Creative Ideas and Best Practices for Staying Connected During COVID-19

• Find new ways to communicate:
  o Communicate via letters and cards.
  o Use technology - video chat, FaceTime, text and email. Ask facility staff to facilitate residents using technology; reach out to local libraries and senior centers to provide training on technology via phone or video chat.
  o Ask family and friends to send short video greetings that residents can watch at any time.
  o **Meet through windows** or arrange a time for a visit through a glass door.
  o Send a virtual hello to brighten the day of residents who can't receive visitors by recording a short video and uploading it to [this Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com).

• Brainstorm ideas to maintain regular activities while isolating, like playing bingo using call lights or conducting an exercise class via video chat.
  o Visit the National Certification Council for Activity Professional's [COVID-19 webpage](https://www.nccap.org) and watch LinkedSenior's recent [webinar](https://www.linkedin.com) for more ideas.

• Think of creative ways to bring entertainment into the facility:
  o If many residents have outward-facing windows, ask local musicians to perform outdoors.
  o Video chat with local performers or friends, family members, and staff who have hidden talents.
  o Access the many online resources for free opera and symphony performances and museum and art gallery virtual visits.

**Video Chatting**

• Use video calling such as FaceTime, Google Duo, Skype, or Zoom from a phone, tablet, or laptop to connect residents with friends and family.

**Window activities**

• Allow families to call and schedule coming by to see their loved ones at the resident’s room window or a common area window.
• Ask families and members of the community to put cards and outside decorations outside resident rooms (wind socks, wind flowers, bird feeders).

**Hallway Activities**

*(Depending on length of hallway you may have 1 or 2 staff members on each hall and each hallway can do the activity at different times.)*

• **Staff and Resident Talent Show**
  o Have staff members and residents, sing, play a musical instrument, or show off other talents from their doorways.

• **Outside Alone Time**
• Take a few residents outside at a time but make sure they stay 6ft apart.

• Hallway Karaoke
  o Have residents sing their favorite songs (don’t share a microphone, though!)

• Hallway Finish the Lyrics
  o Play part of a song and see if residents can finish the lyrics.

• Hallway Wheelchair/Chair Yoga
  o Have residents pull their chairs up to the doorways and have staff lead a wheelchair yoga class
    https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=wheelchair+yoga.

• Hallway Movie Club
  o Have residents vote on a movie a few nights a week. Have residents watch the movies in their rooms. After the movie ends, have staff facilitate a discussion from the hallway.

• Hallway Games
  o Have games such as Hang-Man, Jeopardy, Pictionary, etc. Remember, no sharing of pens or other materials.

• Staff Parade
  o Have staff parade through the halls singing, dressed up, or carrying signs.

• Window Serenade
  o Have musicians perform for residents outside of windows.

• Scribd
  o Scribd is offering free 30-day service to download popular books and magazines. No credit card needed just a Facebook or email account (no future charges). Great for residents with laptops, tablets or smart phones. www.Scribd.com.

• Make Cards for Others
  o Have residents make cards for others, such as hospital patients or other residents who are also on lock down. Do not share materials between residents.

• Pen Pals
  o Create a pen pal program where residents can write other residents. Or work with a teacher to create a pen pal program between the facility and the teacher’s students.

• Door Decorating
  o Give residents materials to create decorations for their doors. Do not share materials between residents.

• Hallway Bingo
  o Hand-out paper bingo cards and have a staff member in each hall call out bingo numbers. Again, no sharing of cards, dabbers, or other materials.

Religious activities
• Ask religious leaders, such as pastors, rabbis, or priests to give window services.
• Many houses of worship are broadcasting their services online. Some are live and some you can watch recorded. Below are a few suggestions local to Houston. You might also check for televised services in your area.
  o Baptist https://houstonsfirst.org/sundaytoolkit
  o Catholic http://www.catholictv.org/masses/catholictv-mass
  o Jewish https://hcrj.org/
  o Lutheran https://flhouston.org/
  o Methodist https://www.stlukesmethodist.org/special-livestream/
  o Presbyterian https://www.mdpc.org/
  o Muslim https://thenationsmosque.org/jumah-stream/

Keep families “in the loop”
• Post daily activities to the facility’s Facebook page and encourage family and friends to follow the facility on Facebook.

See even more suggestions and best practices on Consumer Voice’s webpage.