

Leading Young People's sessions live online

Online safety

Consider how you safeguard leaders and those participating. Set up a password to enter the meeting in video conference platforms like Zoom. If you have two leaders, get online five minutes before the advertised start time, meaning when the first people sign in, you are ready. If you lead sessions alone parents/carers must be present with their children. Let parents know that they should be in the same room as the child/children, but don't have to be on camera. The youngest children may need a parent with them all the time to help and support. You may find it's really good to have parents/carers and children interacting together – encourage it if it works well! Email information to the parents/carers in advance including information about safety.

A note on safeguarding: You will need to follow safeguarding policies relevant to your church or organisation, and any other relevant policies and procedures regarding running sessions for children/young people/adults at risk. The suggestions below are not intended to replace your local ongoing safeguarding policy. Breakout rooms are not suitable for working with groups of children and young people for safeguarding reasons – unless you have the leaders to facilitate safely, i.e. two per group.

Practise and prepare

Before your session, practise signing in and using the different features on your online platform. For example, on Zoom you can share your screen with other participants, a really simple way to show videos and images, and even simple templates that people can copy. Another useful tool is the mute function. It can be easier to keep everyone on mute to avoid background noise, and ask individuals to unmute themselves when you invite them to say something. You might find that some people are shyer online, which means you need to speak more. Preparing bullet points or a short script could help you stay on track and keep everything moving.

Using the weekly Young People's session online – general advice and tips

- Keep online sessions shorter than face to face sessions would be. Try to keep to the structure but also include times for general chat at the beginning and end – you could also include time for sharing a snack together.
- Encourage young people to get creative using what they have around them and/or what you are able to provide safely in advance.
- Remind yourself that attention spans can be shorter online. Don't be afraid to hold shorter sessions, take breaks and allow young people to dip in and out. Remember that helping young people to connect together is very important right now.
- Always include the *Check-in* material as part of your session as it relates directly to what's going on that week.

(Find this within 'The week in focus' section online.)

Gather

- These are often simple activities which can be adapted for online use. However, the *First impressions* image and questions can also be used to introduce the theme.

► How to use the *First impressions* image: go to This week's images, right click on an image and select 'Save picture as'. You can then show this using the screen share function.

Share the Word

- This often requires young people to have a copy of the passage themselves so you could paste a link in the chat to www.biblegateway.com or email them the passage in advance.
- You can always read the passage through together with different young people invited to read different sections or characters.
- However, most activities can be adapted for use online – team/group work will still work if you select which young people are to work together and give clear instructions about when and how to share. You can also choose young people to take part in activities by messaging them individually using the chat function.

Explore and respond

- Working online, two activities may be sufficient so choose those which work best online.
- Discussions and film clips work really well. Encourage the young people to use the reaction buttons to share opinions.

► How to show a film clip, e.g. from YouTube: *have it prepared in your browser so that you don't all watch the adverts beforehand and then share your screen – remembering to share computer sound by ticking the box – and play the clip.*

- Games can often be adapted for online use asking the young people to use what they have to hand at home. They can each move around in their own space as required – you can even put someone back in the waiting room as part of a game, e.g. to share some information with the rest of the group for them to guess.
- Craft activities may also work well with some adaptations – or alternatively you may be able to send out the kit required.

Always include the *Check-in* material as part of your session as it relates directly to what's going on that week.

► *Find this within The week in focus section online.*

The music tracks can be used for playing alongside an activity.

► How to share a music track: *have the track ready to play and then use the screen share function– remembering to share computer sound by ticking the box – and play the track.*

Go with God

This simple, concluding activity is important to include for the structure of the session. They are often very simple and don't require too much kit so are easily adapted for use at home.

Go with God 24/7

Works well consistently without adaptation with a general principle that suggestions like contacting a friend/neighbour, etc. can also be done virtually/on the phone/via email, etc. A great way to finish the session as a 'challenge' and return to at the beginning of the next session.

Through the week

Give young people the ROOTS at home resource to use during the week. It offers a wide and varied range of activities each week, e.g. things to make, bake, read, watch – helping them to weave faith into everyday life. There are five activities – but remind young people that they can choose what they want to do and may only choose one! Ideas are usable across a wide range of ages – making it possible for households to do activities together. It's available as a PDF, so it's easy to distribute - email it, print it, or share it on your website. On the back of each sheet, we provide both a children's version of the relevant Bible reading and the NRSV text. We also add

a glossary where necessary so they can continue to explore the Bible passage together at home.

24-30 January 2021 Young people's session

Additional tips on using this week's ideas online.

Gather

- See general help and tips on page 1.
- Use *Give out invitations* – you would need to prepare the envelopes, show them and demonstrate opening them and reading them out. Or use the *First impressions* image and questions to introduce the theme see magazine page 21 or in the *Young People's* session online.

Share the Word

- See general help and tips on page 1.
- Use *Move and reflect*. You can message young people individually in the chat function to 'choose' them and they can move around in their own space.

Explore and respond

- See general help and tips on page 1-2.
- *Make newspaper fish* – adapt by asking the young people to individually cut out as many fish as they can from one sheet of A4 paper and see who has the most.
- *Social media followers* – display the images using a screen share and then invite the young people to name and rank the celebrities.
- *Fish prayers* – invite the young people to use the fish they made in *Make newspaper fish* or cut out another if they are too small.
- Always include the *Check-in* material as part of your session as it relates directly to what's going on that week.

Go with God

- See general help and tips on page 2.
- Ask the young people to stand up at home in their own space. You can offer for them to turn their videos off at this point if they wish.

Go with God 24/7

A great way to finish the session as a 'challenge' and return to at the beginning of the next session.

Through the week

Give the young people the ROOTS at home resource to use during the week.

► Find it on the *Week by week* page online, in Faith 24/7