STREAMING AND RECORDING RECOMMENDATIONS

INTERNET
Check your internet bandwidth: This is a crucial step, which needs to be checked well in advance of the record to provision for high-quality recording. We recommend a minimum of 6 MBPS of upload and download speed. Look at the ping rate, the lower the number the better your connection. Please ask all other members of the family to discontinue the use of the internet while you are recording or streaming. This includes web browsing on phones or computers or televisions set to watch YouTube or Netflix. If available, using a hardwired connection will greatly improve your connection speed.

To check your internet connection speed, please run a test on one of the test sites listed below. If your bandwidth does not meet or exceed the minimum thresholds above, you should look for another location to record/stream from.

Internet test site option 1: https://www.speedtest.net/
Internet speed test site option 2: https://www.dslreports.com/speedtest

APPEARANCE
Start with the basics. Comb your hair, shave your face, apply your makeup, etc. Also, think strategically about your clothing. Wearing a really busy plaid or patterned outfit will make the viewers' eyes go numb. A plain, solid color will help bring out the best you. Do not wear white or black.

BACKGROUND
You want people focusing on your face, not on what's behind you. Many people like to be photographed in front of a bookshelf, but sometimes the "trinkets" on the shelf will cause distractions. Ideally, your background would be plain or simple with minimal distractions. Do not use a window as a background. If at all possible, a window should be in front of you to provide natural lighting.
ROOM
There is no one-size-fits-all solution to this as every environment is different with different factors that impact your stream quality and personality, including lighting, ambient noise, bandwidth, etc. Keep it simple: You need to be the focus of your stream; not an obscure painting or pile of cables behind you.

Start with lighting. Natural light is great. Open up your shades and let the natural light pour in, but don’t let all that light hit your back. We recommend having your largest light source either right in front of you or no more than 45 degrees away from directly in front of you. Face your brightest source of light (usually a window). It’ll look better for you and everyone else.

You can also use a Ring Light or desk lamp pointing at the wall in front of you. There should be no windows or lights behind you.

If possible, please use a room with carpeting and window treatments that do a good job of absorbing the sound. Add a blanket to the floor or to walls if you do not have a well-lit carpeted room. You may want to test several locations in your area before making a decision on where to stream/record.

RAISE YOUR CAMERA
There is one, and only one, acceptable camera angle: head-on and at eye level. Your table is almost certainly going to be lower than your face, and that means people are going to get an unflattering look up at you. Use a set of books, a stool, or a higher table to make sure your camera is at the same level as your eyes. You don’t want people to feel like they are looking up or down at you.
Do whatever you have to do to get your camera at eye level. Don’t get too close to the camera. Sit between 2 and 3 feet away from your laptop. (disclaimer - if you don’t have an external mic you may have to be a little closer). Remember to look directly at your camera lens while speaking. Sometimes it helps to affix a sticky note near the camera with a “Look Here” and “an arrow” pointing at the lens.

MICROPHONE
If you have a good quality USB mic use it. If not, you can use apple AirPods, or wired headphones with a Mic. The more echo in the room the more important it is to have an external mic.

PRACTICE
You can download the free version of Zoom and practice and record your webinar so that you really can tweak your presentation to make it as good as possible. Try a couple of short records from several different places to see and hear the difference in those rooms.

OPTIONAL GEAR
Ring Light
USB Desktop Mic