

What particular stress or impact has COVID had on your life and relationships?

Challenges Expressed Across Our SEND Membership

Restricted movement - globally, domestically, locally:

- Isolation from face-to-face ministry in communities and churches
- Inability to return to home country or country of service
- Separation from family, teams, children, spouses for extended periods of time
- Travel cancellations – booking and rebooking
- Barriers with immigration (inability to cross borders)
- Inability to “get away” for travel or leisure
- Uncertainty of timing for borders to open up
- Navigating home service without being able to visit supporters
- Getting out is a task, no longer leisure. Encounters with others are filled with COVID stress in other high-contact spaces
- Travel restrictions causing missed weddings, graduations, or funerals of loved ones

Costliness – Finances & Relationships

- COVID testing and re-testing, as well as quarantine is costly (time and money)
- Financial and relational hardships with support/supporter changes and impact on relationships
- Taxing on relationships. Need to be more intentional in staying connected

Some Ways Members Are Keeping Perspective/Focus

- Remaining close to the Lord, and trusting in His sovereignty. Increased prayer
- Reaching out to others to connect by phone or virtually to process and debrief these challenges
- Using this time to work on areas of life and ministry that have needed focused time but were neglected
- Pivoting methods of reaching out and ministering in new ways in the midst of COVID

Challenges Expressed by Our Singles

- Extended isolation and movement restrictions
- Limited access to food and other necessities
- Missed social and physical connection while living alone
- Home service with family members (both a sweet blessing and a challenge when used to living independently)
- Increasing relational connection through phone, zoom, videos and other means. When used to face-to-face connections, nurturing virtual relationships is challenging
- Adapting to increased time together at home with roommates
- Difficulty finding healthy ways to relax/relieve stress without recreational activities. Managing increased irritability has proven harder
- Very little opportunity to collaborate organically with others. More independent work/decision-making
- Government policies, panic, and lack of public health clarity

- Digital burnout with all online connections and no in-person contact

Some Ways Our Singles Are Finding Relief from Stress

- Choosing to make phone calls and reach out to others when lacking motivation
- Greater intentionality has provided opportunity to go deeper in key relationships during this season
- Choosing to slow down and deepen intimacy with the Lord
- Pursuing new prayer partners to journey with
- Taking time to BE with God

Challenges Expressed by Our Couples

- Lacking rhythms of alone time and healthy space
- Constant stress impacting physical and emotional health
- Navigating vastly different perceptions about the pandemic
- Inability to visit children and grandchildren
- Constant shifts complicating planning
- Missing the joys of going out on dates or getting out of the home and away for an evening
- Inaccessibility to family support due to restrictions

Some Ways Our Couples Are Relieving Stress

- Purposefully using time together to build and strengthen relationship
- Commitment to prayer as a couple
- Setting new rhythms as a RESET has been a blessing
- Outlining routines and certain boundaries has helped with resilience
- Leaning into the Lord and diving into His Word together

Challenges Expressed by Our Parents

- **Separation of Children and Parents** – teen children or college children separated from family or the field they grew up in due to COVID. Some spouses had times apart with expectations for managing schooling ministry and COVID independently. Family separations increased stress for a number of our SEND global members
- **TCK Education:**
 - For those who did not previously **Homeschool** – the new requirements of on-line schooling or combinations of home and in person classes presents many challenges to time, schedule, and family dynamics.
 - **Hybrid School** – Masks and semi-present learning come with risks. Varied models will impact child and youth ministry outreach programs in the coming months. Some hybrid models mean less instruction and less learning with more parental involvement expectations.
 - **Multiple School platforms** – Some families have children attending in-person and online and abroad (sending country/service country) schooling. The variety of schooling platforms even within one family is challenging. In-person school adds health risks to the family, which may impact ministry down the road.
 - Lost **MK Educator** option due to COVID.

- **Constant changes** (school on, then off; face-to-face then online, postponements) make planning difficult and require ongoing family re-adjustments
- **Adjusting to restrictions** like long term quarantine, stay at home mandates, kids not allowed outside, and strict protective measures impact family dynamics and require excessive flexibility. Not being able to set plans.
- **Isolation** for parents and kids who are stir crazy due to travel and stay at home restrictions
- **Balancing** working from home, schooling, family and ministry is challenging when the entire family is home all the time and kids schooling requires more time and attention
- **Grief** – of missed or cancelled special events, missing family funerals, language learning opportunities losses for kids, loss of ministry opportunities

Some Ways Our Parents Are Relieving Stress

- Spending more time together in prayer and the Word which builds our confidence in God, each other, our children. Discussing the pandemic impact on us and our faith as a family has helped.
- Extended time together as families has been a blessing and strengthened bonding
- Depending more on the Spirit to lead family by example
- Working to be creative and seek balance in family, ministry, and school times
- On-line ministry allows us to encourage others and share God's Word with friends through online Bible studies and discipleship
- Reaching out to others facing similar situations, and finding support and encouragement
- Seeking the Lord's guidance on what is needed today from us as parents and children