

Resources for Staying Connected

Reducing isolation is an important reason to stay connected. If you're having difficulty getting information or feel isolated for any reason, there are resources to help.

How to stay informed

During stressful times it is important to know you are not alone.

- **Seek support for your mental health:** If you need someone to talk to about the stress you are experiencing, a mental health professional can help. Visit hhs.texas.gov/services/mental-health-substance-use.
- **Find out what services are available**
 - **For older adults:** Area agencies on aging (AAA) are located all over Texas to help adults age 60 and older and their caregivers find the services they need. Visit hhs.texas.gov/contact/aaa.cfm.
 - **For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities:** Local intellectual and developmental disability authorities (LIDDAs) can assist with eligibility determination, benefits screening, service coordination and more. Visit hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/intellectual-or-developmental-disabilities-idd-long-term-care.
- **For the whole family:** People living in multigenerational households can receive services for the whole family from an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). Contact your ADRC to get information and one-on-one counseling on the full range of long-term services and supports available in Texas. To find any of these resources, visit hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/find-us/where-can-i-find-services.
- **Exercise:** Maybe you used to exercise at a facility but do not feel comfortable returning. There are many options to help you stay active. Try going for a walk or gardening. Add some of your regular gym exercises into things you do around the house. You can also order a free Texercise handbook from Texas Health and Human Services that will take you through a variety of balance, strength, flexibility and endurance exercises you can do at home. To learn more, visit texercise.com.

How to stay Connected

Some of us like getting together with friends for game night or learning new hobbies. While getting together in person may not always be possible, it is possible to stay connected.

The following webpages contain resources to help you connect with others, learn something new and give back.

Learn Something New

- **DOROT University Without Walls***

To access hundreds of classes in multiple languages visit dorotusa.org/our-programs/at-home/university-without-walls.

Revised April 27, 2023

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- **Libraries**

Libraries in communities all over Texas offer free access to books, e-books, movies, music and more. To find the library closest to you visit tsl.texas.gov/texshare/libsearch.

- **Senior Planet Virtual Classes***

To find an array of free and members-only classes visit seniorplanet.org/get-involved/online.

Give Back

- **AARP Virtual Volunteering**

To learn how to volunteer from your home, visit createthegood.aarp.org/volunteer-ideas/virtual.html.

- **Volunteer Match Virtual Volunteering**

To search for a volunteer opportunity that fits your interests visit volunteermatch.org/virtual-volunteering.

Travel – Virtually!

- **Google Arts and Culture**

To explore thousands of museums for free visit artsandculture.google.com.

- **The Monterey Bay Aquarium**

This famous aquarium offers live video feeds for several of their exhibits. Visit montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams.

- **NASA at Home**

Explore space and beyond with NASA at nasa.gov/specials/nasaathome.

- **The San Diego Zoo**

Watch live videos of animals at popular exhibits at kids.sandiegozoo.org/videos.

Meetings and Video Conferences

- **AARP**

There are several video chat and conferencing options available. AARP's Senior Planet has a series of videos and articles to help you get started. Visit seniorplanet.org/videos.

Group Fun and Games

- **Age Space Overview of Entertainment Apps**

Age Space has an overview of 10 entertainment apps for older adults. Visit agespace.org/tech/best-entertainment-apps-older-people to read the article.

- **Join a Virtual Book Club**

AARP has a large list of online book clubs, and your local librarian might know some local options. Visit aarp.org/entertainment/books/info-2020/online-book-clubs-to-join.html to view the list.

Connection and Storytelling

- **Best Day of My Life So Far**

This is a listening tool to help you reach out to older adults and share their life stories. Visit bestdayofmylifsofar.org.

- **Empowering the Ages – Sharing Smiles**

This connects youth and older adults via email or mail. Visit empoweringtheages.org/sharing-smiles.

- **StoryCorps**

StoryCorps provides a platform to share stories and listen to the stories of others. Visit storycorps.org.

Caregiving/Care Tracker

- **CaringBridge**

Create a journal to stay connected to your family and friends by visiting caringbridge.org.

- **AARP**

The section for caregivers has helpful resources, caregiver support group information and more. Visit aarp.org/caregiving.

- **Texas Health and Human Services**

HHS has a resource page with a list of helpful resources to support family caregivers. Visit hhs.texas.gov/services/health/support-caregivers.

*This resource has a free option or free trial, but it also has options that cost money.