

WELCOME BACK

AG KIDMIN RELAUNCH KIT

RELAUNCH STRATEGIES:

For the Small to Midsized Church

Note: Most of these ideas are part of a bigger study on relaunch strategies for AG churches. Refer to these reports for a larger more complete study for churches.

What might a schedule be like for services to once again begin?

Consider two services, even if not needed, in order to spread your people out.

Consider bringing your kids into the sanctuary to sit with their parents.

- If kids are with the parents, consider a kid's corner or object lesson done in such a way that the kids have a location in which they know they will engage.
- If kids are with the parents, consider a worship song done for the kids, complete with actions. Also choose worship music with simple words the kids can relate to.
- As soon as your state guidelines allow, start the nursery/preschool back up and then the elementary a bit after. (Or the other way around: start the elementary and then the preschool/nursery.)
- For babies and young preschoolers, consider separate spaces, cribs, playpens, things easy to clean.
- Consider offering an afternoon family service for families with kids. This would be half kids church and half adult church. It will separate some families from the normal service.

Consider occasional events designed to get visitors of the online services to come to the church, such as: on-the-ground picnics, a Sunday afternoon kids rally, a contemporary youth service, etc.

Consider a shorter-than-normal service structure to have less exposure and to accommodate those visitors who were watching a shorter service online.

Consider maximizing your impact by utilizing volunteers to update your space while you can, including painting walls, hallways, chairs, tables, cleaning carpet, updating bathrooms, kid's areas, etc.

Consider hosting a breakfast or reception to encourage re-connection and relationship-building while providing safe food service options.

What precautions will you take to encourage and promote cleanliness and good healthy practices in your space?

Regularly contact your district office for a list of state and regional precautions and standards as well as policies, procedures, and protocols established by professionals for both social distancing and cleaning.

Consider spacing of chairs and room setup for appropriate distancing.

Consider stickers for kids every time they wash their hands. Consider activities utilizing soap and bubbles.

Consider precautions, such as wearing masks and gloves.

Engage in conversations with pastor, board, children, and youth leaders to prepare adequately.

Consider creating a 'touchless environment' that limits the amount of contact with hard surfaces and with one another (including games and toys with children).

Utilize time before re-launch to fully develop cleanliness policies.

- Use volunteers whenever possible to keep all areas clean and sanitized. Clean surfaces and toys on a regular basis using guidelines from your state provided by your district office.
- Utilize dishwasher to clean and sanitize toys/objects, using laundry bags to hold smaller objects.
- Maintain a supply of easily accessed cleaning wipes for instant spot-cleaning.
- Reduce the number of toys, chairs, tables, and equipment that will be needed. Store away excess to only be pulled out if needed. This will greatly reduce the amount of cleaning needing to be done before and after services.

Schedule regular trainings and updates with volunteers, staff, and janitorial personnel to ensure proper procedures are being used.

Maintain a visible presence of cleanliness.

Provide written communication of cleaning processes through various means, including mail, email, brochures, and social media.

Provide written communication on sickness policies.

Post policies for visiting families to see.

What elements will you use to create a WOW first impression for first-time guests who visit your ministry?

Create a "Welcome Home" high-energy party atmosphere and host a family service for everyone to be together.

Even though it may not be appropriate to give hugs or high-fives, consider creative ways to interact, such as large foam hands to exchange high-fives (being mindful of good sanitation practices).

Establish a strategic follow-up process for first-time guests, including but not limited to a post card, phone call, or mailing a special gift.

Make families aware of resources that may be available through the church or community, such as food pantries, financial support, and opportunities for prayer.

Establish a structured, ongoing connection to kids and families through phone calls, cards, and virtual connections to provide support and encouragement. Remember, little things matter.

As the pastor or primary leader, be available and focused as guests arrive in order to provide opportunities for answering pertinent questions and for personal connections.

Provide team members to guide new families through the kids' areas. Create drop-off and pick-up procedures which explain the safety measures in place.

Use activities to build relationships between kids and leaders, such as Show and Tell or playing games like Would You Rather.

How can you prepare your volunteers for your first Sunday together?

Connect with your team via postcards, texts, phone calls, Zoom calls, etc., asking them of their fears, needs, and concerns.

Communicate on a relational level, being honest and clear. Pray with them.

Lead with vision and focus on the positive opportunities, making sure they don't feel alone or overlooked but instead feel valued.

Review updated policies & procedures with your team and equip them in as many ways as possible.

Begin checking on the availability of your volunteers. Be careful of those who feel unsure about the safety of the church, especially the senior citizens.

If possible, use volunteer team members to hold open every door so that only one person touches the doors.

If possible, use volunteer custodial members to clean during services.

Ask volunteers to connect with a group of kids by sending them a card or letter bi-weekly.

If possible, consider a creative team to continue an online presence.

- Prepare a service recap video which is online for kids who were not present.
- Endeavor to create a team to work with digital communications, such as Facebook.
- Create time for the above digital content by utilizing teenagers, talent from other larger churches, talent and resources provided by your district, shared resources from larger churches, etc.
- Utilize digital resources to give families a peek behind the curtain of your children's ministry. Use this opportunity to create positive connections and a preview of the ministry.

Remember to show appreciation to those who serve in your church by providing feedback, affirmation, and love through various means.

Schedule Zoom connect dates. Connect leaders with kids, especially those kids not yet coming to services.

How can you prepare to spiritually impact your kids with DEEP faith?

Become familiar with the eight goals found on the Kidmin.ag.org website. Consider purchasing the "Strong Enough to Last" book found at My Healthy Church.

Partner with parents to encourage spiritual growth in kids through prayer and Bible reading by providing lesson notes from each class.

Structure services to focus on prayer, worship, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lead kids in hearing the voice of God.

Give kids the opportunity to respond to God at the altar.