

# Parent Tip #24

## Foster Connections (From a Distance)

- Individuals with autism and other "learning differences" are more susceptible to social isolation and loneliness, and this may be exacerbated by quarantine conditions. Positive social support is important for everyone during this period, and individuals with autism may need more explicit facilitation to ensure that social connections continue. Parents may need to check in to ensure social contact is continuing via video, text or direct messaging, and/or build in opportunities for daily social contact with family, friends, neighbors, teachers, or others via FaceTime, What's App, Google Hangout, ZOOM, Marco Polo, or other apps. Scheduling time to connect with others via online platforms to attend religious services, play chess, participate in socially engaged gaming, complete online schoolwork, or virtually volunteer are ways to safely promote social interaction and stave off isolation. Several examples provide support around using apps that can foster connectedness.

Adapted from (AFIRM) is an extension of the National Professional Development Center (NPDC) on ASD

