



FAMILIES TACKLING TOUGH TIMES TOGETHER



FAMILY
YOUTH

We Care About Each Other! Connectedness

For most teens, life is filled with fun activities and time with friends. Activities like these are an important part of a young person's life, which makes social distancing especially tough. Lost connections with peers are painful and can lead to a sense of loss and sadness. It's important for us to recognize the emotions this new reality may bring. We can help foster resilience in our teens by helping them to deal with their difficult emotions by showing compassion and encouragement.

Making Connections

Sometimes our teens may need to take a break from a stressful situation, but at the same time may need a sense of connectedness to peers. Strong connections with family, peers, teachers, and other community members are important in the social and emotional health of youth.

Connecting Through a Fit Challenge Activity

Exercise can help young people de-stress and offer a chance to encourage others. Your teen may wish to choose something they enjoy or to try something new found online. Virtual challenges can add interaction to an activity that may not otherwise be social. A fit challenge not only helps build connections but keeps your teen's mind and body active!

- Single-day fitness challenges can connect teens with others for a short time. Encourage your teen to reach out to peers and organize a fit challenge such as a virtual 5K (walk, run, or roll!) or bike race. Participants can meet virtually at the end of the day to celebrate their successes!
- Long-term fitness challenges can take place over several days or weeks and offer a chance for teens to encourage others. These fitness challenges not only provide regular social interaction, but help to keep them excited. Your teen may wish to encourage peers to join them in a long-term challenge, or they may wish to use a fitness app to connect with others.
- Fitness skill challenges can take place during a one-time virtual event. Teens may wish to challenge each other to focus on a single skill such as push-ups or planking. Encouragement during the challenge can be provided by family or others not participating.
- Many unique fitness challenges can be found online. Your teen may wish to join an online group for a workout challenge that lasts a single day or months. Opportunities for encouragement and relationship building are possible through this type of online challenge.

For in-person activities, refer to CDC guidelines regarding physical-distancing and limitations on in-person contacts: [CDC Personal and Social Activities Guidelines](#).

To learn more about the science behind the importance of creating connections, you may wish to read the below research:

- [Relationships First: Creating Connections that Help Young People Thrive](#)