**Green Flags Episode 1: Clear Safety Protocols**

**Audio transcript**

**♪ Slow pop rock plays ♪**

**Narrator:** Green Flags: tips by and for regional young people. Episode 1: clear safety protocols. In Morwell, on Gunai Kurnai land. Meet Catherine and Danni from the Youth Group Committee (YGC) and youth worker Kylie, from The Y’s Latrobe Youth Space. They moved all their youth-led social groups and activities online during lockdown. Many of the young people had never been in an online youth space before. This is what they learned about feeling safe online.

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**Kylie:** Making sure that everything has that privacy element for them, because I think that was, for our groups in the space, that was one of the biggest concerns for some, especially for Rainbow Group, a lot of some of the young people might not be out. Nobody can just enter a Zoom, you know, you have to actually become part of the membership of the group. We had questions and things like that. We had to have group rules. If you have someone in the house then they can’t just sit in on it without chatting with us first, because that’s other people’s privacy.

**Catherine:** It feels really exciting to join sort of just like a Wild West, non-regulated, you know, completely unmonitored or unsupervised space. And when you’re a young person, you’re like, “oh this will be so much fun!” But just to think twice about that, because it comes with the pros of like feeling really free and really independent. But on the con side, it can be quite dangerous, and if things do go wrong, or if you’re targeted or harassed, or you know, worst case scenario even stalked by somebody that, you know, that is the dark side of that.

I really recommend regional young people making sure that the spaces that you are joining have some sort of supervision. Some sort of questions when you join, some sort of checks and balances. I mean, it doesn’t have to be like, ‘nanny state’. But yeah, just making sure that there are some of those things because it will ultimately keep you safe and ensure that you can be part of that long term as well.

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**Catherine:** We built the Code of Conduct in the group with the young people. We had like a red flag system, that we utilised so that they can like, moderate each other, but it becomes a bit of a ‘joke’ so it’s not as intense and they don’t feel like they’re in trouble.

And at the start of every session, we just made sure that everybody, we went through that checklist of like, these are all of the basic guidelines, here’s what to do if you’re having a problem, and so on and so forth.

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**Danni:** Knowing the functions of what you’re using. So in case, you know, you are supervising, something’s getting a bit out of hand, you do have that option to mute or ask someone to leave. Letting the young people know, if you’re not comfortable being on camera, that’s completely fine. Turn it off, mute yourself, use the chat function, just know we’re always here for ya.

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**Kylie:** The Y are really strong about safeguarding, protecting and minimising risk. And I think the young people that we work with – that was our foremost focus. Just having all those connections in place and you know, mitigating risks.

Catherine: There was always those people that they could really resonate with and form those connections with on a deeper level as well, and feel supported.

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**Narrator:** Green Flags is part of YACVic’s [Learning From COVID-19 Series](https://www.yacvic.org.au/training-and-resources/covid-youth-work/). To see more stories like this, visit [YACVic.org.au/Green-Flags](http://YACVic.org.au/Green-Flags)