Getting Started with Empathy Spot

version 0.6.0

Table of Contents

Why use Empathy Spot?

If you're wondering at all about what an empathy exchange is or why you would want to participate in one, check out the first few sections of the NYCNVC Empathy Buddy Handbook. (The phrase it uses, "empathy buddy chat," is essentially another name for an empathy exchange.)
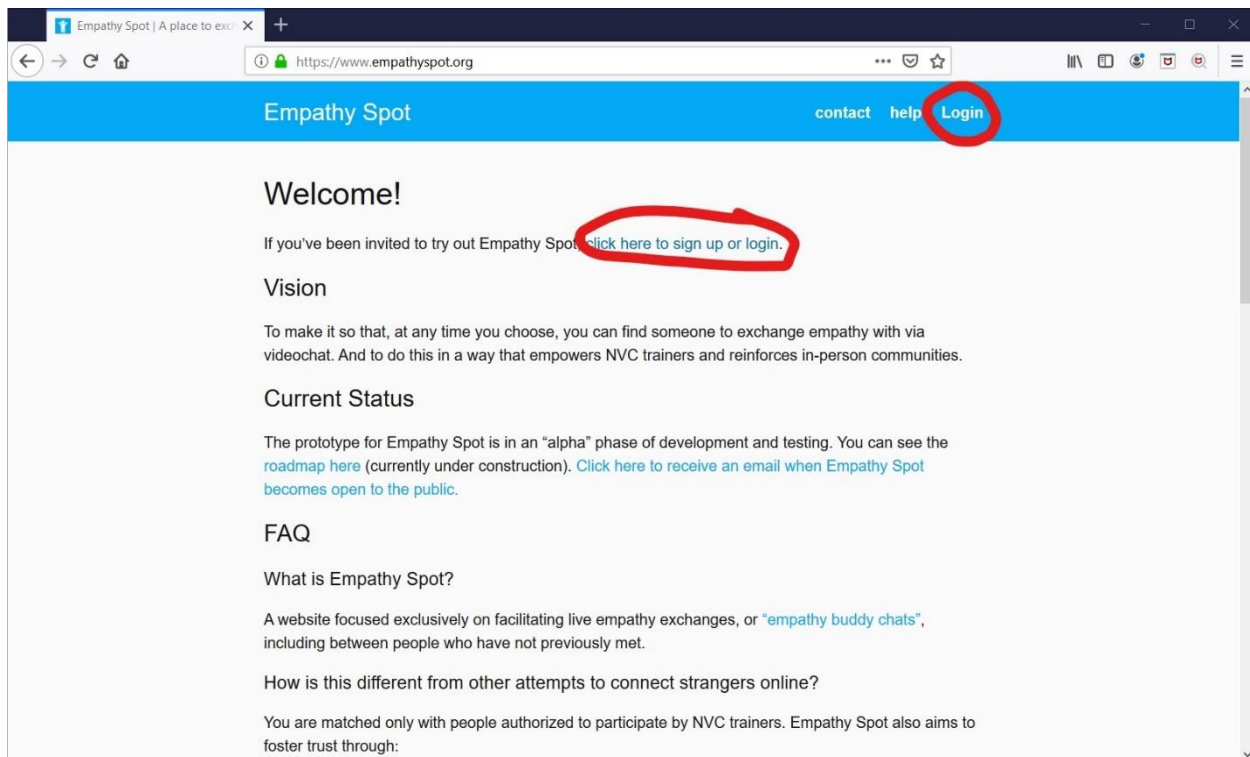
Technical Requirements

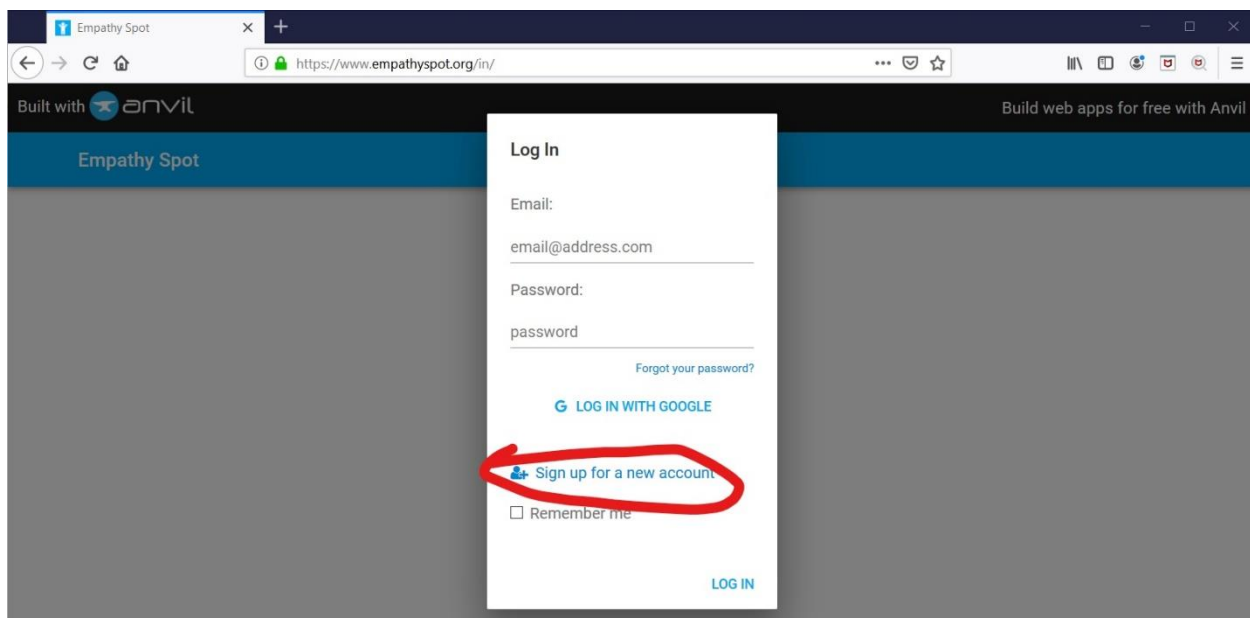To participate using video chat, you will need:

- **camera** – If you use a smartphone or laptop, there is likely one built in. Otherwise, you will need a webcam.
- **microphone** – Again, one is typically built in to your smartphone, laptop, or webcam.
- **software**
  - On a desktop or laptop, use either the Chrome or Firefox web browser to ensure compatibility
  - On mobile devices, any browser will work to access the Empathy Spot website, but for the actual videochat, you will be prompted to download and use the Jitsi Meet mobile app (Android, iOS)

Signing up for Empathy Spot

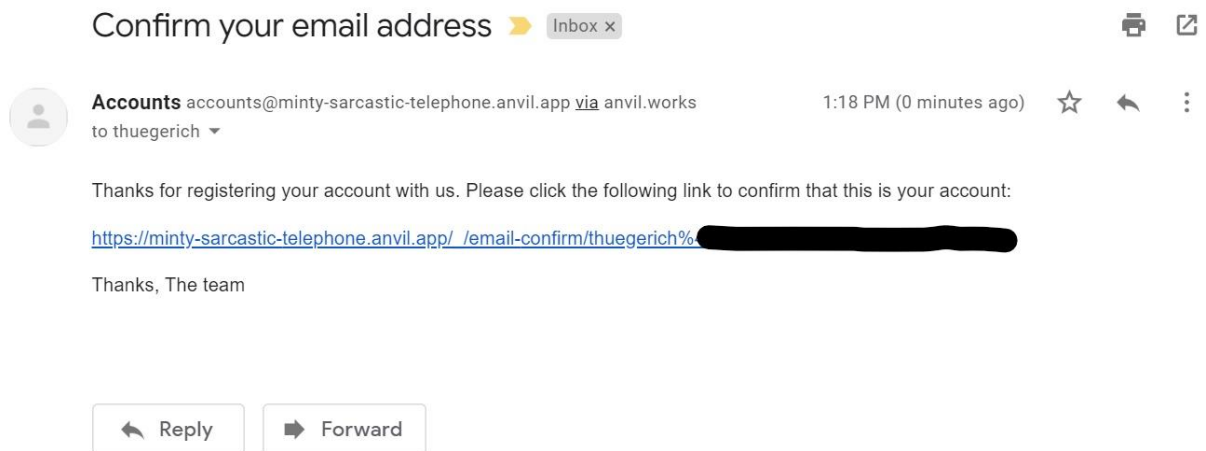Go to https://www.empathyspot.org/ and click on one of the "Login" links:

That will bring you to the login page. Click "Sign up for a new account":

That will bring up the sign up form. You have the option of either (1) entering your email address, choosing a password, and clicking "Sign Up" at the bottom; or (2) using the "Sign up with Google" option to use your Gmail account to login. (Note: If possible, use the email address you receive NYCNVC emails at. This will allow you to be automatically recognized as a member of the group. Otherwise, Tim would just need to manually add your account to the group.)

If you choose option (1), you will receive the following email at the address you provide to confirm that you own the address:
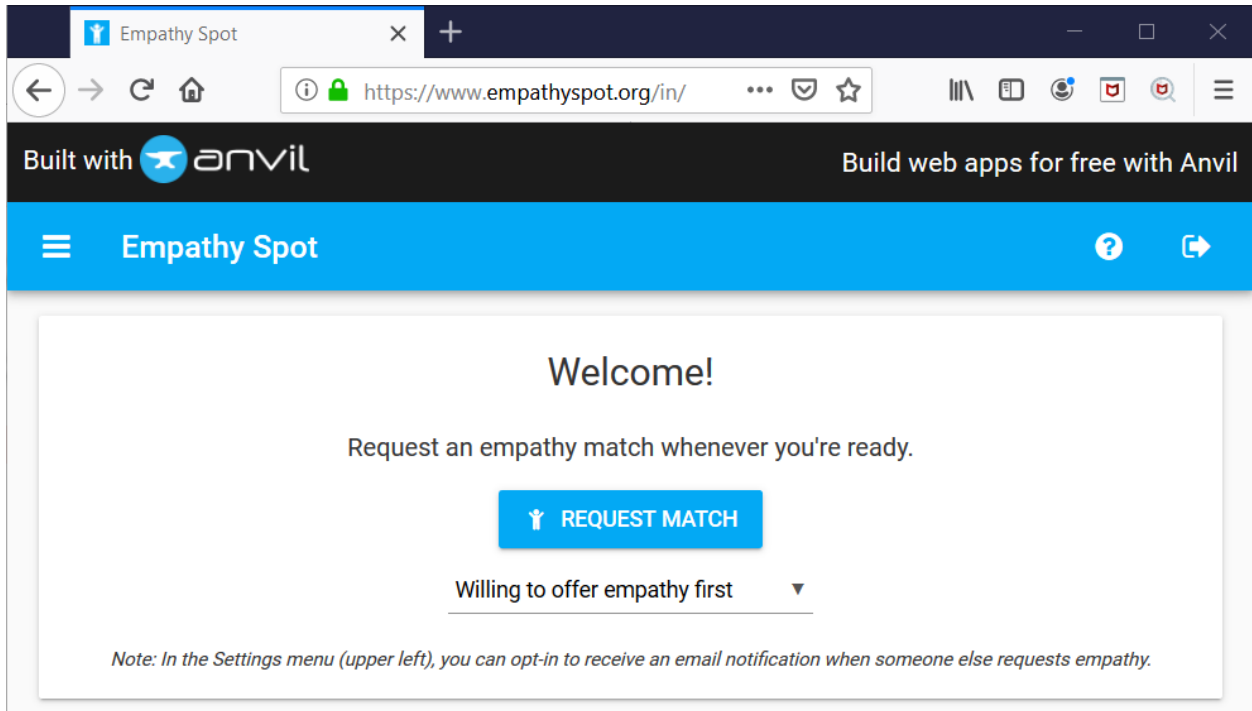

Please note the odd-looking "minty-sarcastic-telephone.anvil.app" email address and link. These are accurate. Empathy Spot is built using the free version of a website-building tool called Anvil, and the free version assigns random urls like "minty-sarcastic-telephone." The url https://www.empathyspot.org/in/ has been set up as an easier-to-remember alternative web address, but it's always https://minty-sarcastic-telephone.anvil.app under the hood. (For more on Anvil, see "Is the website safe in terms of data security and privacy?" in the FAQ at https://www.empathyspot.org/)
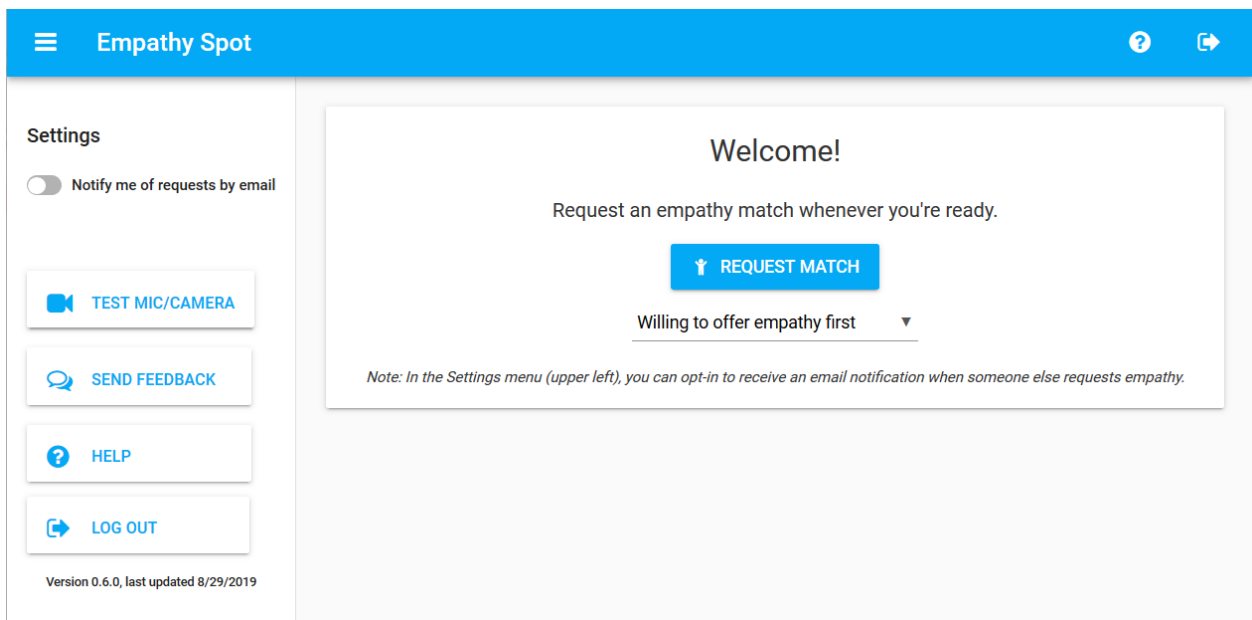
Using Empathy Spot

Finding the side menu

When you log in to Empathy Spot, you should see something like the following screen:

If you click on the ☰ icon in the upper left, a side menu will open (or close), which should look something like the left sidebar below:

(This section under construction)

Testing your microphone and camera set-up

Clicking "TEST MIC/CAMERA" in the side menu will open up a new tab with a sample Jitsi session for testing. [What happens when you do that on mobile?]

[screen shot of Jitsi without permissions, highlighting the thing you need to click to grant permissions]

Setting up email notifications

Requesting an empathy exchange

For tips on how to prepare for the empathy exchange itself—and for step-by-step guidance on how to do it—see section 4 of the NYCNVC Empathy Buddy Handbook.