

# HOPE

**CORONA VIRUS-19 RESPONSE CENTER**

COVID-19 is not just a threat to people's health. Food and other critical shortages, along with broad business cutbacks and shutdowns, are also threatening our financial stability, family security, and safety. Life as we have known it has changed.



Concerning the poor, there are a lot of statistics and predictions that have been thrown around by politicians and network news, but very little practical reality. It is clear that the hardest hit by this crisis is the working poor, especially those with families, and the hardest to recover will be, you've guessed it, the working poor. Most are single parents or grandmothers raising their children while working low paying jobs with no benefits. Many work two jobs, twenty or thirty hours each per week, per job; and are working far more than 40 hours combined and still are not making it. Yet somehow, they are usually the ones that make the sacrifice to push their children out of trouble and into success.

For nearly three decades, HOPE's founding director and missionary team have served those affected by poverty and disaster. HOPE has coordinated immediate relief and extended recovery programs across the United States and into 28 of the poorest countries of the world, all while maintaining a solid footprint in the inner city of Portsmouth through their Urban Outreach Center. HOPE is building a coloration to support children at extraordinary risk, strengthen struggling families and build community.



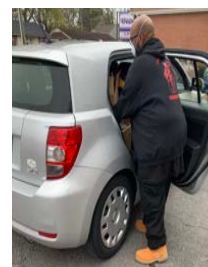
The only response most people consider during times of crisis is relief work. That is because the middle and upper classes only need a little relief assistance in the beginning, and once things settle down, they can work out their own problems. But often HOPE and other nonprofit organizations have to stay for years to help the poor and especially the working poor get back on their feet. The chronic poor who are accustomed to government programs will get what they need because they know how to navigate the system. It is the working poor who will suffer the most. Hence, while abiding by COVID-19 safety protocols, HOPE will rally support for the following programs to strengthen struggling families and build community...

### **HOT MEALS TO GO:**

Hot "to-go" meals will be given under an open tent on HOPE's campus and carried to an area that supports prescribed social distancing protocol.

Our goal is to serve breakfast and lunch to children and the evening meal daily from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. to adults and children.

- First come, first serve. No application is required.
- A clergy person or lay minister will be available for prayer and counsel.



### **FAMILY GROCERY PARCEL DISTRIBUTION:**

Groceries will be distributed under an open tent on HOPE's campus.

The distribution will happen two days each week, Tuesday and Thursday, from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

- Portsmouth residents that find themselves in need of food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic can contact receive a voucher by contacting the Portsmouth Department of Social Services, Services Intake Unit Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. located at 1701 high street or call (757) 405-1800 ext. 8338. It is a very simple self-declared application.
- A clergy person or lay minister will be available for prayer and counsel.

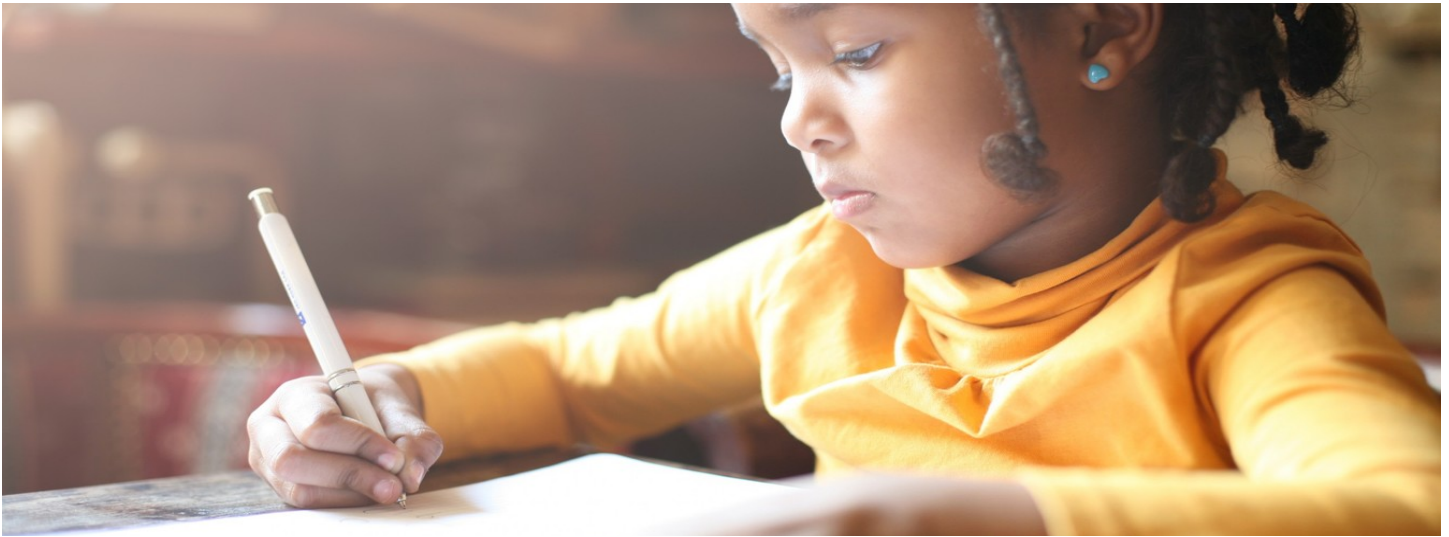
While COVID-19 is terrifying and overwhelming to most middle and upper-class families, it is decimating the poor, mentally ill and otherwise disabled. But it is pushing the working poor with families over the edge. These good people often represent households headed by single parents or grandparents. They were already teetering on collapse, now there is little relief being offered through the process and minimal discussion of recovery efforts for them. Parents that struggle with working two jobs and making ends meet now have the daily worry about their children. Many inner-city children are home with little or no access to support, schoolwork, nutritional food, and no adult supervision or protection in very problematic neighborhoods. Often, an older child babysits younger siblings. HOPE's final proposal during this crisis addresses this undiscussed need.

Children walking home from getting free bag lunches at a school across town were accosted, and their lunches were taken. Others had their lunches knocked from their hands. Last Friday a kindergarten-aged boy was shot. The elderly walking home with their parcels are being threatened and having to hand over their goods. Gangs, criminals and other bad guys do not abide by the law and will not abide by pandemic protocols.



While parents are working, students who are left without supervision, meaningful work, or entertainment will grow bored and connect with the wrong crowd. Violent crimes in our inner-city have been on a constant rise for years and are reaching pervasive proportions during this pandemic. Our students need safety, protection, supervision, academic support, and food security. A number of our children have not received any lesson plans or homework assignments. Others have received online schoolwork, jump drives with worksheets to be printed, or informed that their lessons will be emailed. But they do not have a computer, necessary electronic devices, printer or access to the internet. Most of our students are already significantly behind because of their daily life challenges. Without additional support, this crisis is placing our children at a much higher risk, in more danger, and directly in harm's way. No one is mentioning the particular problem. Once the all-clear is given, the rest of society will rally and begin to play catch up. Without intentional and targeted reinforcement, our students, that started the school year behind, will not have the necessary support system to catch up, much less move forward. This will further erode their already challenging position for education and workforce readiness and will irreparably push them further away from success.

HOPE has consulted with Public Administration, Urban Policy, Juvenile Justice, Education, Healthcare and Mental Health professionals and have pulled out all stops to developed this program with all the current COVID-19 safety protocols. It will provide academic support, security, prepared meals, and supervision for a limited number of our most desperate families. We are working with parents, educators, and the Department of Social Services to determine the most vulnerable students desperately needing our services. Our insurance company has approved this program. Like everything else during this pandemic, our programing is morphing and improving every day as the safety protocols change.



## **STUDENT SERVICES:**

As of now, eight students will be placed into two of HOPE's largest spaces: (1) The Chapel/Auditorium and (2) preschool educational section. Each student will be assigned an individual six-foot table, a laptop, a power strip, and Wi-Fi access to the internet with a wireless connection to a printer in a remote area. HOPE will have two trained adults serving as monitors and tutors in each group. Students, tutors, all HOPE's staff, and networking professional support will be connected and communicative via the internet at each student study area, tutor workstation, on a projection screen for group participation, with HOPE's senior staff and with consulting teachers as needed. HOPE will provide breakfast and lunch along with Math, Science, Reading, Writing, Social Studies, History, and Homework Labs. We will also endeavor to provide meaningful enrichment, limited entertainment, and appropriate physical activity that are creative, practical, and safe. A local clergyperson or trained lay minister will facilitate a time to discuss how the pandemic is affecting students and their families. S/he will share appropriate scripture readings and pray with students who wish to participate. This entire project will abide by the strictest protocols and best practices, as they become known.

The student's family must meet at least two of the following criteria:

- Lives at or below the poverty line
- Is homeless
- Is being raised by someone other than a birth parent
- Has a parent who did not graduate high school
- Is in the military (active duty, deployment or veteran)
- Is an English language learner
- Is incarcerated or disabled
- Does not have internet access
- Is being raised by a single parent
- Or other needs verified by HOPE's case manager, a recommendation from the school, or a referral from the Department of Social Services.

**HOPE'S COVID-19 website [hope4portsmouth.org](http://hope4portsmouth.org) and COVID-18 hotline 1-(757) 585-HOPE (4673)**

To partner, volunteer or donate text, email, or call Frank Allen (757) 761-0974 or [frank.allen@hopecharitable.org](mailto:frank.allen@hopecharitable.org).  
<https://hopecharitable.org/donate-now/> or by USPS HOPE, ATTN: COVID-19, P.O. Box 7816, Portsmouth, VA 23707-0816

For World Missions credit please mail to: COGWM, , P.O. Box 8016, Cleveland, TN 37320 or online at <https://cogwm.org/give/> HOPE's Operations Project #102-2040 or Frank and Wendy's Support Project # 102-9393

**All Contributions are tax deductible under section 501 (c) 3 of the Federal Code of the United States**