With the pandemic, many libraries are moving more and more programs into the online environment and they are likely here to stay! So, let’s take a look at some strategies for moving tween and teen book clubs online.

From *Pandemic Forces Programs to Move Online: Libraries Adapt Quickly to the Crisis* - Why the urgency? “Sure, we want to increase literacy and provide fun events,” says Angela Flock, Young Adult Coordinator for the Coeur d’Alene (Idaho) Public Library. “But I was more concerned about my teens’ mental health. Social interaction is super-important for a teen’s development. Also, for some of them, the library is a safe place away from the issues that they may be having at home. I wanted to continue giving them as much of that experience as possible.”
Planning!

- Who is your target audience?
- What is the book club’s purpose?
- Develop group guidelines
- How will you handle registrations?
Discord was started as a way to communicate while gaming but has evolved into use by other groups and communities. Set up your server where you have access to both text and voice. Discord would be a great place for messages and discussions in between virtual meetings.
Invitations and Communication

- Invite everyone!
- Already have an established book club? Ask those members to invite more.
- Publicize – Social Media, Regular Mail, Flyers, Personal invitations

Probably social media and personal invitations will have the best result.
Select books that are available in multiple formats and that have multiple copies available.

Be sure you read the book to make sure it meets any guidelines you have established before approving it to be used for the book club.

Project LIT Community— a grassroots network of book groups that aims to get students excited about reading by highlighting diverse, high-interest, culturally relevant books.

We Need Diverse Books – Our Story App:
OurStory is a book discovery tool that celebrates diversity and strives to include a wide array of titles with diverse content and by creators from marginalized communities. WNDB defines diversity as all diverse experiences, including but not limited to LGBTQIA, people of color, Native people, gender diversity, people with disabilities, and ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities.

Teen BookCloud is from Tumbleweed Press, which the State Library uses for TumbleBooks. Teen BookCloud targets teens grades 7-12 and provides an online collection of eBooks, enhanced novels, graphic novels, videos and audiobooks. It is free through August 31st. The username is motumbles and the password is trial.
Hold Your First Meeting

- Use the first 10-15 minutes as designated hangout time. A time to catch up with what everyone is doing.
- Will your book club read ahead and discuss or read together? A read-aloud would be a good choice if book availability is an issue.
- Hold discussion about the reading.
- Wrap up. Remind everyone of the next meeting.
Mystery Club?

- Thirteen Teen Mysteries
- Epic Reads YA Mystery Books list
Craft to Go Packets – members pick up at the library and share completed projects during weekly meetings.

Daily/Weekly Challenge – Discord would be good to use for this
- Post a picture reading
- Sign up for Libby or your library’s ebook/audiobook platform
- Share a book you are reading
Pandemic Forces Programs to Move Online: Libraries Adapt Quickly to the Crisis gives encouragement to move programs into the online environment;

- Talks about using the Discord platform, weekly teen clubs like Dungeons and Dragons and a videogame club
- Digital escape rooms
- Shift focus from quantity (participants) to quality

How to Run a Virtual Book Club with Middle Schoolers
- The author of this article uses the Zoom platform
- Provide for asynchronous participation, too – Not everyone can meet when it is convenient for the rest of the group

Tackling Copyright Concerns When Taking Storytime Online (and book clubs, too, when you read the stories online!)
- Looks at the four factors of fair use: purpose and character of the use, nature of the copyrighted work, the amount and substantiality of the portion taken, and the effect of use on the potential market.
- I’m not a lawyer, so I’m not making the call on this one!

Book Discussion Groups: Quick Start Guide from ALA
- Walks you through basic startup questions and best practices
A practical guide that takes a teen-centered approach to implementing a successful book-club, and contains tips on developing teen leaders, sample discussion prompters, checklists and reproducible worksheets, and innovative ideas that will attract and retain teen readers.