

Need to make your face-to-face classes virtual due to the COVID-19 virus? We have some tips to help. While this is a temporary solution to an unprecedented situation, we're here to help make this a smooth transition. You can continue to support the families in your community and prepare them for parenthood. They need you more now than ever, so remember—this doesn't have to be perfect. Just being there for them makes a big impact on their experience.

## Choose a Video Conferencing Service

First, choose your software for conducting a webinar. Consider how many participants would be on at one time, available features that enhance interactivity like chats and polls, ease of use, and whether you are seeking a free or paid service.

Some popular options include:

- Zoom
- Facebook Live
- Google+ Hangouts
- GoTo Webinar or WebEx
- Skype (check size limits)
- Livestream

## Next, choose what to use as a basis for your virtual class.

### Option 1: Use the InJoy Materials You Already Have

- Are you using the *Understanding Birth* eClass (comprehensive online childbirth class) or the *Understanding Birth* web app (with the book or on its own)? Assign students to review the material and watch videos on their own before the live webinar or virtual class. Use the virtual class as simply a live discussion to reinforce what your students learned on their own and answer their questions. Provide information from your hospital about any changing policies due to COVID-19, or show a live demonstration of a certain technique.
- Are you most comfortable using your own customized *Understanding Birth* PowerPoint, or are you teaching a class on a different topic with its own InJoy PowerPoint? You can use it if you have a digital license to show it online (if you'd like more information, contact InJoy). You can cut it down to use in your virtual class. Use caution when showing videos as they may have issues playing back smoothly in a webinar.

### Option 2: Use InJoy's Free Resources

Please enjoy these **FREE** resources made available during this time to complement your existing InJoy materials. They are all available in English & Spanish.

- **Online Understanding Birth LIVE** PowerPoint presentation that is condensed and optimized without videos for use in short, live-streamed webcasts during the pandemic crisis.
- **Online Birth Stories & Essentials** are videos that parents can watch on their own before or after your presentation. You can share this link with individual parents in your personal emails and communications with them.
- **Mother's Advocate.org**: REMINDER—InJoy partnered with Lamaze to develop this helpful website with videos and handouts all about healthy birth. You can share this free resource with your parents!

## Best Practices for Virtual Teaching

- Rehearse ahead of time.
- Consider using a headset or earphones to minimize background noise. Before you start class, do an audio test to be sure everyone can hear you.
- Use your camera—It's important that your class sees and connects with you (encourage your learners to use their cameras, but don't force the issue). Have good lighting and place yourself in an area that is distraction-free.
- Shorter is sometimes better—If possible, try to keep your live presentation to an hour or less.

## Create a Safe & Comfortable Learning Environment

- Suggest attendees are muted when not talking.
- Remind attendees to be themselves and respect others.
- Prevent “talk over.” Questions can be asked using the “chat” feature or the “raise your hand feature” (if it's available in your video conferencing software).
- Create a Facebook Group for parents to interact or encourage families to reach out to each other outside of class (if these options comply with the HIPAA regulations where you teach).
- Recognize the varied backgrounds, lifestyles, and experiences of your learners.
- Be authentic and relatable (it's ok to make mistakes or acknowledge this is new for you too).
- Let learners know right away what the goals and objectives are for the class and for that meeting.
- Ask students for their own suggestions on the best ways to keep in touch with you. This allows them to feel part of the process navigating this new learning environment.
- Ask students for real-time feedback. Is this working? What would they like to try instead? Be flexible and know that there's going to be some on-the-fly adjustments.

## Teaching Ideas

- Keep it simple! Right now, less is more—for you and your learners! Your learners have a lot on their minds, which means their cognitive load is high. Research shows that learning under these circumstances makes it difficult to remember a lot new information. Chunk it out into reasonable blocks of learning and adjust accordingly.
- Flip the class by sharing resources ahead of time, send out the *Understanding Birth* eClass or web app, or have them view the Injoy online birth stories (see above), share an article or two, or provide other educational resources that you can provide digitally.
- If your video conferencing software offers a “whiteboard” feature (this allows you to share a virtual whiteboard that you can annotate on and your class can see).
- If you have a large class, create different “rooms” for discussions and moderate (if your video conferencing software offers this feature).
- Use the polling and quiz features on your webinar software, or have attendees download Kahoot (or other polling app) and create a trivia game or live quizzes, etc. Be creative!
- Humor and storytelling are effective ways to teach adults and appealing to emotion helps with learning (and remembering) new information. Have fun!

**You can do this!** Share your experiences and teaching tips about your virtual classes on [InCommunity](#). This is a safe space for support with your colleagues and to share what's working and what isn't.