

**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 1: Trusting in God (1 hour)**

SESSION PLAN	LEADERS GUIDANCE for use in online groups
<p><b>BEFORE THE SESSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Email / message / call your youth group (following safeguarding procedures) and make sure they understand how to work your chosen group video chat platform.</li> <li>- Schedule a time to meet and forward any relevant access information to your group.</li> <li>- Ask each young person to bring a bottle with them to the session. Could be a water bottle, a household cleaner bottle, soap bottle, etc. but ideally if they have a water bottle that would work best. Tell them to make sure their bottle has some liquid in it.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Figure out which video chat platform is best / safest for your needs. Register and download your chosen app and familiarise yourself with how it works.</li> <li>- For guidance on creating an online safeguarding policy please see the 38:1/Youthscape document.</li> <li>- Make sure you are available and ready to go plenty of time before the start of your scheduled meeting.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ask each young person to think of two truths and one lie as part of a game. Examples of statements can be found in the “GAME” section.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>OPENING THOUGHT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As young people get logged on to the video chat, have them discuss the opening thought for today...</li> <li>- ‘Who / what do you trust?’</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage the young people to talk through why they place their trust in certain things. For example, what characteristics make a person trustworthy or why they trust in objects around them, such as chairs/beds, to hold them up.</li> <li>- Be ready to give examples of things you trust and why to get the conversation going.</li> <li>- Make sure that you direct the conversation so that everyone who wants to speak is given a chance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHALLENGE (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once everyone is online, officially start the session with a group challenge.</li> <li>- Ask the young people to have their bottle ready for the challenge.</li> <li>- Time the group 60 seconds and see who can flip the bottle and have it land the right way up the most times in the minute given.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Explain what the challenge is and how long the young people will have to do the challenge.</li> <li>- Make sure to check and see if everyone understands what they’re being asked to do before you begin.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- After the challenge, ask each person how many they managed and celebrate the winner before moving on to the next activity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>GAME (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two Truths and a Lie</li> </ul>	

# Youthscape

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One at a time, have the young people say three statements about themselves – two that are true and one that is a lie. The rest of the group then has to guess which of the three statements was false.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If the game doesn't work as a group activity, have the leaders ready to be the ones to give statements and the young people guess.</li> <li>- Explain how the game works and give examples of things the young people might say such as: My favourite food is pizza I have a pet I love school I can skateboard</li> <li>- Start the game off with giving your own two truths and a lie.</li> <li>- Take time to ask each young person which of the statements they think is the lie.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Video (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Watch this video together: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4C0JhLf-Fw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4C0JhLf-Fw</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure you have watched the video beforehand so that if technology fails you can describe what happened and key things that were said.</li> <li>- Either, ask the young people to watch this Speak Life video (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.</li> <li>- 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION (20 minutes)</b></p> <p><b>What do you think about this video?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the video, Glen talks about his uncertainty about whether God could be trusted. Thinking back to the opening question, who/what do you trust?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Consider thinking about how you want the young people to answer these questions. Do you want a hands-up system and</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What makes you trust something?</li> </ul> <p><b>Themes from Glen's story?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If someone breaks your trust, would you ever trust them again?</li> <li>- On a scale of 1 – 10, how important do you think trust is in a friendship?</li> <li>- Is God someone you would think of as trustworthy?</li> </ul> <p><b>Optional bible study questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Ephesians 2 v 1 – 9</li> <li>- Are there things we do to try and earn God's love?</li> <li>- How does it make you feel to know you are loved and forgiven completely because of what Jesus did to save you?</li> <li>- Jesus has done everything for us, paid the ultimate price and we can put all our trust in him because he was willing to suffer and die for all our sins. In these uncertain times, what can we do to try and put our trust more in God?</li> </ul>	<p>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>
<p><b>PRAYER (10 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Close the session by praying together.</li> <li>- Ask the young people what they're anxious about and how you can support them at this time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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?</li> <li>- 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>POST-SESSION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 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.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 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.</li></ul>
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