

INSIGHTS COLLECTIVE

Pandemic Economics Think Tank



VIRUS

Small children carry highest viral loads. New research finds children under age five carry particularly large amounts of the coronavirus in the nose and throat – 10-fold to 100-fold greater than in adults. The findings follow a separate effort in mid-July by the CDC which found viral rates were higher for adults with children age 10-19 in the household. Source: [JAMA Pediatrics](#), [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), [New York Times](#)

And why is that important... [Insights Collective] It's easy to argue that the latest research is speculative and sample size inadequate – but it's more important to recognize that **as we learn more about the virus and its implications this study may help shape current guidelines amid the pandemic**, adding children as key drivers of its spread in the general population. Also, younger children have behavioral habits that may increase the risk of transmission, such as playing with other kids in school. We see this impacting school opening and should now be **part of the conversation for resorts marketing to families**. To track vaccines and treatments in development, sorting by drugs, vaccines, non-drug therapy, and testing – review a graphic from Reuters, [here](#).

REOPENING

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Myrtle Beach, South Carolina has ramped up marketing efforts – welcoming visitors - and now find themselves fighting back against press blaming them for spreading the virus. Tourism officials have noted - “places don’t spread COVID-19, people do” believing that promoting activities with calls for social-distancing, such as going to the beach, is an acceptable action for the organization. Several state officials, such as those in Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky, have advised their residents to avoid traveling to South Carolina after cases were linked to Myrtle Beach following vacations. Source: [Island Packet](#)

And why is that important... [Insights Collective] We see several different typologies of destination response, including (1) we’re closed, don’t bother us, (2) we’re open, come join us, and (3) everyone else in the middle. Myrtle Beach appears to be a type 2 destination. While destination leadership might not be happy about the publicity they’re getting, it’s a reminder that elected officials make the rules – and that various municipalities all have different policies. It remains uncertain how these type 2 destinations might be negatively impacting demand mid- to long-term beyond local day visitation – something we’ll be tracking closely.

ECONOMY

Economic activity fell by the largest amount in U.S. history last quarter. GDP declined by 32.9 percent in the second quarter as COVID-19 continued impacting every facet of the economy. The decline follows a 5 percent fall in the first quarter, a number that would normally be catastrophic on its own. Source: [Bureau of Economic Analysis](#)

And why is that important... [Insights Collective] It is hard to be surprised by anything after the past few months, but the GDP numbers from the second quarter are still eye-opening. **While other countries are on the road to recovery, the U.S. is still struggling to get restarted due to a continued failure to implement the same testing and tracing plans that have been so successful elsewhere.** The only way back to health for the tourism sector and the economy is to contain

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COVID-19, and until the highest levels of government embrace that fact, we will sadly continue to lag.

NEW REALITIES

A community-led petition that takes tourism officials to task and holds them accountable in Mammoth Lakes, California is circulating. Demands include a reallocating of the nearly \$1.5 million marketing budget into something that would prevent garbage pileup in heavily recreated areas. Ideas for the reallocation include hiring two-employees to pick-up litter, purchasing extra dumpsters in areas that the tourism organization markets, and providing restrooms in areas which are currently lacking – and in which the tourism organization promotes as a place for visitors to enjoy. Source: [Hold Tourism Accountable for Cleanup, Change.org](#)

And why is that important... [Insights Collective] We have talked a bit about how residents have become more political. Here is an example from Mammoth where residents are holding Mammoth Lakes Tourism responsible for the trash visitors create. We see destinations needing to link up COVID-19 management with these issues and others as residents continue to give voice to their preferences. Issues like those identified by residents were likely already known by tourism officials – but for reasons valid at the time, the issues were never resolved. Now the conversation has shifted, and **tourism officials must take corrective action if they want to remain a community-shared value and elevate themselves from a *destination facilitator* to a destination leadership organization.**

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Chris Cares
Managing Director
RRC Associates



Tom Foley
SVP Business Process & Analytics
Innopia



Roll Garrison
Principal & Founder
The Advisory Group



Carl Ribado
President & Chief Strategist
SMG Consulting



Jesse True
President
True Mountain Consulting



Barb Taylor-Carpender
Owner
Tailored Alliances



Brian London
President & CEO
London Tourism Publications



Susan Rubin-Stewart
Travel Industry & Call Center Strategist
SRS Consulting



Jane Babilon
Leisure Travel Specialist



The COVID-19 Briefing Sheet is a weekly distribution of Insights Collective, an industry Think Tank focused on leading destinations through the New Realities of destination/resort management, marketing and positioning.

The COVID-19 Briefing Sheet, combined with other resources from Insights Collective, allows destination and resort executives to have top-line information on demand and supply developments, along with Insights Collective knowledge on where to focus resources next.

For more information on COVID-19 developments, or industry implications: Brian London, (850) 559 – 0012, London Tourism Publications, Post Office Box 40849, Jacksonville, Florida 32203.

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