



Who Had It Easiest During COVID-19?

By Beula Postlewait, Communications Representative

Did any educators have an easy time during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic?

Homeschool Educators

At first, I thought the homeschool educators would have the easiest time. They were two-thirds of the way through the year with no need to change curriculum choices, methods established, home study areas already established, or schedules. However, one of the advantages of homeschooling is the ability to go on frequent fieldtrips (in a car without the expense of a bus and a bus driver) to many public places (libraries, museums, factories, businesses, farms, and unique places).

I thought homeschool educators had all the advantages until I remembered that many public places were closed, thus eliminating one of the best perks. The spouses of some homeschool educators may have lost a job or have been working at home. So homeschool educators had adjustments to make also.

Public School Educators

Public school educators had to go through trauma and confusion as they waited for the school district to decide whether to go to in-school, at-home, or hybrid for education of students. Teachers had to learn new methods to deliver lessons and keep the interest of students during distance learning. ZOOM, Seesaw, Clever, Canvas, and other methods of conducting lessons with students became the norm. Teachers worried about students who were not using their Chromebooks or other methods to receive

instruction and complete the lessons. Educators worried about students who seemed to be falling behind.

Higher Education

Educators in the field of higher education had big decisions to make concerning their students. These students were accustomed to meeting in larger groups and living in small spaces inside large buildings. These educators were forced to alter their methods, find new delivery systems, and keep their students who are more independent, interested, and on task whether the student was in a dorm room or other campus housing or home with parents.

Preschools

Preschool educators had their own set of problems. Those preschools whose clients were “essential workers” did very well, once they made all the adaptations to their facilities, staff, and methods to meet the standards for health, sanitation, and spacing. This was not an easy task. Regular preschools had to meet health, sanitation, and spacing requirements, and they worried about the drop in attendance. Parents had safety concerns and financial concerns as many people lost jobs during this time. Some parents thought they could stay at home to work and watch preschoolers too. Some parents succeeded at this, but other parents found the children distracting and not able to cope well with the situation.

Christian Schools

Christian schools seemed to have mixed results. Some Christian schools had existing “essential worker” parents who desperately needed childcare while they worked, and some new “essential workers” placed their children in Christian schools when the public schools closed. When Christian schools were forced to close in-school learning, they found ways to provide distance learning for their students. Again, they faced the learning curve for becoming familiar with new systems for delivering lessons and keeping in touch with students.

What can educators do?

So which educators had the easiest time during this pandemic? None of the educators had an easy time. All educators had to make many adaptations. At the same time, if they were serving in a facility that was “open,” they would realize their own vulnerabilities to catching the virus. Many educators who were close to retirement age decided this was a good time to retire. Some schools faced a shortage of regular teachers. Many substitute teachers decided not to work during the pandemic. Most districts and schools found it difficult to find substitute teachers. Anxiety and confusion seemed the predominant themes.

What happens next?

Many districts have decided to re-open the schools. The announcement of vaccines being available and planned distributions brings some hope for physical well-being. What about our minds? What can dispel the anxiety and fear? We need a sense of hope that the future will be better.

Where can we find that hope? God’s Word says in Psalm 62:5-8 (NIV):

“Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honor depend on God; he is my rock, my refuge. Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.”

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