



## COVID-19 Alert Level 3

## Advice for Youth Ministry

Kia ora, Hello to every one involved in youth ministry in Aotearoa we are all now out of Alert Level 3 however should things alter here are some guidelines for Alert Level 3

As people have moved in and out of different Levels there is a weariness in many and it is taking it's toll on Mental wellbeing.

Let's all continue to be kind to others but especially ourselves, let's remember we are not alone Here are some links that may be helpful

The Govt site for Alert Levels

<https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/tables/COVID-19-alert-levels-summary.pdf>

<https://covid19.govt.nz/everyday-life/religious-communities/#religious-events-and-ceremonies-at-alert-level-3>

SO many of the restrictions relevant to Level 4 still apply in Level 3.

Remaining in your household bubbles , visitors, friends extended family still NOT allowed to join you. At Alert Level 3, people are asked to be at home when theya rent at school, work, or supermarket or getting exercise

When you are outside maintain good physical distancing and we are all encouraged to use facemasks

Emotionally - let's be kind to ourselves even as we are kind to those around us,

There is an underlying low mood and lack of motivation hitting many at the moment

here is a link letting you know what to look out for but also with some practical steps to help us with how we may be feeling

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/dealing-with-depression-during-coronavirus.htm>

definitely worth checking out, gives you ideas on how to do these things , and that makes a huge difference

**Distract yourself - Find simple sources of joy - Limit your consumption of news/social media - Maintain a routine-Express gratitude**

It gives us new ideas on how to connect, so take a moment and check it out

We are not alone. We are in the midst of something bigger than us all and everyone is being impacted in different ways

Have a look at the link above but also here are some suggestions that may be helpful in growing and developing your young people and strengthening their walk with God , even in this unique and challenging time

### 1. ENGAGE WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE ON-LINE

*Suggest that for those unable to use internet, phone (via parents phone if necessary) x2 a week*

As Anglicans we are recommending the use of Zoom <https://zoom.us/>

It has 2 options.

Zoom Basic A free Zoom account where you can host 3 or more people, it has unlimited sessions but are limited to maximum of 40 mins per session

Zoom Pro: which has extra features and unlimited time on each session >

We have groups across NZ using a combination of both

Key Leaders holding Pro accounts and all other leaders hosting small groups on the Zoom Basic

Attached are some guidelines on how to use Zoom safely with your young people and we are

offering a tutorial session on how to use the platform well with young people should you require it.

(If you choose to use Zoom there are alterations you can make to the settings to maximise safety)

### **Setting up...**

As leaders, prepare before you meet just like you would for a youth group event.

These sessions can be even more intense as often young people say things on line that they may not say in person

Have 2 leaders at each session and we suggest you have 1 prepared to host and 1 following and addressing the chat option where young people can type thoughts and questions

1. Be familiar with the Guidelines around use of Zoom and ensure you practice as suggested to ensure safety at all times for you and the young people
2. Be familiar with Zoom and know how to use it well
3. Have content for each session ready so there is no awkward silent times. Our young people so need laughter and fun right now, Weave it across your planned session. Favourites of Mafia, TicToc, Charades, scavenger hunts, Scattegories, can all be done online

Utilising these 3 I's may also be helpful in preparation

- Icebreakers
- Input
- Intentional interactions

eg 30 mins into session call a 5 min drink/toilet break, set a challenge

Get them to sign back in after the 5 min break and then the 40 min time limit on Zoom Basic becomes irrelevant.

### **Setting the right vibe / Hospitality...**

This is really important when we meet with our young people online.

1. As leaders meet on Zoom first and pray together before the young people join you
2. Be online first to greet everyone as they join
3. Set the culture / vibe of every session.- don't let things slip  
eg Safe behaviour, no putdowns,
4. Remembering that connecting, listening to and caring for the young people is the most important thing of all but don't lose sight of the content you are hoping to leave the young people with

## 2. HELP THE YOUNG PEOPLE NAVIGATE COVID-19

Anxiety is already something our young people and young adults were struggling with prior to COVID19 moving across the world, and now across Aotearoa

With all that is occurring right now, and with isolation now our young people's norm, the mental health of our young people is of real concern

We have suggested using online as a means of connecting with our young people because they are a generation so comfortable with this form of communication. The challenge with this means they will be less engaged with the community around them and will find it easier to connect to what is happening across the world and our nation.

- Diocese are all coming up with their own strategies but definitely worth making sure the young people are in the loop and see if they have ideas on how they can connect with what is happening and how they can contribute
- We are not helpless. Prayer is real and something we can all be doing . Invite your whole church community including young people to be praying regularly and specifically around global and local issues that are unfolding because of COVID19 .  
Here are 2 links worth using - put out by 24/7 so aiming specifically to engage young people but encourage your Diocese to join you  
<https://www.24-7prayer.com/coronavirusprayer>  
<https://www.chvnradio.com/christian-news/praying-through-a-pandemic-10-specific-prayers-for-responding-to-coronavirus-anxiety>
- Create a safe space for young people to share any worries, ask questions. This link answers some questions being asked at the moment (and it's from Harvard !) – check it out  
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/how-to-talk-to-teens-about-the-new-coronavirus-2020031419192>.
- The question of where is God in human suffering isn't new and is certainly coming up now. [NUA](#) is a free resource that goes there, aimed at Young people - here's a link to a taster <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2323522917694570> .  
Revelation 22: 13 says God is "the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End"  
So good to know we are in His hands and not in this alone. Spend time reminding the young people He is bigger than everything around them.
- Use this as an opportunity to help our young people engage with the Bible  
Set a passage each week in with your young people/youth group and get the young people using this app <https://www.youversion.com/bible-lens/> (available free @ google play) to take a photo and post their picture with that scripture on it  
There are Psalms that help us lament: Psalms 10,57,61  
There are Scriptures that bring us comfort: Isaiah 43  
There are Scriptures that bring hope and remind us that we have a God greater than everything Psalm 121  
And there is really good advice :Hebrews 10: 22-25 which is why we are encouraging connecting online!!  
*"So let's do it—full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out. Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshipping together but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching."* (The Message)

This link <https://www.facebook.com/TheDailyOffices/> takes you to a site set up by Adjust , a group of young adults in Auckland, where Scriptures and liturgy, prayers are lead 3 times a day.

### 3. Other Information

*This is just to be aware of , not trying to add responsibilities too big to carry just put it out there so we can be mindful and pray into it and have it in our thinking*

- It is so important to keep our young people safe and with the statistics showing young people already struggle with Mental Health and suicide  
The need to build a sense of connection over this period of time, the need to help them find their hope and purpose and engage with their Creator is vital  
The best thing we can do here is to create a space for young people to express how they are feeling and to be straight up with them if we have any concerns for their safety. While confidentiality is important if you have concerns for the safety for a young person or others, seek help.  
Be aware of who is supporting you and what your plan and protocol is in your Youth Ministry, in your Parish, Your Diocese so you can activate it easily  
Different support is readily available to you  
Live for tomorrow that has been set up specifically to support people journeying with young people <https://www.livefortomorrow.co/>  
If you are doing youth ministry within the Anglican Church setting you have Diocese Youth Enablers as well as your Vicars and Vestry  
You don't need to feel overwhelmed If feeling concerned ? Contact this supporting you and Activate your plan /protocol and share your concerns.
- Encourage young people to establish a pattern and purpose to their days, intentionally creating time away from being online  
With schools being closed and our young people isolated at home all day, many/most with access to unlimited internet  
there are 2 areas of concern and something to discuss with the young people before they become problems

Research is showing similar neuroimaging for people gaming and drug addicted!!!  
True story!

<https://www.healthimaging.com/topics/neuroimaging/video-game-brain-mri-shows-similar-results-gaming-drug-addicts>

Gaming is genuinely fun for a lot of people and a great way to socialise – explore with the young people what rhythms could be set that prevent this becoming excessively consuming. And also how can it be done safely?

Pornography is a silent worldwide endemic. <https://fightthenewdrug.org/10-porn-stats-that-will-blow-your-mind/>

With 64% of 13-24 year olds already actively seeking out porn while they juggle school, Uni, work

imagine how hard it will be with all this time at home and the internet as their main form of distraction

Jo Robertson sums it up really well in her TED talk  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCY2dOf2eMs>

#### Closing Message from Lorna National Youth Facilitator Tikanga Pakeha

This has been going on for months now and everyone is feeling it, some regions of NZ more than others, but COVID has impacted everyone across Aotearoa and the world.

You are reading this because you have the privilege of journeying alongside young people in this huge yet also precious season

As our young people and as we are stripped back from the noise and pace of normal life

The internet and screen time has become such a huge tool for ourselves and the young people and it is impacting us all

You are right there beside the young people

yet it is becoming increasingly difficult to engage with them effectively

so the advice is find ways to be as creative as possible and shake things up with old fashion phonecalls, letters/packages

For some of those doing this the engagement of their young people online increases after unexpected deliveries arrive to the young people.

Each of you are able to connect - be committed to praying -and let God use you to make a very real difference.

In the midst of this work out what you need and be intentional about adding it into your week  
So that you are cared for well as you care for others.

Good tools - Preparation – Connecting all go a long way as you walk with our young people

But let Prayer and Worship undergird it all, and be the foundation you build everything on

Here are some links to some worship songs that you could use personally and with your young people

Te Aionuku <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2vwAa5oRZU>

No-one but you <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wo5uf4-WCdE>

Jesus - what a wonderful name <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8IcT5KdBEY>

Tuhia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wxI8hbHQLE>

Afio Mai/Peace <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxti7euyKLU>

As you walk and pray with your young people - Know you are being prayed for too.

*And to end From A New Zealand Prayer Book*

God of the present moment

God who is Jesus stills the storm and soothes the frantic heart

Bring hope and courage to all of us as we wait in uncertainty

Bring hope that you will make us the equal to whatever lies ahead

Bring us courage to endure what cannot be avoided  
For your will is health and wholeness  
You are God and we need you

Blessings – Kia kaha

Lorna

I roto i te pōuri te mārama e whiti ana; heoi  
kihai i mau i te pōuri / **The light shines in the  
darkness and the darkness did not overcome it.**

*John 1:5*

*Join with churches around the world in  
lighting a candle on Sundays at 7pm,  
and praying with and for others.*

