



Phase-by-Phase Recommendations for Reopening Children's Ministry

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PHASE 1: Online Gatherings and Resources

Stay-at-home order, or groups of 10 or less approved

- Provide digital resources for family discipleship.
- No in-person ministry. But prioritize email, text, and phone communication with parents and your children's ministry team.
- Recruit a leadership team made up of parents and volunteers to provide feedback about reopening.
- Consider sending a survey to all families to gauge their interest and readiness to participate in the nursery and children's ministry when they reopen.
- Consider recruiting a volunteer team to prepare Kids Activity Kits for small groups and services.

PHASE 2: Small Groups Reopen

Groups of 50 or less approved

- Work with a volunteer team to prepare and deliver Kids Activity Kits to small group leaders.
- Sanitize all classrooms and store the majority of classroom toys so that between-service sanitizing at Phase 3 is kept to a minimum; if you have not already, remove and dispose of all classroom food items.
- Finalize your schedule of volunteers for Phase 3.
- Send a parent communication with an overview of reopening phases and a review of snack and sickness policies as well as building traffic flow.
- (If you have adult gatherings) Keep kids in service with parents; distribute children's bulletins with restaurant-style crayon boxes for kids in service.
- (If you have adult gatherings) During Phase 2, observe families and listen carefully to CDC recommendations as well as what other churches are doing. Specifically, observe how many families are coming to service in person, what they are utilizing in the service (activity kits, wiggle rooms, building space, etc.), and the ages of the kids in those families.

PHASE 3: Reduced-Interaction Worship Gatherings

*Groups of 100 or less approved (*Some churches will reopen with more services than typical.)*

- Implement *Phase +7 strategy*, that is, children's gatherings relaunch at least one week after adult gatherings reopen.
- Open essential children's ministry programming but with smaller class sizes. You may want to adapt classroom caps and ratios to make them more restrictive than the legal limit in your state in order to reduce overcrowding in environments for younger children. You may consider requiring pre-registration for these classes.
- Rearrange traffic patterns so that there is a separate family entrance for children's ministry.
- No large group worship assemblies for kids; classroom teaching only.
- Thoroughly sanitize classrooms between services.
- Hand sanitizer stations throughout the children's ministry.
- Kids coordinators will check-in each family so that there is only one person using each computer, touch screen, or iPad.
- No cloth toys or books, only plastic toys that can be easily cleaned.
- For diaper changing, use rubber changing pads that can be wiped down easily. Volunteers must wear gloves to change diapers, only using them for the duration of diaper change, disposing after. ***This is a great long-term policy but especially essential in this season.*
- Use padded floors that can be sprayed and wiped down in baby rooms.
- For toddlers and preschoolers, restroom trips should not be taken as a class. Each service will need additional workers to help with restroom assistance.
- No classroom snacks allowed.
- Set up classrooms with six feet of distance between each seat.
- Curriculum adjusted so that all activities are low touch.
- Consider opening expanded nursing mothers' and "wiggle" rooms areas for families with younger kids, and sanitize the space between each service.

PHASE 4: High Safety Worship Gatherings

*Groups of 250 or less approved (*Many churches will reopen; Larger churches will need to consider requiring pre-registration and encouraging families to attend every other week.)*

- Expand Sunday children's ministry programming to more age groups but with smaller class sizes. You may want to adapt classroom caps and ratios to make them more restrictive than the legal limit in your state in order to reduce overcrowding in environments for younger children. You may consider requiring pre-registration for these classes.
- Continue all restrictions outlined above.