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**The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington Provides Communities with**

**Critical Services During COVID-19 Pandemic**

From distributing free produce, providing daycare for essential workers to hosting critically needed blood drives and free online nutrition and exercise programs, the Y steps up for communities across the DMV

**WASHINGTON – April 6, 2020 –** While the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington temporarily closed its facility doors on March 16, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it did not close its community support. Instead, the Y is providing vital services to help support communities across the Washington metropolitan area. These include:

* Distributing free produce across each community the YMCA serves. To learn more, please [click here](https://www.ymcadc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ProduceDistribution-3.pdf);
* Providing [emergency childcare support](http://www.ymcadc.org/emergencychildcare) for the children of [essential workers](https://www.ymcadc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Essential-Personnel-covered-by-Emergency-Care.docx) (first responders, medical professionals, etc.) at Y locations in Maryland;
* Holding [blood drives](https://www.ymcadc.org/blood-drives/) in partnership with the Red Cross at Y facilities, to address the shortage of blood supplies in local hospitals;
* Providing free meals to children at YMCA branches and program centers. Details will soon be available [here](http://www.ymcadc.org/stayinformed);
* Communicating directly with youth and their families to provide help needed through [YMCA Youth and Family Services](http://yfs.ymcadc.org/);
* Continuing to provide telehealth mental health therapy through the Y’s Youth and Family Services program for existing clients; and
* Coordinating virtual [volunteer support](https://www.ymcadc.org/virtual-volunteer-opportunities/) for the community, including making masks for

Y workers.

“Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Y’s buildings may be temporarily closed, however, the Y will continue to be a force of good during this time of great uncertainty.  We will provide critically needed services such as childcare for emergency frontline responders and community grocery distribution. The Y will also host blood drives and conduct welfare checks for seniors,” explained Angie L. Reese-Hawkins, YMCA of Metropolitan Washington, president and CEO. “Members of the Y help support these critical services.  The Y is here to serve and strengthen the community.”

To support the mental, physical and spiritual well-being of the community, while observing social distancing requirements and other safety protocols, the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington is offering an exciting array of **free** virtual YMCA experiences online at [www.ymcadc.org/virtualymca](http://www.ymcadc.org/virtualymca). This site contains access to [live](https://www.facebook.com/ymcadcwellness/) workouts that are updated daily and recorded video content that is updated weekly to support:

* Physical activity for all in the [Virtual Wellness Center](https://www.ymcadc.org/virtual-wellness-center/). Enjoy yoga classes, the challenge of boot camp, barre, or participation in another workout experience.
* Nutrition education and cooking instruction is available at [Virtual Kitchen](https://www.ymcadc.org/virtual-kitchen/). Viewers can learn how to blanche and freeze broccoli, how to make chicken stock, and much more.
* Youth development activities are available in the [Virtual Playground](https://www.ymcadc.org/virtual-playground/), with activities for early learning and school age children.
* Learn better hand-eye techniques and racquet skills in the [Virtual Tennis](https://www.ymcadc.org/virtual-tennis/) Center.
* Enhance swimming skills, water safety and more in the [Virtual Aquatics](https://www.ymcadc.org/virtual-aquatics/) Center.
* Strength, community and support for seniors can be found in the [Virtual Fit & Well Seniors](https://www.ymcadc.org/virtual-fit-well/) Center.

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**About YMCA of Metropolitan Washington**
The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington is a non-profit charity organization that has been serving the communities and families of Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia in the areas of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility, for nearly 168 years. Through opportunities in wellness, aquatics, youth sports, summer camps, childcare and more, the Y engages more than 250,000 individuals and families. Visit [www.ymcadc.org](http://www.ymcadc.org) for more information. Members are asked to stay with the Y during this critical time to maintain charitable services for every community. #StayWithUs