

Impact Survey:

Covid-19 and UK Youth Circus

Report 2:

Supplement

10th June 2020



Supported using public funding by

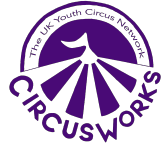
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



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About this Supplement

This supplement contains what youth circuses have to say about the Covid-19 crisis, in their own words. It is a supplementary document, intended to be read alongside our main report: **Impact Survey: Covid-19 and UK Youth Circus Report 2**.

Answers have been edited for clarity, to protect anonymity, and to rectify grammar and spelling mistakes. A few answers have been omitted, due to illegibility or because they were not relevant to the question.



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Financial Impact

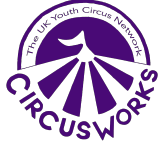
"We have been very lucky to receive significant support. However, if we are not able to operate at a close to normal level of activity from October we do risk going under again. We are anticipating not being able to resume normal classes until September. Its possible we may be eligible for the new government easing of regulations for the small business grant for businesses with shared premises, but we have contacted the local council and they don't have the information yet. If so that will enable us to survive until 2021 even if we have low class numbers or minimal activity in the autumn."

"Our financial outgoings while closed are small: just insurance payments which our insurer has reduced temporarily. There is the possibility that our landlord will not survive the crisis; which would mean we will lose our training space, and we have no back up to pay what would undoubtedly be more rent on a new space (if we can find one). The financial loss is based on the income from youth streams for the summer term and the summer holidays. We owe parents for the last two weeks of the Spring Term when we had to close early but several have already donated their fee, and we hope we will have more donations, otherwise we will be starting off on the back foot when we come back."

"It's not the short term that is the issue, but the mid to long term. What can we apply for funding for?"

"Being eligible for the self-employed income support scheme has disqualified me from Arts Council of Wales grants."

"Our activity capacity (particularly for aerial) has reduced by approximately 65% due to social distancing and cleaning to comply with Covid-19 Secure Risk Assessments. This means that the impact will be medium and long-term, and requires us to develop a new business model with less reliance on aerial programming, which was our core activity. We do not anticipate that demand for outreach activity (which was 35% of our activity) will bounce back quickly, due to economic restrictions and perceived risk, which will amplify this impact. The crunch will come at the end of this year and in 2021, when everyone will be bidding for the same project funds. Until social distancing and cleaning restrictions are lifted, the future of our organisation is unknown."



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"Short term we can cope with lockdown. A long closure will mean the loss of young people and savings that will be sufficient to end the youth circus."

"Until receiving confirmation of the Arts Council England grant today we would have been unlikely to survive."

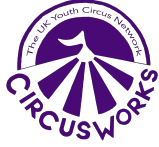
"Our organisation is an NPO, and is seeking funding from Arts Council England. As a leading higher education academy in the circus and performing arts industry, the company is supported in other ways financially. However departments such as our Youth and Adult public classes have lost all income, and the Academy cannot sustain the cost of the staff to run them indefinitely. Additionally this crisis has dried up most of the additional sources of income the company relies on, such as our theatre, venue hires, and of course classes."

"The timing of this survey is too soon for us to be able to comment, or give figures for Arts Council of Wales funds or Self-employed Income Support Scheme."

"We currently have an application in to help save our circus through the creativity, tourism and hospitality grant. We are awaiting the outcome."

"As an Ltd. I can apply for the small business loan and I am going to furlough myself (I am the only PAYE on the company books). As for the freelancers who work for me, they are all applying for the self-employed loan or going on to universal credit. We did get a bit of money (20%) from our summer term contract with an organisation that we work with and we have split that amongst the freelancers. We do not have any rent (we hire the space we work in), and so we have low overheads (storage, insurance, van costs i.e. parking, road tax etc.) if we are not doing any work; but we will run out of savings in 3 to 4 months if no work is allowed. In that case, we will apply for the small business loan for approx. £7000 to £9000. Hopefully, schools will be fully open come the Autumn term and if so we will not need the loan, but that is cutting it very close if we can not run any workshops in the Summer holidays."

"My concern has obviously been the loss of income so far, but it's also my projected loss of income even once we can open again."



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"It is upsetting that we had to take a bounce back loan and get into debt."

"I am a limited company paying myself dividends. If the Government does not approve of such fiscal arrangements it should not offer the product."

"We are ineligible for all government support except job retention, and are ineligible for all arts council grants. We are surviving at the moment through grants (suddenly our reliance on grants is a strength rather than a weakness!), but we had budgeted for trading income too which has now disappeared for at least six months. We are hoping the third sector resilience scheme will support us; otherwise we will need a loan to cover our trading losses."

"We are fortunate that our youth circus is a part of a larger organisation that will weather the storm."

"We are yet to receive any furlough money, so we hope that this comes through - we furloughed staff earlier in May.

We may not qualify for the small business grant, as we are rates exempt, but have applied.

Our building is not valued highly enough to qualify for the hospitality grant. Esmée Fairbairn have been a brilliant funder and offered additional support. Children in Need have also been incredibly flexible.

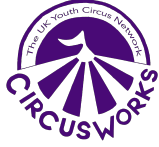
City Council have also been flexible for our arts and heritage work. Funding for festivals that were planned for this financial year has been hit particularly hard.

Other funders have put many scheme/awards/etc. on hold - leading to continued and renewed uncertainty.

Due to owning our building and a number of other factors, our fixed running costs are comparatively high. Fortunately we believe we have managed to secure enough income this financial year to (we hope) cover these.

Some parents have continued to make their monthly contribution, as a donation, but the majority have cancelled (understandably). Therefore, our Youth Circus income is down considerably. Our trainers are mainly freelance staff, and as such our expenditure has been reduced to reflect this decrease in income.

Where we had secured grants to move other pieces of work forward (strategic planning, social circus, development, marketing, recruitment of additional and new posts to build capacity and sustainability), this work is now on hold indefinitely, meaning we will be around 12-18 months behind where we wanted to be - at least."



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"It's all a bit shit."

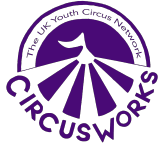
"I found it difficult trying to support staff, as a sole director without income who is not eligible for most forms of support. I had to take work elsewhere to live and didn't have time to work for the company. Motivation and planning are challenging too as we don't know when we can start classes again. And if so, will we financially be able to implement social distancing requirements?"

"No current outgoings as don't have premises, and freelance staff are not engaged."

"We are very lucky not have a mortgage or loan."

"We're fortunately at a transitional stage in the expansion of our business, and are able to scale-down with relative ease."

"Our Youth Circus is only one aspect of our work. We are currently forecasting that our overall income will be down by around 30% to 50% (around £150-200k) over the year. However, funding for our Youth Circus work (all work for young people aged between 2-18 years) will be down by more like 85%. We have reduced our Youth Circus outputs to zero and anticipate that this position will last until December 31st."



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Impact on Staff

“One staff member has another job, our other staff member has no additional income, due to the lockdown impacting their other business.”

“Their mental health at this time is a big concern to us.”

“Some instructors may not be able to return, as they need to find other employment to provide for themselves and their families.”

“All of our staff are self-employed. I have advised them on claiming Government assistance for the self-employed.”

“Our administrators and instructors are currently working for free!”

“Many entire households rely on income from our organisation. One adult might be employed on the staff team, part-time, and top up their income through freelance performance work etc. The other adult in the household might be 100% freelance, with much of their work coming through our organisation. As a result, there are entire households that have lost the vast majority of their income.

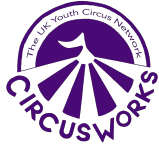
The impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our team is a real concern. They are facing real financial hardship, and having the ability to prioritise their own needs and those of their families while trying to develop 'creative project proposals' for funding is very difficult.

Concerns about the suitability of translating many art forms into a digital format is also a cause for concern. As is the (in some cases inevitable) reduction in quality. Across the sector there is also a lack of competency, skill and confidence in working on new platforms with limited ability to train/learn easily.

Needing to navigate the multiple layers of uncertainty detailed above permeates all areas of life... For many this is worsened still by the lack of a sense of purpose, and real hardship.”

“We managed to maintain and pay one tutor for a weekly session.”

“With the funding support we are now able to keep most of our administrative staff on reduced hours, and we are trying to create work for our tutor team. However at the moment we can only offer them a very small



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amount, as there is limited uptake for online classes and activities, and only so much we can do on a virtual basis."

"As explained before we received some money for an upcoming contract that was split amongst the freelancers, but other than that there are no workshops and no hours."

"All staff are part time. Four are still working (very hard) online and remotely, one is furloughed. If we get the grant and trading or other projects resume in some form from September, we should be OK to retain our existing staff - we are working hard to ensure this happens. We are engaging self-employed staff with grant funding as much as possible to support the sector, but this is a very limited pot."

"Mental health has been a real issue."

"I have asked staff to make videos to put on the website which I would pay them for, but only three have taken it up?!"

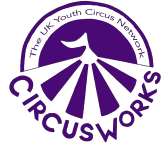
"There is very, very minimal hours and pay."

"The furlough scheme is a safety net for most of our zero hours staff, but as it pays 80% of wages, and is then taxed, it isn't all they can rely on, and our organisation is not in a position to top up the remaining 20% for any staff other than core employees. Additionally, as our staff only came on contract in October 2019, it doesn't accurately reflect the severe loss of additional hours and income that comes with Easter events such as our Showcase, and Easter Camp."

"Some have not qualified for self employed help so had to claim Universal credit."

"Devastating effect on their income and wellbeing."

"I feel fortunate as a sole-trader working with support predominantly from volunteers, or on a barter scheme, my youth circus is currently 'hibernating'. I have stored all the kit at home, I don't have venue overheads, and I lent equipment to youth circus participants before lockdown, so some will be able to continue. But I've not been earning myself since March 16th, so it may be

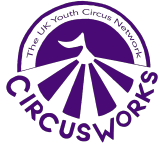


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that I have to find other work if I can't bring my youth circus and adult classes back, as they were my sole income."

"Some self employed administrative staff have been working on severely reduced hours."

"Huge wellbeing challenges here."



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Impact on Young People

"We're not sure. We've had a few messages from parents to say they miss us, or are looking forward to coming back."

"Obviously it's harder to teach skills, but we're doing our best! We've adjusted existing grant funding to send them all some kit to practice with and to use in our weekly zoom sessions.

In the other ways, we don't really know yet. The online sessions are taking place at the same time as our regular workshops, although they're a bit shorter. We are an inclusion project at heart, so we hope that they are getting the same benefits as they do in person - building confidence and resilience, having fun, somewhere to belong.

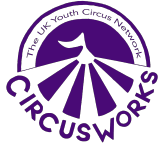
In our online sessions we focus on skills and fun - but it's hard to gauge mood in that setting! Our youth circus is somewhere the young people are able to step away from a constant focus on the various challenges they face and have a bit of fun for a couple of hours - we suspect that this remains the case. It is not possible to have a quiet chat with any of the young people and they may not feel able to communicate their feelings in front of the whole group. It's hard to know quite how they are doing. One parent said that their son was struggling with the lockdown - struggling to sleep and not keeping to much of a routine. When we see that young person he seems to be his usual self.

We have had feedback that some young people struggle with the Zoom setting and we are trying to maintain contact with them in other ways. The best we can do is offer regular contact and engagement opportunities so they know that they can be in touch with us if they need or want to, and work hard to stabilise our finances to make sure we are able to open up again as soon as it's safe to do so. We have spent significant time on training and updating policies and procedures to make sure this change in our work is safe for everyone. "

"They are not training or meeting their friends."

"Disengaged."

"We are about to start calling around to see how everyone is doing as we haven't had a lot of response to emails and Facebook. Only six students have been regularly participating in online classes, some parents have responded



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to say that their children don't want to do classes online (normally a good thing!), but several are saying they are generally very grumpy and struggling with the lack of social time. We know it has been particularly difficult for the families of the SEN group (special educational needs), and that parents have said online classes are not suitable for these children. We are more worried about them as their capacity to do activities is now even more limited. We do not have many young people who come from severely deprived backgrounds, except for some of the school students, but our contact with them is always through the school."

"They are bored - becoming demotivated and disengaged."

"Loss of muscle tone, lack of a space to practice, so a gradual ebbing of their skill set."

"They are frustrated, scared, and bored, we have been engaging with them as best we can but there is a limit to online learning when every activity a child does from school to violin lessons is suddenly having to be done via a screen."

"A part of their lives is missing."

"They are missing this activity. We cannot get into the complexities of individuals, but for many vulnerable young people it is quite a serious loss and has a negative impact."

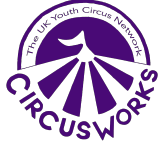
"Unknown, but some are doing our at home activities and receiving rewards."

"No physical activity. Isolated. Lonely."

"They are worried about maintaining strength and flexibility. For some young people it was the most important part of their week. Volunteers and Department of Education students have been affected."

"We have been running online classes (which are later put on YouTube) but:

- There is a clear discrepancy between take-up from low income families for the online classes, compared with our normal demographic. We're not reaching young people from low income backgrounds at all.



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- None of our young people with additional needs have taken up the online classes.
- Some of the young people that we had concerns about (happiness, focus, home situation) have not attended, or if they have attended it's been hard to give them the additional attention they need.
- We cannot connect with the young people in the same way we can in real life.
- As a teacher I'm really missing the social context, and despite breakout groups and theatre games we just cannot recreate the informal nature and the social connections that were growing between the kids in our classes."

"We hear from them and their parents that they miss the activity and their friends."

"Some have taken circus at home kits and are working on new skills. The performing company have made a video. However the bulk of participants seem to be despondent."

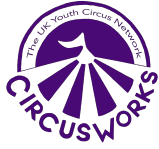
"They're bored, but aware of the situation and their responsibilities. The potentially 'indefinite' nature of social distancing is what causes the most anxiety for them and their parents. Our older members want to do what they can do to help the wider community, while we're told that our youngest participants are becoming easily moved to tears and anger at the lack of overall routine to their lives."

"For some, it was not only circus skills but also social time."

"We are currently accessing this. Skills progression and the social aspects of circus are our main concern."

"I know some have been really missing it. Some have been practising with kit that I lent them, or stuff they have bought themselves. The socialising in particular, the aerial for certain, have been particularly missed."

"We have managed to maintain contact with half of the group, most of whom attend a weekly online session. We have just set up a creative planning group with them as well to start preparing for going back. We are trying to contact the other half and re-engage them."



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"Their connection to each other and to circus is reducing. Many were due to transition to another class or group over the period of lockdown, but this has not been possible. Many do not know when/if they can return. Many report that confidence in their skills has decreased and they are feeling less physically able as well as experiencing a loss of confidence in themselves and their social bonds with the people they'd normally only see at Circus. "

"Sociability, exercise, mental health, anxiety, increases in inequality."

"They find it hard to self motivate themselves to be active, and in turn struggle with mental health."

"We still do online sessions."

"Some of our performance group had just been to the National Youth Circus Event and were very inspired, so they were devastated when we had to stop with the cancellation of four performances in April and May. They are all serious about their circus and have been keeping up skills/learning new skills while we are off. We feel that the younger kids may well drift away without the motivation of a regular class, and we have no idea how to accommodate large recreational aerial and acro classes when we eventually can return."

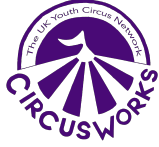
"They are losing strength and flexibility. They are also suffering the mental health effects of the lack of exercise and loss of doing something they love."

"We know that those who are attending our classes have commented on the impact on their mental health. Those doing online training are grateful to be able to keep going because it means that they are exercising and they have a focus."

"They are missing the connection and physical exercise."

"They are struggling, but we are doing online classes to keep them engaged. It's not the same but it's something."

"For the paid class participants they are mostly missing contact with friends in the classes, as well as the physicality of the classes. I can't say for the in-school classes as have no contact with them but I would assume the same if not more so, as they come from a poorer background. We work with an



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organisation that employs us to teach the disadvantaged children in state schools."

"We've always used our position in our community to champion the values of participation in the arts as a way to promote better citizenship, kindness, and curiosity. Almost all of our members are from low-income families who support this message, so we're responding to their needs and suggestions as well. We share our training space with an OAPs group, so I'm pleased to say that most of the chat amongst the group has been about how we can help them."

"I've missed them!!"

"WE will be suffering the repercussions of this for a long time to come."

"We launched our virtual showcase, alongside our home tutorial videos and the footage and engagement we received was incredible. Many people were thanking us for giving them a task to focus on for a while. Hopefully when we launch the showcase it will help to re-inspire their home training and lift their spirits."

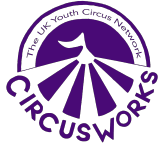
"It's hard to gauge impact without direct connection."

"Those that can get out are getting some physical exercise in the local parks, thankfully it's getting warmer and staying dry. But what I hear most from the parents is about the lack of social connection: actual face to face interaction with each other as well as organised group activities."

"There are many young people who benefit from our Youth Circus in ways that they do not benefit from other activities. The inclusive, non-competitive environment offers all young people a real and meaningful opportunity to be themselves, to be creative, to connect - this is particularly true for those who are vulnerable, have additional needs and/or struggle to communicate/feel isolated. It is these young people who we are most mindful of at this time."

"We know that we've had a positive impact by doing zoom classes for our kids and encouraging them to go to other online circus classes."

"The most vulnerable children prior to the crisis will now surely be some of the most vulnerable citizens of the UK."

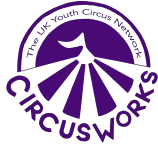


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"I do hope that the young people coming from the poorest backgrounds will have managed to find activities to help them stay sane throughout the crisis."

"We have seen an almost complete decline in engagement with the school since a couple of weeks into lockdown."

"I'm really worried that we have a bomb ticking in terms of both physical and mental health."



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Remote Activity

"We are running three online classes a week. We had another just for younger students, but no one attended so we cancelled it."

"We have been releasing nine online tutorials a week for the past two months. These are YouTube tutorials with varying levels of difficulty and equipment. We have also been making our Virtual Showcase and have had over 250 video submissions."

"Youtube tutorials, competitions via a WhatsApp group and a Zoom class/meet up. Most of the young people don't have equipment, so this has been challenging."

"We have provided circus at home kits, with online teaching support through links, how to videos, and offers of one to one support. We also have a weekly online meeting of our performance Troupe, working on skill exchanges, performance and sharing video. We host a stretch class, and provide sign posting to other circus provision."

"Facebook group signposting suitable online activities."

"We delivered five classes via YouTube, and we are about to launch a further online programme."

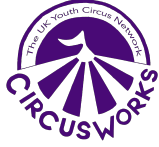
"Free donation based videos on our website filmed by the teachers (paid)."

"We are about to launch an online Saturday morning class. This will now also be augmented by the Arts Council England funding."

"Once a week brief online challenges for parents/families to access and do together."

"Mainly training and support."

"We do a weekly 40 minute Zoom home circus workshop videos for our 12 to 16 year olds, commissioned by BLAS Pontio and funded by Arts Council of Wales. At the moment aren't available online: they go live for 10 days, then



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get re-released. After another 10 days we have the rights to post them again."

"Online youth circus class once a week, and advanced youth circus classes twice a week. This weekend we are providing some free online classes for families and children as part of the Creativity and Wellbeing week. Our online adult classes are suitable for older teens, and we are running a youth pub quiz get together on Wednesday the 27th of May."

"A regular online conditioning and stretching workout, but this is not very well attended."

"We have online classes at the moment over Zoom, which we record and then put edited versions on YouTube."

"Online classes in stretching and conditioning, juggling and poi."

"We are loaning equipment and running bespoke activities with vulnerable children."

"Home conditioning classes via Zoom on Mondays and Thursdays, 5.30pm."

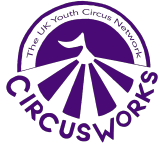
"Weekly Zoom sessions - we are carrying on during school holidays, which we don't normally do."

"Yesterday (Sunday) evening four families climbed hills around our town to signal to each other, using smoke canisters at a pre-arranged time. We provided the canisters, safety training, and geo-location information as a project for young people to lead with parents/carers supporting them. We plan to keep developing this practise as an on-going "Beacons" project to connect people with the hillside places they can walk to."

"All classes are online at the same time the classes usually were – but they are shorter."

"I have shared other circus activities – links through different social media sites – but felt uninspired as to what to share directly myself."

"We have a WhatsApp group that meet once a week to do Zoom exercise sessions."



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"We provide eight online classes a week."

"It has been fantastic for ourselves and our youth to take part in other online classes – particularly NoFit State and Circomedia – especially for our families on low income as these are free/donations only. We are also meeting lots of like-minded people online and new communities and networks are developing.

Another note about our kids: a parent got in touch, whose child has been at risk of being a young offender, and reported that their child hadn't done any homework until after one of our circus Zoom classes. Although we don't charge or ask for fees for the Zoom classes, a parent has already insisted on paying us. So we think that we will add a donate button, now that we are more confident running online, and having the relevant safeguarding knowledge passed on to us by you guys.

Some children who are shy have refused to join our sessions.

It's a bit fiddly trying to get Zoom invites out when parents like to be contacted on different platforms.

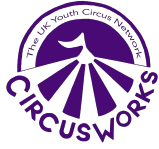
When I tell our youth about other online sessions, I usually attend too, and help with introductions. The kids are more likely to go, and relax quickly, if they know someone else there. Parents have really appreciated the effort we've put in to advertise what's on.

One of our Home Circus videos was used in a secondary school for the children who still have to go.

We also lost out on applying for Arts Council of Wales funding to teach a live online session as our DBS weren't under 12months old. We got ours before the portable system. Our local agency stopped taking new applicants as they are inundated with 'volunteers' who need urgent DBS, but made an exception as the receptionist worked in the arts council, and understands how important it is that we do positive things through the arts that engage young people."

"It was actually one of the (older) young people who took the initiative to form the WhatsApp group and we are now paying her to keep it running."

"We have had very little engagement with our online classes from our regular students."



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"For under 12's, the young people's engagement with the online material is so dependant on the digital literacy of the parents and what they have at home in terms of laptops, smartphones and computers. If parents are not there to adjust camera angle, help with unmuting etc. it makes a massive difference in how much feedback and interaction we can give and how much the kids can get out of the session.

- Several parents have reported that they don't have the technology and/or cannot manage to keep a structure that accommodates for the online classes.
- Parents have reported that their kids don't want to participate in online classes or feel saturated by online classes already.

We have had a lot of good feedback about the online classes too though!:

Parent: "They're both enjoying the classes and went on to choreograph a longer dance later that evening with their sister, incorporating their new moves! I think you guys are doing a great job of delivering the classes in these circumstances, so thank you all!"

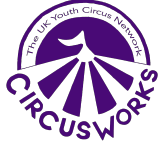
Parent: "[My child] ended up doing one of the previous midi classes in YouTube and loved it. Honestly she'd had a grumpy day and this really cheered her up and put a smile on her face!"

"I did try to teach trapeze classes online but the students were to scared without me in the room with them."

"We have done some online dance stuff but the head of youth is in a vulnerable category and cannot fully engage with the process."

"I struggle with my business head and my artist head when thinking about transferring my lessons from in-person to online. This struggle is because circus is based on the sharing of the same space, the empathy of the coach to the student, and physical connection between peers. Online coaching also flags up concerns for safety and has equality issues. I feel strongly that as an artist and coach, I should not allow circus to fall into the void of the big wide web when everything else is also. My business head struggles with knowing that this is what most circus schools are doing and therefore could be the only way to bring an income."

"One of the teachers is also doing her own Zoom conditioning classes four times weekly."



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"We would be interested in doing more, but it's not sustainable given our employment model and current funding situation."

"Please encourage all young people who train in circus to apply their physical fitness and creative energy to thinking about how they can help their wider community, especially older people who are going to be locked-down for a lot longer than most of us. Remember that most OAPs aren't as digitally connected as you, but they are very interested in what you do! Be creative, kind, and do something amazing for them."

"We find remote activity works with older, dedicated youth students but not with the younger ones who really just want to be swinging on a rope and not stretching!"

"I've been keeping up with the comments/information shares/anxieties on how to teach safely online. Equity's Zoom meeting a few weeks ago was useful, and I have now had confirmation that my insurance will cover me to teach online. I just have to decide if that's the way I want to go. With so many very skilled, motivated, (young!) people out there, I have been questioning too much over what it is I can offer them. More to do with self-doubt and panic I guess than anything. Thank you for continuing to keep us connected."

"Will CircusWorks act as a hub for material?"

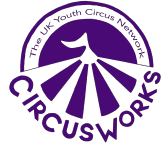
"We are looking into limited online classes via zoom now that we have created a large library of online tutorials students can dip in and out of as often as they want. "

"It is good to have but it will never be a substitute for the face to face and physical contact that forms part of circus."

"I would like to offer more Zoom classes but our internet is very unstable, there is no fibre connections available in our area."

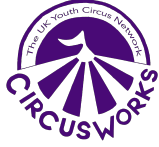
"It has been a whole new way of working, which has come with challenges and frustrations for the team."

"We did have many more youth circus classes programmed, but the take up has been much lower than for the adult classes. We are still trying to contact parents to see the reasons why, but we know that for some kids they are put



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off doing online activities as they are doing their schooling online. We also know that for kids more than for adults participating in circus classes is a social activity which is not the same online."



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Plans to Reopen

"I will have three phases:

1. One-to-ones
2. Small groups x4
3. Back to normal class sizes

"We will be taking a lead from schools and gyms in terms of when we run classes again. I personally feel that it would be safe to start classes in the next few weeks, with reduced numbers in the classes and running extra classes to accommodate all the participants. But I feel the big issue will be cleaning equipment/hands and parents mixing together when picking up or dropping off."

"Probably in September, maybe with a summer holiday workshop in August. There is the possibility that we might open for the last 3 weeks in July."

"Awaiting advice."

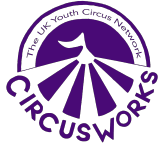
"We are now allowed to run one-to-one sessions outdoors, and we have had some interest in doing these either in people's gardens, or in the outdoor garden around our space. However, this is obviously more expensive for us and for participants than group classes, so we will have to see how possible it is to make this more accessible financially.

We are estimating we will be able to resume proper classes in our space after the school holidays, but we are still waiting to see how the government guidance progresses. If we can resume sooner, even better."

"We assume we will need at least one month to prepare administratively, and that we will need to adapt our classes/approach to ensure compliance with current government guidelines."

"It depends on what happens with schools as our youth circus is linked to a school."

"Buy lots more ropes, silks and trapezes so that each student will have their own piece of equipment. Keep equipment spaced out. Students will need to clean mats/crash mats at the end of each session. No shared chalk/rosin. Students will need to wear clean training clothes and wash them after each



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session. Students will also need to bring hand gel. No extra people (parents etc.) will be allowed in the space.”

“As stated previously, we are following government guidance and public opinion. However the conditions that we are considering include: outdoor teaching, students only using their own equipment where possible, no mixing of groups in classes, and staggered leaving and arriving.”

“We have rejigged the space fully, from the lobby area to the "waiting" area. We have added foot peddle drinking fountains and hand wash sinks to the main training area. We have removed bottleneck areas – everything is 2 meters apart including warm up spaces. We have protocols about spotting, distancing and clothing! Students will be given their own equipment and sharing will not be happening.”

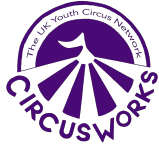
“After all students are attending school there will be no purpose to lockdown and so we will start then.”

“Limited classes with less students and social distancing.”

“We have a discussion planned for the end of July with our management team about the possibility of starting smaller classes in September, however, our BTEC will not be starting until January and the same may end up being the case for other classes also. We are playing this scenario by ear, and by gut.”

“We are figuring out ways to not share equipment, developing strict cleanliness rules and updating waiver forms for students – to agree to the risks involved and to be safe for the sake of others. We will not hold any youth sessions until it is safe to do so. We are thinking about small group training sessions with cleaning regimes and several days in between groups, no equipment sharing and always the same few people training together, with no cross overs.”

“COVID-19 Secure Risk Assessment drafted based on own assessment, discussion with teachers and Arts Council England risk assessment documents. Established a COVID-19 secure training protocol and cleaning regime.”



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"The only thing we can do is make sure people are washing their hands and keeping clean, we cannot disinfect equipment as it is mainly aerial."

"We are fortunate that we have a fairly large space, but we will have to re-consider the layout of our sessions and possibly reduce the number of participants. We are in touch with other circus training spaces about logistics etc. Obviously hygiene will be top priority. The equipment we use is only used for the youth group and only used once a week, so it should be safe."

"Again, we're keen to begin as soon as it's safe - possibly starting with skipping lessons in the park, if that's better than being indoors. But only if it's safe. We need to follow guidance (which is why I haven't answered the above question - I'm not qualified to decide if its safe or not)."

"Outdoor family circus sessions."

"We don't know: until the government gives clear guidelines it's very hard to know when and how to do it."

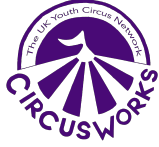
"I am anticipating offering outdoor sessions in the first instance, where social distancing can happen realistically, and where the spread of 'droplets' is considered less risky. I might investigate private outdoor spaces that I could potentially hire and provide kit like hula hoops, juggles, yoga mats etc. where everyone stays in their own space, but at least we can be 'together'... Still very much in the thinking stage. If permitted, I'll teach private households/one-to-ones on my rig in the garden, but at present, this is not permitted or covered by insurance."

"Currently working through them. September at the earliest but we will be guided by Government."

"We think we will be classed as a high risk activity and probably open when the last set of restrictions is being lifted. I believe that we lie in the 'amber' band. So basically not for a while."

"Waiting forlornly for clarification."

"Outdoor work."



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"We will need to look at social distancing measures next year and slowly build up classes again. We have a meeting to discuss this today so are not clear on plans as of yet."

"Hoping to offer ground skills sessions in the park initially, plus some one-to-ones in a studio. I do not know when normal classes are likely to resume."

We are hoping to be able to run a one week intensive in August to re-engage with our young people and then, government rules and regulations permitting, open up again in September when the schools go back."

"To teach private classes for people from the same house or family."

"Waiting for lockdown to end."

"Online only for the moment."

"We are hoping to reopen when schools/theatres do, so we're watching those spaces! Our schools are (wisely) very unlikely to open until September."

"Reduced class sizes with shorter sessions."

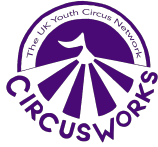
"Likely we will have to reduce class sizes from around 15 per class, to 8. This will have a massive impact on our income as we can only introduce an additional one hour of classes for youth circus to try and accommodate our returning students."

"We have developed a Covid Responses Plan which we are happy to share."

"Small groups using the space at a social distance, with heavy duty cleaning taking place in between any sessions."

If you expect to reopen soon, will you be changing the way you teach your classes, or implementing any new safety procedures?

"There will be many new procedures to start with including: only recapping skills already learnt to reduce spotting time. Students will need to wash hands before and after lessons, will not be able to use chalk bags, will not be allowed to bring mobiles into the class space. There will be 20 minutes clean



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down time between each lesson to allow us to clean down all the equipment. New policies will need to be read and waivers will have to be signed by all parents of the students.”

“Absolutely - we look upon this as a great opportunity to get the students to be more responsible for their training.”

“We are expecting to have to create new social distancing/hygiene practices. It's too soon to know what they might be - a lot can change in four months.”

“I think the smaller numbers will make it very questionable as to whether it's financially worth it. We will struggle with enough kit for it not to be shared, so we will be limited in what we can teach. There will have to be deep cleaning, restrictions on types of kit, hard surfaces only, low numbers in classes, new risk assessments, new insurance policies applied for. Games and warm-ups will have to be re risk assessed too.”

“Absolutely. Change is the new normal isn't it? I will only work with those I know to start with; probably not teach aerial to youngsters (maybe only adults or teens), no spotting, work on conditioning and reviewing simple shapes, social distancing, face coverings perhaps, personalised rosin/water etc. no sharing equipment... the list goes on...”

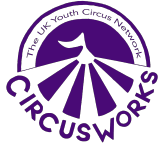
“Reduce the numbers, clean equipment more, ask participants to clean hands, try not to let them get too close to each other!”

“We will expect to implement additional cleaning and hygiene practices, including putting down dance floor on top of the mats as it can be easily cleaned, and using separate aerial equipment wherever possible. We will also have to look at what activities we can include that will comply with social distancing.”

“I am concerned about having no spotting, and also the financial impact of reduced numbers.”

“Almost everything will have to change.”

“Capacity will be reduced by 66% for all aerial classes to ensure social distancing. We will use a three day quarantine of aerial equipment as the only sure approach. As a result we are having to double our equipment to



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maximise available classes. Teaching practice will be revised to remove need for spotting and reduce injury risk. We are happy to share our training protocol document.”

“We will be developing a range of policies and procedures to support safe delivery.”

“Any classes will need to have gaps between them to allow for cleaning and safe arrivals and departures. Additional equipment will be needed so that each person has their own, for the duration of the class, with cleaning/quarantine in between.”

“Further research needed.”

“Limited numbers, social distancing rules, and hand washing rules.”

“If holding the classes outside or beginning with street dance only (rather than acrobatics) better fits the new guidelines that's what we'll do - but only if it fulfils guidelines.”

“We expect to bring back our Youth Performance Group first, followed by adults. No spotting so we will need to be very careful with teaching new tricks. We are looking at how we can use safety rigs in a socially distanced way.”

“We need time to consider what a Best Practise strategy is, and how to implement it.”

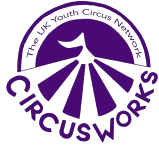
“We are not expecting to open soon, but yes we'll have to implement new measures unless there is a drastic change in infection rates.”

Further Comments

“Clear guidance would be really useful whenever it is possible. This government is being particularly vague!”

“I expect a lowering of numbers after such a long break.”

“As circus has no governing body, identifying on what basis a centre should open is falling on individual locations. Guidance/recommendation from



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CircusWorks based on practice in the UK and internationally would be helpful in supporting the decision making of individual circus centres.”

“I understand that giving a date for when we can lift the lockdown is not that easy, but knowing when would help us to plan.”

“We are desperate to see our young people back in action again. Today we had a zoom session with some of them and it was really moving to see them again.”

“We are aware of the potential pitfalls but hope to risk assess the whatsits out of it!”

“Aerial classes require some level of touch to be safe in spotting children and young people. Until this is safe, and it’s safe to share equipment, we won’t be able to resume.”

“I would say it's not really up to us when we get to start or not.”

“It should not be rushed. I’m pretty certain that there will be another wave and therefore another potential lockdown scenario.”

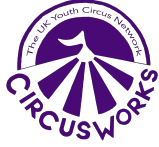
“We will not be starting before September. I think it will be a few months before we can judge what will happen after the summer. I am now expecting it to be after Christmas. We wonder how insurance companies will treat us, and whether they will consider us high risk and therefore increase premiums. We wonder how many people will be cautious about coming to classes.”

“We cannot wait to get work underway again. It may be that we do some online and physical delivery to begin with.”

“It would be great to know what other schools are putting in place and develop an industry standard we can all adhere to so we're all doing the same thing.”

“It’s so hard without clear guidelines.”

“The level of demand is completely unknown. The availability of trainers to teach is also a question due to their mental, physical and financial well being.”



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"I feel that we are three steps forwards, two steps back at the moment. I know I have to be patient, with myself and the government! I'd hate to be in their shoes... The more we can share ideas, thrash out the 'what if?'s in a polite, friendly, helpful way, then I'm sure we'll be able to put our creative brains together and start something exciting and new. Your support as ever is gratefully appreciated. If there's anything I can do to help you too, then please don't hesitate to ask."

"It is too soon to call this."

"We have not a clue when we can get back to full strength."

"It is important that it is done safely, and not in a way that finds loopholes in the current restrictions. "

"The sooner the better."

"Too early to answer this question - may not be until 2021."