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## **Commit to Connect: Combatting Social Isolation and Loneliness in All Communities**

**Connecting with other people is essential to our health and well-being.**

The good news is there are many ways we can connect even if we're physically apart.

Keeping our physical distance from others is key to helping prevent the spread of COVID-19, but it also is important to find ways to connect to others and stay engaged in the world around us. That's because social isolation and loneliness also can have a devastating impact on our health and well-being. In fact, a recent study found that social isolation can be as bad for your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day!

That's why, as we work together as a nation to get through the COVID-19 pandemic, we also need everyone to join together and ***Commit to Connect...***

***...to help ourselves:*** Staying active and engaged is critical to our own health. Commit to Connect, and create a plan that includes activities and routines that allow you to stay in contact with others.

***...with loved ones:*** People of all ages and abilities are struggling as a result of physical distancing, but many older adults, people with disabilities and others who are at increased risk from COVID-19 are particularly feeling the weight of social isolation. Commit to Connect more actively, and more regularly, with your family, friends and neighbors. Make sure they are ok, and help them *connect* to services and resources they may need.

***...through technology:*** Technology has opened many virtual doors, making it possible for people to share experiences, even while physically apart. We have to work together, and Commit to Connect more people to these resources.

...**through our networks:** Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the aging and disability networks have been partnering with businesses, every level of government, other non-profits, and the people in our communities. Together, we have been finding, sharing and replicating innovative solutions to the ongoing challenges created by the pandemic, including social isolation and loneliness. We need to Commit to Connect as partners and innovators, even after the pandemic is behind us, to continue to help the people we serve stay connected and engaged, fully participating in their communities.

## **Give the Gift of Connection**

Looking for that perfect gift idea? Consider gifts that help people connect to each other. Whether you're looking to buy gifts, make gifts, or share an experience as a gift, there are many great options. [Here are some ideas](#)

## **Activities and Resources**

Fortunately, there are many ways to stay engaged, active, and connected--both with and without technology, and there are many resources available to help people of all ages and abilities find the solutions that will work best for their individual needs.

[Find activities and resources that may be right for you](#)

## **Commit to (help others) Connect**

There are many tools and resources to help people connect to others and get engaged, but people don't always know where to find them. If you like what you're finding here, please share -- you might help someone find exactly what they need. We've created social media posts, graphics, and more to make it easy. [Help us spread the word!](#)

## **Find Out If You're At Risk**

[Connect2Affect.org](#) has tools that can help you assess your risk for social isolation and find support services in your area.

One example is the [Social Check-In](#) - an assessment you can take using just your voice to learn whether you may be at risk of social isolation. To get started, just ask Alexa or Google to "Launch Social Check-In." Simply answer a few questions, and then you will receive a text message with your results as well as practical tips to feel

more connected.

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