

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

- Find new ways to communicate:
  - Communicate via letters and cards.
  - 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.
  - Ask family and friends to send short video greetings that residents can watch at any time.
  - [Meet through windows](#) or arrange a time for a visit through a glass door.
  - 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](#).
- Brainstorm ideas to maintain regular activities while isolating, like playing bingo using call lights or conducting an exercise class via video chat.
  - Visit the National Certification Council for Activity Professional's [COVID-19 webpage](#) and watch LinkedSenior's recent [webinar](#) for more ideas.
- Think of creative ways to bring entertainment into the facility:
  - If many residents have outward-facing windows, ask local musicians to perform outdoors.
  - Video chat with local performers or friends, family members, and staff who have hidden talents.
  - 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
  - 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
  - Have residents sing their favorite songs (don't share a microphone, though!)
- Hallway Finish the Lyrics
  - Play part of a song and see if residents can finish the lyrics.
- Hallway Wheelchair/Chair Yoga
  - 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](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=wheelchair+yoga).
- Hallway Movie Club
  - 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
  - Have games such as Hang-Man, Jeopardy, Pictionary, etc. Remember, no sharing of pens or other materials.
- Staff Parade
  - Have staff parade through the halls singing, dressed up, or carrying signs.
- Window Serenade
  - Have musicians perform for residents outside of windows.
- Scribd
  - 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](http://www.Scribd.com).
- Make Cards for Others
  - 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
  - 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
  - Give residents materials to create decorations for their doors. Do not share materials between residents.
- Hallway Bingo
  - 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.
  - Baptist <https://houstonsfirst.org/sundaytoolkit>
  - Catholic <http://www.catholictv.org/masses/catholictv-mass>
  - Jewish <https://hcrj.org/>
  - Lutheran <https://flhouston.org/>
  - Methodist <https://www.stlukesmethodist.org/special-livestream/>
  - Presbyterian <https://www.mdpc.org/>
  - 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](#).**