

# Guidelines for Creating Video Content

## THE BASICS

- **Audio Conditions** – Film in a quiet place, where you are not likely to be interrupted. Audio that is too quiet or is overpowered by background noise will cause viewers to drop off. Most smartphones can record decent audio if you are careful about your surroundings and keep the subject relatively close to the microphone.
- **Lighting** – At-home videos will not usually allow for the best lighting. However, there are things that can help.
  - Film in a bright room, in the shade outdoors, or under cloud cover. Avoid lighting that comes only from directly above.
  - Try to find a well-lit space so you and your props are illuminated well, but keep in mind that too bright can wash you out and create harsh shadows.
  - Do not shoot the video in front of a window unless it is a tinted window because this will create a silhouette.
  - Check for shadows from curtains and other objects. It is ok to have shadows in the background. Background shadows add to the dynamics of the video, but you don't want shadows on your face or props
- **Camera Orientation** – Film with landscape orientation (horizontal.) This will be most practical for viewing on all types of devices. If you are using your phone make sure you are recording in high resolution, see the settings on your phone.
  - However, shooting in landscape isn't possible, so it is ok to film vertically but be sure to project your voice because your phone's microphone will not be as exposed.
- **Composition** – Place your subject in the center of the frame, look directly into the camera
  - YOU and the activity are the focus so be sure that you and your props take up most of the shot.
  - Give yourself a bit of space around the frame because film will sometimes cut the edges off when they are played on different screens. Especially make sure you give yourself from head space at the top your screen.
  - You want to be the focus of your video. Keep your background simple, but since we are doing these at home it is ok if your background looks like your home.
  - Check that there isn't anything you don't want people to see such as messy wires, trash can, etc.
  - Add any personal touches that you think will enhance the video but that won't distract from you and your activity. Some examples may be a plant, books on a shelf, a piece of art on a plain wall.

- **Camera Angle** – Keep the camera just above your subject’s eye level, slightly angled down, which is flattering for most people.
- **Stabilize** – Use a tripod, or mount the camera to something stationary whenever possible, but don’t worry improvised methods are often just as effective.
  - If someone is shooting the video with you, limit the zooms. Only have them zoom into something when it is really needed and have them do the zooms pretty slowly because otherwise it can be a bit jarring for the viewer.
  - You can always do close ups after filming and they may be edited into the film (this definitely can happen if we have the proper time to edit the video)

### PLAN YOUR VIDEO

- Do practice shots. Try different places in your house or different set ups to see what works best. Film 10 – 20 seconds and see if you like the way it looks.
- Write a real script. Determine the beginning, middle and end to your story or activity.

### CONSIDER YOUR AUDIENCE

What information is most important to your viewer and what do you want to convey to them

### BE AUTHENTIC

Be sincere and direct and seek to inform rather than to persuade. An effective video will allow the audience to emotionally connect with our organization and mission which can drive engagement.

- It can be hard talking to just a camera. I imagine that I am running class in front of a group of well-behaved children and I talk to them.
- You don’t have to put on make-up, you are all beautiful just as you are! But if you are putting on makeup remember that you can put on more than you normally would. Stage make up is a bit heavy, but still reads as a typical look and not overdone...unless you decide to get artistic with magenta eyeshadow, blue lipstick or something like that.

### HAVE FUN!

