June 2020

parenting CHRISTIAN kids

Church Logo and Information

Practice Outreach in Your Own Neighborhood

POWERSOURCE

ASK JESUS:

1. To help your family form close ties to neighbors of all ages.
2. To show you areas of need in your neighborhood—and ways you can meet them.
3. To give family members a heart for reaching out to all people.

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During the past few months, the coronavirus pandemic has caused lots of stress, separation, and cancellations. Yet several bright spots have brought much-needed light to the dark times.

For example, families, neighbors, churches, and communities are coming together in creative ways to offer support and to meet a variety of needs. Acts of love, whether simple (waving, posting signs) or more involved (running errands for the elderly, donating gift cards to the unemployed) are lifting spirits and easing tensions.

These deeds forge connections among neighbors who may not even know one another's names. And they give family members purposeful projects to tackle together while much of society must remain unnaturally apart.

As social-distancing restrictions gradually ease up in some areas, outreach methods can expand a bit, too. But that doesn't necessarily mean serving your neighbors will require more time and money—unless you have extra you'd like to give.

In fact, parents can use this out-of-the-ordinary period to show kids just how far a little kindness can go. Resist the temptation to self-isolate (unless you're sick, of course). Instead, search for ways your family can make life a bit easier—and more cheerful—for people around you. To get started, check out the suggestions on the following page. May God bless your outreach efforts!

“Who is my neighbor?”

In Luke 10:25, a legal expert asks Jesus about the path to eternal life. Jesus tells him to follow the two greatest commandments—love God and love your neighbors. Yet the man presses for more detail, following up by asking “And who is my neighbor?” (verse 29). Then Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan, teaching that neighbors can be anyone, not just people who look, act, and believe as we do. In this era of wariness and extra caution, it takes effort to know our neighbors, let alone to serve them. But serving others helps us get to know people as individuals and also allows Jesus to work through us, as living examples of his love.

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

The Samaritan Shuffle

Use this activity to teach kids about neighborliness while helping them release pent-up energy. On slips of paper, write one of these events from the parable of the Good Samaritan:

- A man walks to Jericho.
- Robbers beat up the man.
- A priest walks past the hurt man.
- A Levite walks past the hurt man.
- A Samaritan stops to bandage the man’s wounds.
- A Samaritan puts the wounded man onto an animal.
- A Samaritan takes the wounded man to a motel.
- A Samaritan pays the motel manager to care for the man.

Put each slip into a different balloon. Inflate and tie off the balloons. Have family members bat the balloons around. When you yell, “Stop and pop!” everyone grabs a balloon (or two), pops it, and retrieves the slip. Work together to figure out the correct sequence. Then read Luke 10:30-37 to see how you did. Pray, thanking Jesus for opportunities to love your neighbors.

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Rockin’ the Walk More people are taking walks these days, so provide stroll-ers with some inspiration. Paint rocks with bright colors and write or draw simple messages on them. Set them along sidewalks or near flower beds to make people smile. Kids also can write Bible verses on your sidewalk with chalk.

Free for All! Instead of setting up a lemonade stand to earn money, kids can give away free bottled drinks (or individually wrapped treats). Display signs such as “Jesus is the Living Water” or “Free gift: Jesus quenches your thirst!” Instead of taking money, set out a jar for prayer requests.

Give & Take If you’re handy, help kids build a Little Free Library or a Little Free Pantry (instructions are available online). With permission, you might be able to place it on your church grounds. Contributors can fill a library with books and Bibles and a pantry with toiletries and nonperishable food items.

Sing ’n’ Serve Teach children the joy of serving by finding age-appropriate tasks they can do with your supervision. Summertime examples include washing cars, watering people’s plants, and watching a neighbor’s pet. With younger kids, sing simple refrains while you work. To the tune of “London Bridge,” for example, sing “God loves me, so I love you, I love you, I love you. God loves me, so I love you. Love each other!”

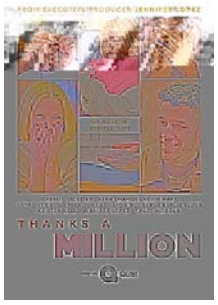
Prayer Pals Craft-loving kids can make colorful cards for elderly people who remain homebound. Include your phone number on a note that says: “Please share how we can help you—and how we can pray for you!”

Award-Winning Acts Although the Summer Olympics have been postponed, you can cheer on people’s good deeds. Using ribbon and card stock, create a bunch of ribbons that say Medal of Honor. Read aloud Hebrews 10:24. Tell family members their goal is to “catch” people being kind and give them a medal. After complimenting the good deed, they tell the honoree to pass along the medal to someone else who *they* catch in the act of kindness.

Crops of Kindness If you have a garden or fruit trees, deliver extra produce to homebound neighbors. Add notes with fun messages such as “Lettuce know if you need anything!” “You’re the apple of God’s eye!” and “We’d be in a pickle without good neighbors!”

All these commands and all others are really only one rule: “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” … Loving is obeying all the law.
—Romans 13:9-10, NCV

MEDIA **MADNESS**



TV

Title: *Thanks a Million*
Network: Quibi
Synopsis: Quibi, the new short-form mobile video platform, has shows with very brief episodes. In this docu-series, celebrities such as Nick Jonas, Kristen Bell, and Kevin Hart surprise people with financial gifts to start chains of gratitude. The "pay it forward" premise is uplifting and often very emotional. Note that some of the people have been through traumatic situations.
Our Take: This feel-good series demonstrates the powerful ripple effects of kindness. It might, however, give viewers the impression that only wealthy people can make a significant difference in people's lives. Discuss how kids can launch similar gratitude chains without much (or any) money.

MUSIC

Title: "I Know"
Artist: Big Daddy Weave
Synopsis: For two decades, this group has produced inspirational, award-winning contemporary Christian music. While social distancing this spring, the five members recorded a new Zoom-style version of their #1 single "I Know." That song is from the group's newest album, *When the Light Comes.*
Our Take: Frontman Mike Weaver says "I Know" emerged from a time when his own family was going through a lot and was asking why. The lyrics emphasize God's goodness, kindness, and constant presence. For example: "I don't understand the sorrow / but you're calm within the storm. / Sometimes this weight is overwhelming / but I don't carry it alone."

Activities, Podcasts & Apps

Time Capsule

For a break from screen time, try this free activity created by a Canadian mom. Natalie Long's Covid-19 Time Capsule is filled with fun ideas for kids and families. They range from jotting down facts and feelings to interviewing parents. Download pages here: https://tinyurl.com/y7rx4w9e

The Kids Are All…Home

This new "by kids, for kids" series includes homemade podcasts with helpful tips for getting through the pandemic. Creators share ideas for at-home activities, safety tips, snacks, and more. Listeners will feel less alone and might even be inspired to create their own podcast episode.

Spotify Kids

In response to the pandemic, Spotify expanded its kid-friendly app, which now offers a playlist of 8,000 fun and educational songs. It's free for subscribers of the company's premium family plans. Music ranges from Disney tunes and dance hits to lullabies and bedtime stories.

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This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, read, listen to, and play.

CULTURE **&** TRENDS

Pandemic Parenting Moms and dads working from home while trying to homeschool must embrace flexibility and show compassion—to themselves, as well. Parenting experts say it's okay to give children more free time. "Think of the quarantine as an AP class in chilling," writes Lenore Skenazy. "You can help your kids ace it by stepping back." *(Washington Post)*

Pets & Potty Pros Among the positive trends emerging from lengthy lockdowns are spikes in pet adoptions and potty-trained toddlers. Being stuck at home apparently brings out the need for comfort creatures—and provides "bonus" time to housebreak them *and* the human kiddos! *(various sources)*

QUICK **STATS**

Music to Young Ears While the music industry could lose $12 billion in 2020 due to canceled concerts, festivals, and albums, streaming of kid-friendly music and videos has increased by double digits. *(USA Today)*

Boom or Bust? Jokes about a pandemic-related baby boom abound, but demographers say economic and health uncertainties make that unlikely. Others predict a "baby blip" may occur this winter, with a mere 2% increase in births. *(various sources)*

June

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 First Day of Summer
21 Father's Day	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

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