

## Covina-19: School's Out!

### Virtual Response

We are looking at creating virtual support responses. For updated information, please make sure you "like" and "follow" one/both of these Facebook Pages: Ministries Across Generations: <https://www.facebook.com/ministriesacrossgen/> and DYMN (Disciples Youth Ministry Network): <https://www.facebook.com/DYMNetwork/>. Once a majority of schools are closed, we will lead daily online gatherings. We will share videos, ideas, and insights.

1. **Daily Online Family/Children Learning: Organized by Olivia Bryan Updegrave**
2. **Daily Online Gatherings for Youth, Young Adults, and Leaders: Organized by Randy Kuss**
3. **Children Worship & Wonder Family Worship on Sunday Morning: Organized by Lisa Engelken**
4. **Support Online Children, Youth, and Young Adult Groups**

We have several platforms that can help host your meetings. Some of these meetings may be alongside voices throughout the country, and others can remain with your specific group. Please reach out to us if you would like assistance.

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The rise of the COVID-19 creates a complex set of questions about how humans participate and experience life in relationship to one another. This conversation is changing by the hour.

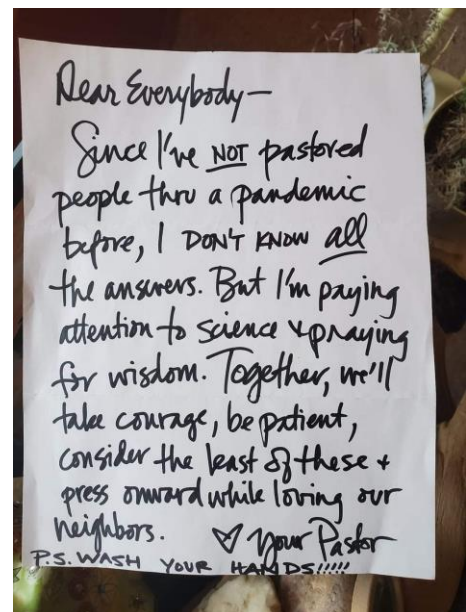
The church is called to respond to the "least of these," but systemic issues around poverty, race, and economics forces us to have difficult conversations about the best ways to serve the many who are put in an even more difficult situations as this pandemic closes what for many is the only affordable child-care option. **These are faith-based conversations and not legal.**

*We recognize that many children and teenagers may be heading home to empty houses because the threat of COVID-19 is a lot less than the loss of a paycheck.*

*We recognize that the grandparents at higher risk are the ones who are going to be called upon to watch the children.*

*We recognize that many schools and local charities will need to close their doors and shut out access to affordable food, and sanitation.*

*We recognize that many church-based child-care facilities are not insured to cover long-term closings, and have a different set of legal standards.*



*We recognize this is a complex conversation in a complex world. Our goal is not to spread germs, but our love of Jesus in a world of harsh realities must respond to the "least of these."*

*If you can stay home... stay home. If you can help others stay in clean and safe areas when other options are more damaging to the "least" of these, then think and pray through the best ways to help. Recognize that while we may not gather in one form, that other forms may be options with the correct safety measures and conversations.*

### **Plan Ahead and Be Ready:**

Get Your Household Ready for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Household Plan, Neighbors, Local Aid/Emergency Numbers, etc.): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/get-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html>

### Emergency Caretakers:

- Make rules and boundaries for those in the house based on the previous article.
- All people like to know a schedule and boundaries.
- Make a plan to help keep organized based on those in your household.
- Check out our Safety Information: <https://www.docfamiliesandchildren.org/safety-resources>, and get waivers.
- Check out our Pinterest Boards: <https://www.pinterest.com/disciplesfcm/> for faith-based activities.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Feeling overwhelmed? Yeah... I hear ya!) But many of us who work with children, youth, and young adults are more "tech savvy" and prepared to make faithful connections over WiFi. In fact... many of us were made for such a time as this!

- Help other leaders understand the safety measures needed with placing/streaming things on the internet.  
Technology and Social Media: <https://www.docfamiliesandchildren.org/safety-basic-7>
- Use text messaging resources (but in groups) to help keep your teenagers and others connected and in conversation.
- It is time to put all those Facebook pages and online meeting resources to a different level of use.
- Here are some free videos and resources from our YouTube Channel: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL10TN4Jh\\_3Pa0wEGXTeFSg/featured](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL10TN4Jh_3Pa0wEGXTeFSg/featured) to continue to keep faithful interactions going.

### **Children:**

Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>

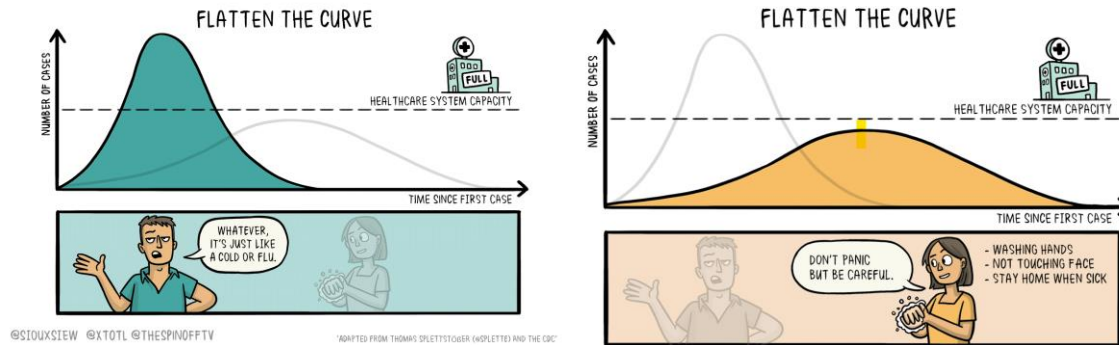
Daniel Tiger: How to Talk to Kids About Corona Virus:

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-coronavirus>

## Teenagers:

When teenagers ask, "Why aren't we in school?" or say, "This is awesome (being out of school)... or dumb (being out of school)... or whatever!"

If you know a college student trying to get home or in need of a home, help them find their way safely.



## Education at Home:

Schools are planning for closing, but not all households or school systems will be able to provide the same type of access and accountability. If libraries are closed and a kid does not have access to a computer, they may be limited to online options. If an adult is not present to help or does not know the material, it may be even more complicated.

- Get creative and look around... really look... to see who may need help and how you or your church may be able to help them.
- Were you a teacher? Does your church have Wifi? Anyone have an old computer?

## Safety and Care and Resources

As your faith community and leaders begin to look around and respond to the various needs, and the needs of those displaced from schools, our ministry team finds it important to keep you informed of the risks, options, and insights. *We do not take legal liability for the choices of your community, but we do take responsibility for the need to provide some quality safety options.*

Liability: **If any risk is not something for you or your community, then do not do it.** There are many ways to "be the church" in this time.

If you serve in a community that may need its doors to be open when other doors are closed, then we want to make sure you are aware of some basic safety measures for interacting with those under 18 in any facility. You may want to consult with an attorney before hosting anything in your facility to make sure you are following state protocol.

- Connect with other churches, school systems, health/emergency agencies and resources in your community. There may be other places prepared to respond and need volunteers, food donations, or cleaning supplies.
- Review the protocols of your church, school district, health organizations, and state before taking any action.
- Take a look at your insurance policies (specifically your child safety policies) before inviting anyone into the church building.

**Ministries Across Generations  
Disciples Home Missions**

- Make sure you have waivers for any interaction with someone under 18. (Even in the home.)
- All adults should have background checks, and if caring for other peoples' children, there should be at least two adults present if possible.  
(Following this measure in the home is also important at this time as people care for other's children.)
- If school is out, you may have teachers who can help with the educational or care needs in your community.
- All appropriate food handling and bathroom protocols should be followed. Check you state regulations.
- (Just in case you missed it) Wash hands, wash hands again, and help keep everything clean.

**The Insurance Board:** <https://www.insuranceboard.org/>

The Insurance Board has a ministry that helps *all* churches with safety. They provide numerous resources, and insights for each state. If you have any questions or safety concerns, please e-mail the insurance board.

(For more information from the denomination: <https://disciples.org/dns/disciples-and-covid-19/>)