

The More We Get Together: Improving Interactivity and Community Building in Online Live Storytimes

The Problem

Many librarians and storytellers moved storytimes online at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic without knowledge of what works in that format. The sponsor **Claire Scott**, a former public and current school librarian, began weekly community storytimes and struggled with **interactivity** and **community building**, two elements crucial to in-person storytime.



The Setting

Weekly Zoom live storytimes with infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and their grownups. Attendees are predominantly queer and trans families.



The Methodology



- Attend public library storytimes for inspiration
- Test out new elements
- Solicit feedback through surveys
- Engage in regular brainstorming and feedback sessions with Capstone sponsor

Outcomes

- Guide for Live Online Storytimes for other practitioners
- Facebook group for grownups to connect outside of storytime
- Integration of several new elements to weekly storytime



Findings

- Adults wanted more opportunities to connect to each other
- Platform matters
- Unmute when possible
- Interactive dances and scavenger hunts are big hits

