



QUARANTINE IDEAS

During lockdown, we gathered various simple ideas for an online youth group on the liveblog. Find them all in one place here!

IDEA #1 – VIRTUAL MUSEUM TOUR

How about virtually touring a museum together? Taking a trip around London landmarks? Or using Google Earth, or [Google Arts and Culture](#), to explore some of America's National Parks? The internet is full of virtual tours allowing people to experience places they are currently restricted from visiting in person. Many group video chat platforms have a share screen function enabling the entire group to see something on one person's screen. This is highly useful for allowing the whole chat to experience something together.

MUSEUMS

Numerous famous museums are now online and open for virtual admission. Here's a few that are definitely worth checking out:

- [Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History](#)
- [Nasa Glenn Research Centre](#)
- [The British Museum](#)
- [Picasso Museum, Barcelona](#)
- [Benaki Museum, Athens](#)
- [National Palace Museum, Taipei City](#)

CITIES/ LANDMARKS

New sites and new experiences are being added to the digital world on a regular basis. Some great ones that are already up and running include:

- [Visit London](#)
- [Easter Island](#)
- [National Parks of the USA](#)

For an online session, it's important to remember that not all the young people will be interested in seeing round a museum or landmark. Keep the tour short and engaging. Check it out for yourself beforehand and identify what the best features are so as to direct the group to the most interesting areas.

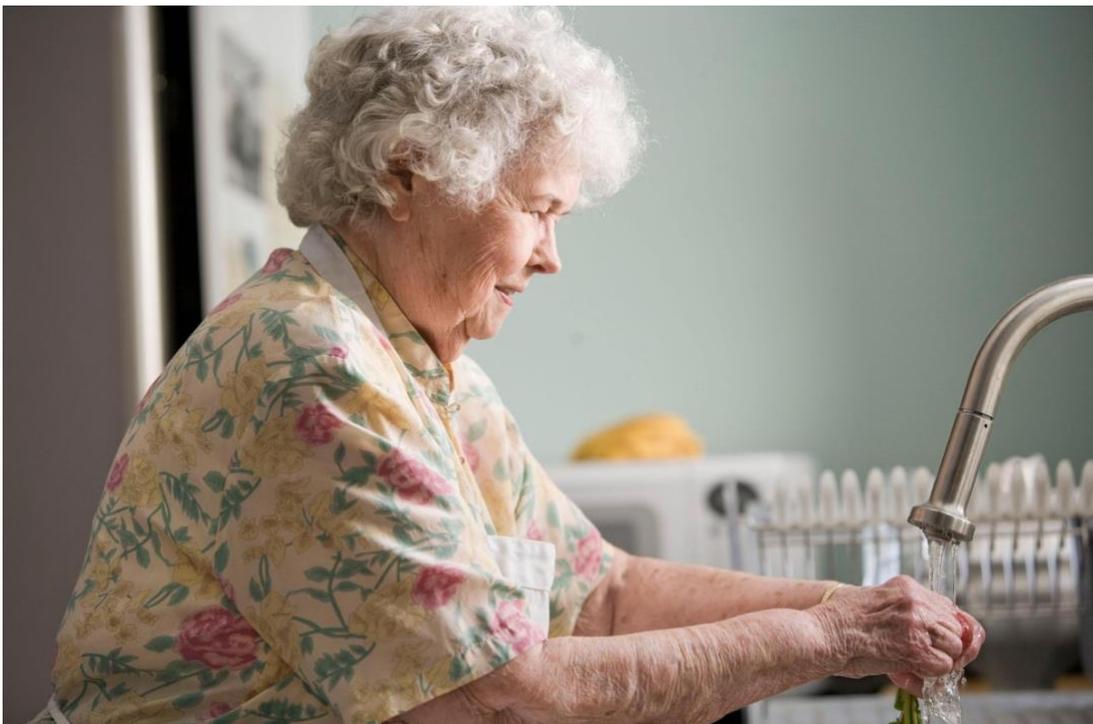
You could even use the tour to play a game! Go through the site beforehand and note down a list of objects / words you see. During your online youth group, tell the young people the list of things they should look out for. Have them come up with their own buzzer noise which they have to make as soon as they spot something from the list. Keep it fun and interactive so as to keep the young people interested.

IDEA #2 – INVITE YOUNG PEOPLE TO WRITE TO AN ELDERLY PERSON IN THEIR COMMUNITY

During this time, it's been incredible to see people come together and offer support to one another during such difficult times. Here's a way to engage your group in the midst of quarantine, and help them to invest in their community:

We know that some of those most at risk now are the elderly, and that elderly people are already some of the most isolated in our communities. A letter, email or card could brighten up someone's day and bring real encouragement. Here are the practical steps:

- **Identify older, vulnerable people in your community** who would be open to receiving a message from a young person. If you work for a church, identify isolated older people in your congregation and ask for their home/email addresses. If your youth work context is not church based, how about contacting a local care home? Ask them if they would be up for receiving correspondence from your youth group and distributing the message to residents. If they are worried about the risk associated with letters coming in, check to see if emails would be appropriate. Emails could be printed off on site and delivered to rooms or read aloud.
- **Get the young people you work with on board.** Use this as an opportunity to talk to your young people about social action and caring for their neighbours. Tell them they can be creative as they want to be with their messages. If they're struggling with what to write, point them towards a Bible passage, poem or song lyrics. Challenge them to see this practical exercise as a way of looking after some of the most vulnerable people and a way in which they can potentially make a real difference in someone's day.



IDEA #3 – STOP MOTION SWITCH-UP

Want to switch up how you do youth group notices, or looking for an artistic, fun new way to get people talking and creating? Why not make a stop motion movie? Stop motion is a form of animation where a video is made by taking a number of photos and moving things around bit by bit between each shot. When the images are then played back sequentially, what was static is now moving. Stop-motion allows you to make a high-quality film using minimal resources.

You could use this as a way of making a collaborative youth group movie. If you decide on a storyline, each young person could film from 30-60 seconds of images, and those individual scenes could be collected and edited together to make a complete animation. Here is a step-by-step guide:



STEP 1: Download a stop motion video app and familiarise yourself with how it works. Apps such as Stop Motion Studio are free to use and put the movies together for you. All you have to do is take the photos and move the characters.

STEP 2: Choose your characters. The cast of your movie is completely up to you! You could use Lego people, stick men, soft toys or even everyday household items. Toy Story 4 was headlined by a plastic spork, so shoot for the moon.

STEP 3: Come up with a rough storyline. Nothing too long or complicated. It can be as easy as having a character climb the stairs or fight an opponent. Remember for each move your character makes you'll have to take a load of photos so the simpler the scene, the better.

STEP 4: ...Action! Time to get the camera rolling. Open the app on your device and set up the first scene. Take your photo. Next, move the characters slightly – it could be adjusting an arm, moving them forward an inch, etc. Once you've set your new scene you can take another photo. Continue moving your characters bit by bit for each new photo. Once you're happy they've reached the end of the scene, hit play and watch your stop motion movie from start to finish.

IDEA #4 – VIRTUAL MOVIE NIGHT

Looking for another group activity to do with young people during the lockdown? Instead of the usual in-person movie night, why not have a **Netflix party**? Netflix Party is an add-on to Netflix that allows people with different accounts to all watch the same thing at the same time. If someone pauses the show to grab some popcorn, it's paused for everyone. There's also a fun chat option at the side so people can send comments to one another while the movie's going on. This will only work if everyone in your youth group has a Netflix account. The other challenge is that Netflix Party is only compatible when running on a laptop or desktop computer because it's downloaded and run via Chrome.

Prior to any party, make sure you follow your usual safeguarding procedures regarding consents and also ensure you're not exposing young people to anything which isn't age-appropriate. Netflix has an abundance of movies to choose from but why not select something that you can use to fuel discussions in subsequent group meetups, like 'Lion', 'The Boy who Harnessed the Wind' and 'The Theory of Everything'? You could pull out themes from the movies and link to bible stories with similar themes. Use these movies as a link between the experiences of fictional characters and lessons learnt from reading scripture.

Here's how you'd go about setting up your lockdown movie night:

- Download and install the Netflix Party extension from Chrome
- Make sure all the young people have also downloaded the extension
- Load the Netflix website and choose a movie
- Choose something light-hearted and funny to watch
- Turn that solo-movie into a party by clicking on the red NP at the top right of the screen
- Start the party and invite your youth group to join by sharing the URL
- They then can click on that URL invite which will load their own Netflix account and they join the movie by clicking on the red NP in the top right of their screen



IDEA #5 – TRYING A NEW SKILL

As a youth leader, investing in young people is at the heart of what you do. You want to see young people thrive in all areas of their lives. In this time of online youth work, it's difficult to know how best to come alongside your youth group and continue to offer them holistic support.

With some young people becoming increasingly frustrated with life in lockdown, one practical way you can encourage them is by inspiring them to explore new activities, hobbies and skills during the isolation period. Young people have more time than ever to try new things and pursue new skills. Many organisations, both educational and recreational, have responded to the current lockdown by putting material online which is readily available for anyone to access. This is the perfect time for young people to experiment with something they've never done before – they just need to know what's out there!

Here's a list of things you can inspire your young people to try:

- **Cooking classes** – several chain restaurants have recipes and cooking tutorials available via their social media accounts or youtube channels. These include Wagamama's ['wok from home'](#) and Zizzi's [#zizzirecipes](#).
- **Khan Academy** – this free online programme might sound a bit too much like your usual school work but there's a far greater variety of courses available online than in your normal classroom. There's everything from a course on Storytelling, which has you create your own theme park, to World History, highlighting key moments in various cultures throughout time.
- **Learn how to code** – [Hour of Code](#) offers free beginner tutorials on how to code. Everything from Google logos to apps to Minecraft landscapes.
- **Photography classes** – during the month of April, photography giant Nikon, is offering [courses for free!](#)
- **Learn a language** – there are several apps available to download that will help you get started with learning a new language. Apps such as 'Memrise' and 'Duolingo' are free, easy to use and fun to explore.

Why not direct your young people to some of these courses/activities and help them make the most of the time they have during quarantine? At the end of a youth group session, you could challenge your young people to try out at least one new activity before you meet again. For something like the cooking classes, why not encourage them to make something and send in a picture? Before recommending young people to certain websites, please make sure you follow your usual safeguarding procedures regarding consents and pre-evaluating content.

IDEA #6 – VIRTUAL ZOO OR AQUARIUM TRIP

Why not try a virtual zoo or aquarium trip? Multiple zoos and aquariums across the world have set up live webcams showing footage of popular tanks and enclosures. Since many video chat platforms have a share screen function, the entire youth group is able to experience something together through one person's screen.

ZOOS

- San Diego Zoo has perhaps the greatest number of webcams providing live snapshots into various animal enclosures from baboons to elephants to tigers.
- Houston Zoo also has a varied mix of webcams to view, showcasing animals such as giraffe, rhino and leafcutter ants.
- Edinburgh Zoo is another zoo with some excellent webcams to check out. The penguin enclosure is particularly entertaining!
- The Chester Zoo YouTube channel features pre-recorded tours of exhibits and animal feeds. This is definitely where to go if the live webcams in other zoos aren't loading or the animals are hiding off-screen!

AQUARIUMS

- Georgia Aquarium has several webcam tanks letting you look in on beluga whales, jellyfish and more. Georgia Aquarium is home to some ocean giants, including whale sharks and manta rays. You can view these magnificent animals and more in the Ocean Voyager exhibit.
- Monterey Bay Aquarium has webcams highlighting some of their most popular tanks. The sea otter and shark cams are some of the most viewed. The aquarium only shows footage during certain hours but plays pre-recorded clips when the live-feed is off.

INTO THE WILD

While zoos and aquariums are great at promoting species awareness and championing conservation, sometimes you just want to see animals in their natural habitat. The Explore website offers just that! While there is still aquarium and zoo footage on the site, the majority of cameras are hidden in real life nature reserves and known wildlife hotspots.

For an online session, it's important to remember that not all young people will be interested in seeing animals in zoos and aquariums. Keep the tour short. Check it out for yourself beforehand and identify where the best webcams are so as to direct the group to the most interesting exhibits. It is also worth noting the times the live cams are running considering some of the suggested sites are based in the United States.

Make the session interactive. Ask each young person what their favourite animal is beforehand and try and find webcams or footage of that animal to highlight to them during your tour.

IDEA #7 – QUIZ NIGHT

Just about everyone seems to have been involved in a video-chat quiz at some point recently. It's a great way of doing something fun as a group while being apart. It's also a great thing to do as a youth group. You could run it as an outreach or social event and encourage young people to get their friends involved. If you want to run a quiz for your youth group here are some pointers to help get you started:

- While you could opt for the traditional quiz rounds – general knowledge, music, sports, etc – it'll be more exciting to the group if you include some rounds more specific to them. For example, why not include some questions about the area where you live? You could put up pictures of roads or well-known places and ask them to name them. Or what about a leaders' baby picture round? Match which picture belongs to which leader.
- Get inventive with your questions. Keep it fun and interesting but remember who your audience is – make sure there are a few easier questions thrown into the mix.
- It's probably a good idea to keep each round quite short to make sure you are keeping everyone's attention.
- Try and make it as visual as possible. If your video-chat platform of choice has a share screen function, make use of it! Create a PowerPoint and include pictures, logos, etc for the group to identify.

One last thing to mention is a great programme called [Kahoot!](#) which allows you to create quizzes online. Questions are viewed on a shared screen and players answer individually on their own devices. For more information and tutorials on how to run a Kahoot! quiz, check out their website.

