

# Congregations Supporting **COMMUNITIES**

THIS FALL- STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND FAMILIES NEED YOUR HELP.  
HOW CAN YOUR CHURCH RESPOND?



## 1.) START WITH WHO YOU KNOW

Talk with the parents, students, teachers, administrators, and social workers you already know in your congregation or community. Don't know any? Then now is the ideal time to call the nearest school and introduce yourself!

## 2.) BRING QUESTIONS, NOT ANSWERS

Be a listener. Ask questions like - "How are you?" "What's challenging right now?", "What would be helpful?", "What would NOT be helpful?" Listen carefully to their responses. Write them down.



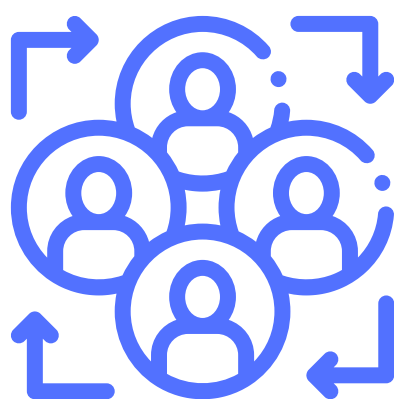
## 3.) GIVE A REALISTIC YES

Compare expressed needs to your resources and strengths. Consider them in the context of one-time, short, or long-term commitment. Can you actually meet this need? Offer only what you can realistically deliver, and don't try to meet needs they didn't ask you to. Build trust and meet need, even if it feels small - every little bit helps!



## 4.) WORK AS A TEAM

Bring others in and empower them. Don't try to do it all yourself! Partnering with others takes more time and effort, but creates better dignity, investment, sustainability, and trust.



## 5.) CELEBRATE THE WINS

Set goals. Measure your impact. Share good stories. Put people first. This season is hard, and no one has all the answers. But remember that transforming the world can start with the care you give to the student, teacher, and family right in front of you.



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# Congregations Supporting **FAMILIES**

There are no easy days, no easy decisions right now for families.

Parents and caregivers are trying to figure out how to navigate school decisions alongside work obligations, financial stressors, health concerns, and additional childcare. The risks for and reporting of domestic violence, abuse, depression, substance abuse, food insecurity, housing stability, and divorce have heightened significantly.

*How can congregations support families in need during this time?*

## Support Parents & Caregivers

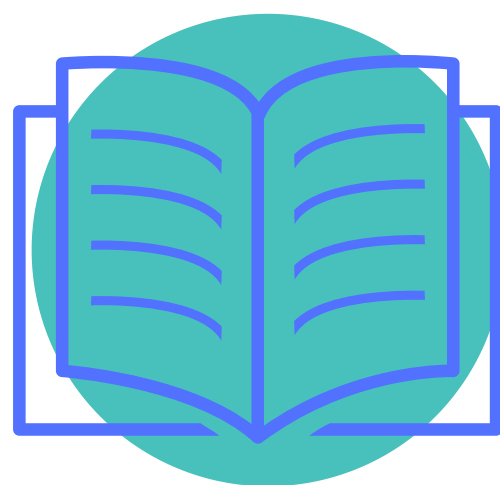
### IN CRISIS



- Form parent support groups to provide empathy, idea-sharing, and networking.
- Care for families in quarantine by providing meals, calls, cards, etc.
- Cover costs of telehealth for single parents and married couples to get counseling.
- Volunteer the church parking lot as a food distribution or COVID testing site.

### IN EDUCATION

- Connect families with tutors/subs to facilitate learning small groups for digital learners.
- Consider how your church building, grounds, parking lots, vehicles, etc. could resource children/families without wifi, students of single working parents, Homeschool groups, Learn From Home pods, or small groups.
- Offer tutoring or Financial Health Classes
- Print up yard signs and surprise students on their first day of school.
- Encourage, encourage, encourage!

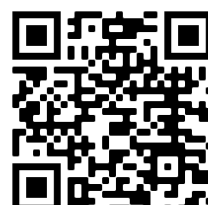


### IN FEEDING BODY & SOUL



- Offer Wednesday Night Suppers and/or Communion as a Drive Thru.
- Host drive up Bingo Nights, Movie Nights, Worship, Car Sing-a-longs using loudspeakers or FM radio.
- Resource families for the spiritual development of their own children (Lead a Sticky Faith study?)
- Text out prayers, scripture, worship videos, and words of encouragement.
- Connect families with Amplify Media streaming study services.
- And hold them in prayer!

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# Congregations Supporting **TEACHERS**

THE CHANGE FEELS CONSTANT.

AND THE PLANS WILL NO DOUBT CHANGE AGAIN. NO MATTER WHAT THE PLAN WILL BE, PARENTS ARE VOICING FRUSTRATION AND ANGER. SAFETY AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPLIES ARE LOW, AND STUDENTS' NEEDS ARE HIGH. TEACHERS ARE WONDERING ABOUT THEIR OWN CHILDREN. HOW IS THIS GOING TO WORK?

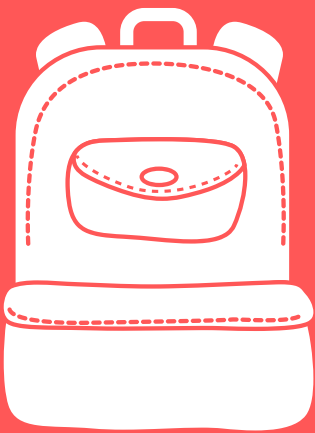


## 1.) LISTEN

- Attend school board meetings. Stay current on your community's school plans.
- Check in with teachers, principals, administrators, and staff. Ask "How are you? How can we help?"
- Give teachers/administrators a platform to speak to the congregation.

## 2.) PRAY

- Offer a "Blessing of the Teachers" during worship.
- Pair teachers and congregation members together as Prayer Partners.
- Include area schools, principals, and board members on church prayer lists.



## 3.) GIVE

- Gather and donate school and classroom supplies.
- Gather and donate safety and sanitation supplies.
- Supply teachers and school staff with meals, gift cards, and financial support for childcare and counseling.

## 4.) SERVE

- Schedule acts of teacher/school staff appreciation.
- Connect substitute teachers and underemployed educators with small groups looking for tutors.
- Provide space on church grounds for tutors to meet with their student small groups.



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