**Stay connected with others**

Maintaining healthy relationships with people you trust is important for your own mental wellbeing and will help others too who may be finding the current situation difficult.

Think about how you can stay in touch with friends and family during this period, whether it's people you usually see often, or connecting with old friends.

**Using different media**

There are lots of different ways to keep in touch, including:

* **Messaging** – Messaging app’s allow you to keep in touch with just one person, with a group or a wider networks in almost real time. Most enable you to share text, images and videos and many operate across platforms (i.e. Android, IoS and Windows). Most are secure end to end however controls over who can join groups are only as strong as the administrator. Think carefully before distributing material that may cause offence. Also do be conscious of how what you are reading is making you feel and withdraw from the conversation if it’s not helping you. Click [here](https://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/best-text-messaging-apps/) for a review of different messaging app’s.
* **Video Conferencing** – There are several video conferencing app’s that you can use to keep in touch face to face. Most offer a range of service levels including free offerings (usually with limits over numbers of participants or duration of calls). Click [here](https://www.howtogeek.com/661906/the-6-best-free-video-conferencing-apps/) for a review of six video conferencing app’s.
* **Online Games** – Multi-player games can be an option for children to keep in touch with friends but also for contact across generations.
* **Playlists** – Many music services offer the option to create a playlist which can then be distributed to friends and family. Some give the option for people to add to them progressively. As with messaging, be careful with age appropriate material.
* **Physical** – Making homemade cards (which is a great project to do with the kids), sending a postcard, even posting small gifts or just writing a good old-fashioned letter.

**Virtual this … virtual that**

Look out for new and different ways in which technology can be used to keep people connected, including:

* virtual quiz
* virtual book club
* virtual dinner parties
* virtual concerts or gigs
* multiplayer online games
* online interest hobby groups (e.g. [Meet Up](https://www.meetup.com/))
* online religious services and faith group meeting

**Keeping safe**

It’s sad to say but there will be people who try to exploit the current situation for their own gain. So make sure you maintain the usual online safeguards. Childline provide advice on staying safe online [here](https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/staying-safe-online/).