

# Connecting socially while keeping your distance

Even before the pandemic, caregivers told us they feel isolated and lonely. Now, more than ever, we all need to stay connected to one another. It's so important for our own health and well-being. Staying home during COVID-19 is critically important and requires some creativity in finding safe ways to connect and socialize.

Here are a few tips that you can use to maintain social connections:



## 1. Use technology

Use Facetime, Zoom or Skype to stay connected. These platforms are good options that can connect you with family and friends. You don't have to be tech-savvy. It's easy and fun. If setting up an account is daunting, ask a neighbor or family member for help and a quick tutorial by phone. We've also provided links to online tutorials for each [FaceTime](#), [Zoom](#), [Skype](#).



## 2. Stay active in your community from home

It may sound counterintuitive, but it is easy to remain an active member of your community from the comfort of your home. Many organizations — political parties, faith-based groups, not-for-profits — rely on volunteers to make phone calls. You can do that community-based activity right at home. [The Kids Help Phone](#), local food shelters are all in need of home-based volunteers at this time. Many local communities have also created caremongering groups to support neighbours who need extra help. Learn more about [caremongering](#).



## 3. Go on a news diet. Nourish yourself with arts, culture & wellness instead.

Stay informed, know what's going on but don't get locked into endlessly watching "breaking news" on the 24-hour news channels or social media. That message repetition can cause heightened anxiety. Watch a news update in the morning, then check in again at night. You can also visit the Ontario Government's [webpage](#) on COVID-19. Consider giving yourself a news or media curfew to give time to focus on other things before bed.

Nourish yourself by focusing on arts, culture and wellness resources that are now free to the public. Here are a few examples. If you have others, share them with your friends, family and community using your social media accounts.



### Performing arts fans

[Met opera livestream](#)  
[National Arts Centre presents Canadian musicians](#)  
[National Ballet of Canada on YouTube](#)  
[Broadway plays and musicals you can watch at home](#)  
[Stratford Festival On Demand](#)

### Visual arts fans

[National Film Board of Canada](#)  
[Indigenous films](#)  
[NASA's collection of images](#)  
[BBC's Reel](#)  
[Live Canadian landscape webcams](#)

### Animal fans

[All About Birds webcam](#)  
[Calgary Zoo's PandaCam](#)  
[Virtual Canadian farm tours](#)  
[Ripley's Aquarium shark camera](#)

### Family friendly activities

[Virtual Museum of Canada](#)  
Virtual museum visits ([British Museum, London](#);  
[Guggenheim Museum, New York](#); [National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.](#); [Musée d'Orsay, Paris](#); [National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul](#))  
[Indigenous online school lessons](#)  
[Virtual field trips](#)  
[Children's authors live readings](#)  
[Online games](#)  
[Online lessons, worksheets, activities \(Ontario School Board\)](#)  
[Free audio children's books](#)

### Support to mental wellbeing

[Free virtual yoga](#)  
[Mindful breath meditation](#)  
[Free meditation resources](#)  
[Mindfulness for kids](#)  
[No equipment exercises](#)

### Home projects

[7 decluttering projects for when you're stuck at home](#)  
[7 easy renovation projects when stuck at home](#)  
[8 home improvement projects anyone can accomplish](#)

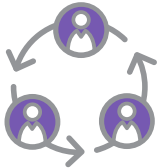
### Podcasts

[CBC podcasts](#)  
[But Why: a podcast for curious kids](#)  
[Stuff You Should Know](#)

### For thrill seekers:

[Canada's wonderland](#) has rides you can experience from your home.

*\*Resources courtesy of the Canadian Red Cross*



#### 4. Reach out to family and friends

Stay in touch with the people close to you. Set up virtual chats, parties and game sessions. [The Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) is recommending that individuals create a “buddy systems” to make sure vulnerable and hard-to-reach people stay connected, particularly to news about COVID-19. This can be done through your faith-based organization, social groups or with the help of neighbours. And for those of you who are not elderly – why not make it a point to check in on your older friends and relatives? Such thoughtfulness is always greatly appreciated.



#### 5. Connect with support and other caregivers through OCO

We are offering free webinars and 1-1 counselling session for Ontario Caregivers through the [SCALE](#) program as well as [virtual caregiver cafes](#) (peer support) to help them through Covid-19. Register for these opportunities to receive support and connect with professional help and other caregivers.