

VIRTUAL SMALL GROUP GENERAL INFO

TIPS & TRICKS

- Watching the Bible story video: use your meeting app's "share my screen" option to play the video yourself. (Be sure to click "share computer audio" so kids can hear the video.)
 - We recommend watching the video together as a group, so your few can have a shared experience and you'll know that the follow-up activity will make sense to all of your kids.
- Navigating a virtual conversation:
 - Make "eye contact" as much as possible. The more "locked in" and engaged you are, the most your few will be as well.
 - Use the "host" functionalities of your meeting software to your advantage! Turn kids' mute buttons on and off as needed instead of leaving it to them to regulate.
 - At the beginning of every small group time, remind kids of the "house rules": try not to talk when someone else is talking, make sure you're listening to your friends and giving "eye contact" when they're talking.
 - If kids are talking over each other, let them know you're trying to get their attention and then wait for them to settle down. Don't try to talk over them in order to regain control of the conversation.
- Keep Small Group time short. Thirty minutes is about the maximum amount of time kids can be expected to sit in one place and focus on one thing. Expect about a 2-minute attention span for every year of your kids' lives. For a 7-year-old, that's about 14-18 minutes! Keep them engaged by doing that day's suggested activity (in the Leader Guide) along with the suggested conversation, instead of separating them.
- Your shy or more introverted kids might be used to participating in a virtual group setting by now, but if they still seem reluctant to share or fully engage, look for easy, low-impact ways to let them join in.
- Say their names! It sounds simple, but say their names so each kid knows you want to hear from them.
- Hope for a great time of connection, but don't expect it to be revolutionary! Simply by showing up virtually and spending time focusing on your few, you're communicating that you're there for them and they're important to you.

GAMES & ICE BREAKERS

Here's a list of games and icebreakers you can have on hand for when you need them.

WHERE'S THE WIDGET?

- Pretend like you're holding something small in your hand.
- Tell kids that they get pretend to hide it from you and you get to guess who's got it!
- Close your eyes or turn around while the kids silently decide who is going to be the one "holding" the widget.
- Slowly count to 10 and then open your eyes or turn around and face the computer.
- Based on facial expressions, overheard conversations, and general giddiness, take a guess as to who is holding the widget.
- (If you play this game enough, eventually your few will become rather adept at deception!)

WOULD YOU RATHER:

- Ask a few "would you rather" questions and lead kids to take turns quickly responding with their choice.
- Let them take turns asking their own "would you rather" questions of the group.
- This website has a huge list of "this or that" type questions for kids: <https://bit.ly/2Y0gg8q>
- You can also get really silly and random with what you ask, like,
 - "Would you rather eat dessert whenever you want to, but you can only have the same type for the rest of your life; OR only be allowed to eat dessert once a week, but you can choose whichever dessert you want?"
 - "Would you rather touch an alligator or hug a panda bear, if you knew neither one would bite you?"

TWENTY QUESTIONS:

- Choose one person to start, or ask for a volunteer.
- This person must think of an object. It can be any object, (as long as it's appropriate) and would be something everyone in the group would know.
- The rest of the group then takes turns asking yes or no questions about the object.
- The person who has the object in mind should answer

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the question with a simple yes or no, avoiding giving any other details.

- After hearing the answer, the kid asking the question is allowed one guess at what the object is.
- If a total of 20 questions gets asked with no one guessing what the object is, the kid who thought of the object wins and gets to reveal what the object was.
- If someone does guess correctly, they now get to think of a new object.

HIDE AND SEEK

- Choose three or four kids to be “hidiers” and one kid to be the “seeker.”
- The kids who will be hiding get to choose if they’ll move left or right of their device’s camera, or down below so they can’t be seen.
- When you say “Go,” the seeker closes their eyes while you count to 10.
- The “hidiers” will then hide by moving left, right, or down. Instruct the hidiers to stay put until you tell them to move.
- After counting to 10, let the seeker open their eyes and guess which direction each kid moved.
- If the seeker gets them all right, they get to be the seeker again.
- If they get any of them wrong, they choose the next seeker.
- The game is basically a game of chance, unless any kids accidentally reveal themselves by moving part of their bodies back into the range of their device’s camera!

SCAVENGER HUNT

- Make sure you have everyone’s attention.
- Tell them you’re going to give them an object to find and the first person who returns and shows you the object first wins!
- Think of an object all kids would have in their homes. (Ideas and suggestions are below.)
- Tell kids what the object is and give them a second or two to think of where that object might be.
- Count to three and call out, “GO!”
- Kids should go find that object as fast as they (safely) can.
- You are the judge of who makes it back first. To keep it fair, you can make the stipulation that the winner

must be back in their seat in front of their device and you must be able to clearly see the object they’re holding.

- You can play a few rounds of this game and keep score. The kid who won the most rounds is the overall winner!
- Scavenger hunt object suggestions:
 - A spoon
 - A sock
 - Something fuzzy
 - Something orange (or any other color)
 - A sibling (only use this one if all kids have at least one sibling at home)
 - A grownup
 - A remote control
 - A ball
 - A shoe
 - A crayon/marker (for safety, no pencils)
 - Tape
 - Something edible
 - Something you can drink from (cup, water bottle, etc.)
 - A Bible or devotional book
 - A regular book
 - A pillow
 - Something artsy
 - A pet
 - Something electronic

SHOW AND TELL

- Kids love sharing about themselves and what they like! Give them a chance to do that in this virtual twist on an old classic.
- If you’re doing show and tell, you may want to let families know ahead of time so kids can pick out that perfect show and tell item!
- As kids share about their item, encourage their peers to stay quiet and listen.
- Limit sharing to two minutes for each kid, and give them a countdown when their time is almost over. (You can hold up 10 fingers and lower them one at a time to show kids how much time is left.)
- If your group likes doing show and tell, you can do it often and choose a different theme each time!

ICEBREAKER CONVERSATION STARTERS:

- What’s your favorite thing you ate this week?

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- What or who do you play with when you're outside?
- Who has a family pet that they can show on camera?
- What was the best part of yesterday?
- What's the longest you've gone (during social distancing) without showering?
- If you could BE any famous person, who would you be and why?
- How many stuffed animals are on your bed right now?
- What's one thing you don't miss when school is out for summer or holiday breaks?
- What's one thing you DO miss when school is out for summer or holiday breaks?
- If you could add one thing to your bedroom, what would it be?