills:** Programming that centres around group discussions, activities, and learning.
- 45% Support and Wellbeing:** Programming that centres wellbeing, mental health and emotional support.

If you're hosting a series of events, you might consider having a mix of different purposes to cater to different audiences and needs.

### EVENT TYPE

Your events could be creative, sporty, educational, uplifting or purely just for fun. Be creative and consult with your own audience where possible about the types of events they would like to see.

You can find a number of different LGBTQIA+ youth preferred event types on Page 7.

### COLLABORATORS

Consider whether there are LGBTQIA+ artists, facilitators and community members who you could work with to host your event together. Collaboration is a great way to elevate the voices of others within the community, including People of Colour, People of Faith and People with Disabilities.

### Finding a Collaborator

Find the collaborator that suits the event you want to run. If you're wanting to host a writing workshop, find a local LGBTQIA+ writer, or source a popular drag performer or DJ for a dance party event.

The most important factor is to collaborate with people and organisations that are relevant to youth audiences. A corporate style event with a dry speaker won't interest most young people!

### Account Access

Platforms like Zoom and Facebook are the easiest to use when it comes to account access, as you can provide controls to your collaborators, without having to hand over passwords. Instagram has very limited controls, and unless you go live with another account, you have to provide log in details and trust your collaborators with full access to your Instagram account. Whatever you choose to do, provide clear instructions on how they'll have access and what they need to do in order to go live with the event.

### Language Guide

Just like with located events, being clear about the words and topics your collaborators can and cannot say, and what sort of tone they need for your event sets clear expectations. Put together a simple language guide to instruct them on what these expectations are and to help guide them to successfully facilitate your event.

# ACCESS & INCLUSION

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## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

Consider how you can include and elevate the voices of First Nations peoples through the programming and promotion of your event.

### Welcome to / Acknowledgement of Country

Whether in person or online, paying respect to traditional land owners should be at the start of every event. It is a sign of respect and an opportunity to invite young people to understand, reflect on and recognise Aboriginal history and culture.

## DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

Many platforms, like Zoom and Google Hangouts, have computer-generated closed caption options, which can be useful for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Consider other access needs that might be appropriate to your event, like whether engaging Auslan interpreters is suitable.

## PEOPLE OF COLOUR

People of Colour are often overlooked, underpaid and under-represented within events. Consider opportunities within your programming to elevate and include artists, facilitators and participants with diverse cultural backgrounds, identities and experiences.

## LGBTQIA+ YOUTH WHO ARE NOT 'OUT'

Not everyone in your audience may be 'out' or comfortable with how they identify. Digital events are a great way to connect with young people who might not have the confidence or ability to attend a located LGBTQIA+ event. Many of them may not be 'out' to their families, and could be attending your digital event in private. Consider hosting an event that is not LGBTQIA+ specific, but is still facilitated by a queer-identifying person.

## RURAL AND REGIONAL

Online events create a unique opportunity to connect with and include rural and regional young people and performers.

- ☐ Consider how you can scope out and feature the local queer talent in regional areas around Australia. This can boost their audience and create a sense of pride and representation for the youth in their region.
- ☐ Consider how you can promote your event to rural and regional youth services, they can share them with their young people and expand your audience!

## INTERNET ACCESS

The strength of an internet connection can vary across different pockets of Australia. Keep this in mind when programming your events. For example, a Netflix Watch Party might not be as easy to load (and afford) as an Instagram Live stream.

## AFFORDABILITY

A truly accessible event is a free one! Not every young person has the money to cover a ticket entry fee, and where possible, ensuring your event is free will support participation.

If your event requires a ticket fee, consider how you can provide discounts and complimentary tickets to those who can't afford them.

## STEP 3

# SELECT YOUR PLATFORM(S)

## PLATFORMS

Choosing the right online platform is key! Consider how young people will access your event, how the platform can help boost your event's engagement, as well as ensuring you have the tools you need to maintain the safety and privacy of your audience.

Considerations when choosing a platform:

- ☐ What is happening at the event, and what functions do you need? (i.e. playing music, posting a recorded session afterwards)
- ☐ How do you want your audience to engage with your event? Via comments or video.
- ☐ How do you want your audience to interact with each other and the presenter?
- ☐ How long will your event go for?
- ☐ If you're hosting the event with a collaborator, what online accounts and access do they need to run the session?

## AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

In our youth engagement survey, participants were asked to select which social media platforms they currently engage with.

**94%** Instagram

**42%** TikTok

**30%** Snapchat

**26%** Facebook

**17%** Twitter

Other suggestions provided by participants included: Tumblr, Discord & YouTube.

## PLATFORM FEATURES

Below is a feature summary of the top 4 most popular streaming platforms to help you decide which is right for your event.

	FOR EVENT ORGANISERS				FOR EVENT ATTENDEES				
	Simple Setup	Provides User Stats	Allows Session Recording	Time Restrictions	Viewable on Laptop	Viewable on Phone	Requires Account	Allows Group Text Chat	Allows Group Video Chat
<b>FACEBOOK</b>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>INSTAGRAM</b>	✓		✓	1 HOUR		✓	✓	✓	
<b>YOUTUBE</b>		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
<b>ZOOM</b>			✓	40 MINS*	✓	✓		✓	✓

\* Longer durations require paid account

## STEP 4

# SAFETY AND RISK

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### IDENTIFYING RISKS

Managing risks and youth safety can present its own unique challenges in the digital world. Some of these key challenges can include:

#### Inappropriate Attendees

Depending on the platform, you may need to consider additional steps to limit or control who can know about or access your event.

#### Inappropriate Comments

Attendees may be accessing your event anonymously or from an unidentifiable account. It's very easy to hide behind a keyboard, so you're more likely to see inappropriate comments at a digital event. They may be deliberately offensive, or they might just come from a lack of knowledge or understanding.

#### Break Aways and Private Conversations

If your event has break-out functions, you run the risk of attendees having separate, private conversations within the event that can be disruptive or unsafe.

#### Youth Anxiety

Just like at located events, young people can find LGBTQIA+ digital events of any nature overwhelming. Detecting and supporting this anxiety may be more difficult when you're not in the room with them.

### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

If the purpose of your event is to provide mental health and wellbeing support, ensure that this is provided by an appropriate, qualified person.

All events relating to LGBTQIA+ identity may bring up mental health challenges with participants. Consider what further resources and referrals you can share with them at the end of your event.

### WAYS TO COMBAT RISKS

#### Safety Message

Kick off your digital events by announcing or typing a safety message.

Example: This event is a safe space for LGBTQIA+ and questioning young people. Anyone who violates this by posting inappropriate or discriminatory content will be removed. Always practice online safety, and avoid adding strangers on social media. Contact the event moderator if something looks suss.

#### Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct formalises the rules of a digital event. Make one specific to the online space so your collaborators and attendees understand expectations.

#### Moderator

There needs to be a staff member supervising, and where possible and necessary, this should be someone who isn't hosting the event. The moderator should read every comment and respond where necessary. This person is responsible for removing guests and responding to problematic behaviour.

#### Have Support on Standby

In the case where a young person feels unsafe or overwhelmed, have a process in place to address the situation and provide immediate support for the young person. Where possible, this should be provided by a certified youth worker.

#### Child Safety

Organisations and individuals working with young people must adhere to the child safety standards and laws applicable to their state or territory. Ensure that you familiarise yourself and adhere to these standards before proceeding with your event.

## STEP 5

# PROMOTE AND HOST YOUR EVENT

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### PROMOTING YOUR EVENT

Promote your digital events as you would a located one. Be specific about what an attendee should expect, and how the session will run. This will help to alleviate any worry about the event, and support higher engagement.

### EVENT PROMOTION CHECKLIST

Things to include when promoting your digital event:

- ☐ Give your event a name that clearly articulates what it is.
- ☐ Provide the date and time of your event.
- ☐ Instructions for how a young person can sign up or access the event.
- ☐ A description on what the event is, who it is for, and what to expect.
- ☐ Information about what attendees need to bring (e.g. if it's a drawing tutorial, they might need a pen and paper, for a workout session, they might need a bottle of water).
- ☐ Information about accessibility features.
- ☐ A photo and bio of the people who will be facilitating the event. If you're working with collaborators from outside of your organisation, make sure you tag them.

### LAUNCH PROMOTION

Once your promotion is ready, launch it online via social media and your email lists, asking the young people that you are in contact with to share it with their friends.

### REGISTRATION

Registration can be useful for knowing who's attending, but it can deter people by adding an additional step or barrier to participation.

Consider what is best for your event. A platform like Eventbrite can streamline this process - and is free to use for events without a ticket cost.

### MEASURING SUCCESS

Ways to measure the success of your digital event:

- ☐ Track attendee numbers: during the event and those who view it later on.
- ☐ Track the interactions, comments and reactions during the event.
- ☐ Create a short youth feedback survey for attendees at the end of the event.



### LET'S DO THIS!

Whether you're looking to implement immediate events in the wake of COVID-19, or embed digital events into your annual calendar, we hope that this guide has helped spark ideas to get you started.

The focus is to keep LGBTQIA+ youth feeling supported and connected, no matter where they are. Good luck!





## WE'RE HERE FOR YOUTH

### HOW WE'RE ADAPTING OUR YOUTH PROGRAMS ONLINE AT MINUS18



#### DIGITAL YOUTH EVENTS

We'll continue to deliver life-affirming events for LGBTQIA+ young people online, even after social distancing requirements subside.

Our digital events will be hosted and promoted through our @minus18youth social media platforms.



#### LGBTQIA+ YOUTH WORKSHOPS

We've digitised our workshop offerings so we can connect with and empower more young people and pride groups around Australia.

Our interactive Queer Youth Leadership workshops build leadership, connection and youth empowerment.



#### MINUS18 TEENS

If your young people are looking for a space to engage with other LGBTQIA+ youth online, they can access the 'Minus18 Teens' private Facebook group.

This is a youth-only space that has daily posts and is moderated by Minus18 staff and volunteer crew.

**FIND OUT MORE AT [MINUS18.ORG.AU](https://minus18.org.au)**



## AND HERE TO HELP YOU



### BOOK LGBTQIA+ TRAINING

We deliver high impact LGBTQIA+ inclusion training to bring your workplace or team up to speed. Through building empathy and understanding, our workshops will provide you with the tools you need to create inclusive spaces.

Find out more [minus18.org.au](https://minus18.org.au)



### ORDER PRIDE MERCH

Minus18 resources and merchandise are the perfect way to show visible support for LGBTQIA+ people. We've got posters, booklets, toolkits and a whole lot of rainbows.

We provide discounts on all bulk orders for schools and workplaces, with 100% of the proceeds supporting LGBTQIA+ youth programs at Minus18.



### JOIN A CAMPAIGN

Get your workplace or friends together and host a rainbow event to raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Your efforts create a world where young people are safe, empowered and belong.

Learn how at [minus18.org.au](https://minus18.org.au)

## HOW TO DONATE

### MAKE A RECURRING DONATION

If you think we're doing great things, and want to see us do even GREATER things, sign up to donate monthly. This will ensure that Minus18 is around for another 20 years.

### MAKE A ONCE-OFF DONATION

Can't sign up to give monthly? That's OK! Once-off donations are wonderful too. Any donation above \$2 is tax-deductible as well.

### DONATE YOUR VOICE

If you don't have the ability to support financially, you can share our work. Sign up to our mailing list, or connect with us on social media, and tell your friends, colleagues and networks about who we are and what we do.

**All donations to Minus18 over \$2 are tax-deductible.**

**LEARN MORE AT [MINUS18.ORG.AU](https://minus18.org.au)**

**f i t MINUS18YOUTH**

