

TOGETHER APART

A simple curriculum for use online

The current period of quarantine and isolation provides uncharted territory for youth workers. While it is an anxious time for many, as we strive to keep up contact with our socially-distanced young people, it is also an opportunity for us to find completely new approaches to youth ministry. As we rethink how we previously engaged teenagers, and seek to translate much of this now into a digital context, we find ourselves at the frontier of youth work innovation. However, this takes time, and while we explore new possibilities for online youth work, it's important to continue to support our young people as they try to find their feet in this new normal.

*This six-part series of session plans are a suggestion of how you might run a fairly traditional-style youth group by using an online format. **This is not a revolutionary new youth work model**; rather it's a basic tool to help you continue to care for your young people, to keep sharing Jesus with them and to bring them together to have fellowship with one another. Also remember: technology is not failproof – if what we or you've planned doesn't work for technical reasons, that's ok. Youth work has always been about connection rather than content, and that's doubly true now.*

Session 2: Jesus Changes Lives (1 hour)

SESSION PLAN	LEADERS GUIDANCE for use in online groups
<p>BEFORE THE SESSION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you need to remind young people how to join your online youth group, get in touch (making sure you follow safeguarding procedures) and make sure they understand how to work your chosen video chat platform. - Schedule a time to meet and forward any relevant access information to your group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you haven't done this already, choose a video chat platform that is best / safest for your needs. Register and download your chosen app and familiarise yourself with how it works. - For guidance on creating an online safeguarding policy please see the 38:1 Youthscape document. - Make sure you are available and ready to go plenty of time before the start of your scheduled meeting.
<p>OPENING THOUGHT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As young people get logged on to the video chat, have them discuss the opening thought for today... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage the young people to talk through different aspects of the question...

Youthscape

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you believe bad people should be forgiven? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you understand by the word “bad”? - Did the person make a one-time mistake, or did they repeatedly do something wrong? - Has the person said sorry? - Is the person trying to change?
<p>CHALLENGE (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once everyone is online, officially start the session with a group challenge. - Ask the young people to stand up and make sure they’re in an open space. - Time the group 60 seconds and see who can do the most star jumps in the time given. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the challenge doesn’t work as a group activity, nominate one person to do it or be prepared to do it yourself and have the rest of the group countdown. - Explain what the challenge is and how long the young people will have to do the challenge. - Demonstrate to the group exactly what you mean by a star jump so that everyone knows what they’re doing. - If you want the young people to be able to see a visual countdown, load a 60 second countdown on YouTube and share your screen (if you’re able) so that they can watch them clock tick down. - After the challenge, ask each person how many they managed and celebrate the winner before moving on to the next activity.
<p>GAME (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring Me - Ask the young people to remain standing for the game. - The game involves the leader asking the group to “bring them” random items, e.g. spoon, phone, shoelace, watch, etc... - The young people race to be the first to find the item and bring it back to the leader. The person who brings it back first is awarded a point. - In this version of the game each person is competing individually to see who can get the most points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain how the game works and give examples of things you might ask for. - Make sure you have a good list of items to ask for before the game starts. - Warning: this game can get quite competitive so warn the young people about treating their houses with respect and not rushing around so much that they cause damage.

<p>Alternative Version</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make use of electronics and do an online “Show/Tell Me”. - Have the young people use their phones to look up what they’re being asked for, e.g. a picture of the Tower of London, the flag of Fiji, how long is the river Nile, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This version will only work if young people have more than one screen available to them – one to zoom, and the other to look up information - Again, make sure to have a good list of things for them to look up before the game starts.
<p>Video (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watch this video together: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zEve0VdUTc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure you have watched the video beforehand so that if technology fails you can describe what happened and key things that were said. - Either, ask the young people to watch this interview with Justin Bieber (make sure microphones are muted) or, if possible, load the video on your screen and use ‘share screen’ to allow the young people to all watch the video through your screen. - If you decide to go with the share screen option, make sure you have the video pre-loaded and ready to go before the session begins.
<p>QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION (20 minutes)</p> <p>What do you think about the video?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you think about what Justin said? - Here are some words people have used to describe Jesus: teacher, crazy, good man, criminal, God’s son. From what you know of Jesus, which of these words would you use to describe him? - How do you feel about forgiveness? Does someone need to say sorry to be forgiven? What about people who’ve done terrible things – should they be forgiven? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make sure to read through the questions beforehand and have an idea of responses so that you can facilitate conversation if it seems to be drying up. - Consider thinking about how you want the young people to answer these questions. Do you want a hands-up system and then you choose who answers? Do you want them each to take a couple of minutes to think of an answer and then you choose someone at random to answer?

<p>Themes from Justin’s story</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “God loved me for who I am before I did anything to deserve it.” How does that statement make you feel? - Do you agree with Justin that it’s a fight not to bad things sometimes? - Where / who can you go to for hope / encouragement? <p>Optional bible study questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Luke 15 v 11 – 32 - How would you retell this bible story to a complete stranger who’d never heard it before? - What do you think of the younger son’s actions? - Do you he deserved the special treatment he received when he came home? 	
<p>PRAYER (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close the session by praying together. - Ask the young people what they’re anxious about and how you can support them at this time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Again, think about how you want to young people to interact in this. Do you want to go around and ask each person for a prayer request? Do you want to leave it open and see who volunteers a prayer point? - Also, if you want leave time for the young people to pray as well make sure you explain to the group how that will work.
<p>POST-SESSION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Think about how you want to session to end. You can either end the meeting once is prayer is over and goodbyes are said, or you can allow space for the young people to chat and catch up then end the meeting at a later time. - Ask the leaders to stick around for an online debrief after the young people leave the chat. Talk through any concerns

	(safeguarding, pastoral, etc.) and decide on how best to follow up.
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