



COVID-19: Staying Connected with Your Friends, Family and Community

While it is important to practice physical distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19, it does not mean you have to be alone or disconnected from friends, family and your community. In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, NYC is also dealing with racial injustice and inequity, and working to confront decades of historical trauma experienced by Black communities and other communities of color. It is natural to feel overwhelmed, sad, anxious or afraid. Staying connected to friends, family and your community can help you cope with anxiety, reduce stress and stay positive.

Stay in touch with others through:

- Phone calls
- Text messages
- Video chat
- Email
- Social media
- Visits and meet-ups (meeting outside when possible, staying 6 feet apart from others and wearing a face covering)

Have safe visits with neighborhood friends and family.

- Go for a walk with a friend or family member while staying 6 feet apart and wearing a face covering.
- Develop a “social bubble” of a few close friends or family members to socialize with in person. When getting together, be sure to:
 - Meet outside in a park or other open space.
 - Avoid big gatherings.
 - Maintain 6 feet of distance between each other as much as possible.
 - Have a face covering and be sure to wear it (fully covering both your nose and mouth) whenever physical distancing is not possible.
 - Leave plenty of space between your group and others.

For more information on how to get together safely, visit nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/covid-19-getting-together-safely.pdf.

If you can, virtually include your friends and family in your daily routines.

- Share meals virtually. Use video chat to exchange your favorite recipes, then prepare and enjoy your meals together in your own homes.
- Try a virtual game night or virtual dance party.

- Tune in to the same streaming concert, Broadway performance or comedy show.
- Invite a friend or family member to attend the same online workout class.
- Go on a walk or jog with a friend or family member while talking to each other on the phone.
- Start watching a TV show or movie at the same time, then exchange reviews afterward.
- Race a friend or family member to finish the same puzzle.
- Exchange your favorite book or movie titles with your friends or family, then set up time to share your thoughts by phone or video chat.
- Meet new people through online groups on platforms like Facebook, Slack, Meetup and WhatsApp, or through neighborhood mutual aid groups. For some examples, visit citylimits.org/nyc-coronavirus-crisis-resources-for-you/#11.
- Find an online worship service or schedule a live prayer session with others.

Reach out to those who need support.

- Check in on your friends and colleagues of color, who are experiencing the impacts of racism more than others. Send them your support and let them know you are there for them if they want to talk.
- Participate in activities that promote equity and racial justice, either safely, in person or virtually. For information on how to protest safely, visit nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/covid-19-safe-protest.pdf.
- Reach out to an elderly neighbor or relative to talk.
- If you are not sick and are not at high risk for severe illness, offer to shop for those who need help in your neighborhood or building.
- Post a positive review online for a local business.
- Contact your local nursing home and ask if you can send letters to their residents.
- Reach out to those with young children and offer to read or entertain them virtually.

Support and Resources

NYC Well offers many emotional support applications (apps) and information on community resources. For a list of apps, visit nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/app-library. Reach out for support and help if your symptoms of stress become overwhelming. NYC Well has trained counselors available 24/7 to provide free brief counseling and referrals to care in over 200 languages. Call 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355), text “WELL” to 65173 or chat at nyc.gov/nycwell.

For resources that address issues such as financial help, food, health care or insurance coverage, and more, see the [Comprehensive Resource Guide](#). Visit nyc.gov/health and search for “community resource guide”.