



engAGED

The National Resource Center
for Engaging Older Adults



Blog Post Templates to engAGE Older Adults and Caregivers During COVID-19

As the COVID-19 crisis continues to affect older adults around the country, engAGED has developed a six-part series of sample blog posts intended to help organizations working with older adults encourage them to stay active, engaged and connected in their communities. Our goal is for organizations to use this information in their own messaging, resources and outreach to help them better meet the needs of older adults in their communities during these changing times. For more resources, please visit www.engagingolderadults.org/covid19.

Engaged and Connected: Stay Active in Your Home During COVID-19

Maintaining physical fitness is critical for older adults and can help prevent falls in the home. Organizations that work with older adults can use the below sample blog post to help older adults and caregivers to stay fit and healthy at home.

- Due to COVID-19 many scheduled health and wellness classes for older adults have been canceled. However, there are many options to help you explore at-home workouts to help you remain active and healthy throughout the pandemic.
- If you prefer group workouts, senior centers and gyms are offering free exercise classes and instructional videos, many of which are geared toward older adults or inexperienced exercisers.
- Most importantly, make a point to move frequently during the day, even if it's just a few gentle stretches or laps around your home. If you can walk outside, keeping a 6-foot distance does not exclude talking to neighbors and enjoying the sunshine. Or, turn on the radio and dance!
- If you're a caregiver to an older adult, make sure you are making time for yourself and being active. Try exercising first thing in the morning. If you don't have 30 minutes to be active, look for three 10-minute breaks. Find simple ways to make exercise fun and enjoyable for you and your loved one!



The National Institute on Aging website contains several exercise activities targeted to older adults and caregivers. Visit www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercise-physical-activity to get started.

For more ideas on ways older adults can stay connected to the community while physical distancing, check out our fact sheet, *Staying Connected at Home During COVID-19*, which was produced in partnership with the Eldercare Locator (eldercare.acl.gov). Find the fact sheet at www.engagolderadults.org/covid19.

Engaged and Connected: Reach Out to Family and Friends During COVID-19

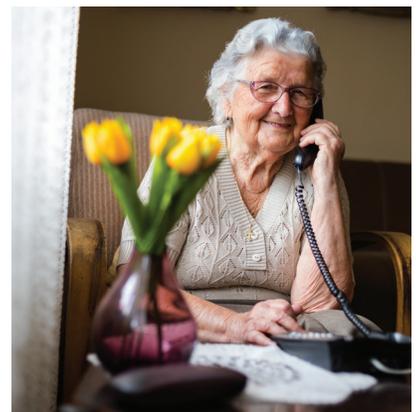
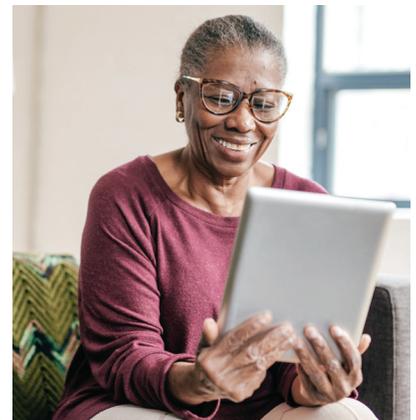


As physical and social distancing have left many older adults feeling isolated and lonely with their normal routines disrupted organizations can help older adults maintain and strengthen ties to family and friends despite social distancing and stay-at-home orders. Organizations that work with older adults can use the below sample blog post to help older adults stay connected to their friends, families and caregivers during the COVID-19 crisis.

- ▶ To stay connected to a family member, friend or long-distance caregiver try to call them every day, write a note or send a card. These are simple tasks to do and can bring a smile to someone's face while cheering you up in the process.

- ▶ Whether you swap book, meal or TV recommendations or plan fun activities for the future, just making the connection is important. Remember, these conversations don't have to be long—just a quick check-in to see how they are doing.
- ▶ Need conversation starters? Share information about other friends and family members, interesting books you've read, movies or television shows you would recommend (or not). Schedule your calls for specific times or on specific days and make them a regular social gathering.

For more ideas on ways older adults can stay connected to the community while physical distancing, check out our fact sheet, *Staying Connected at Home During COVID-19*, which was produced in partnership with the Eldercare Locator (eldercare.acl.gov). Find the fact sheet at www.engagingolderadults.org/covid19.



Engaged and Connected: Take a Trip Without Leaving Your Home During COVID-19

During the COVID-19 crisis, older adults can see the world—even while physical distancing. Organizations working with older adults can use the sample blog post below to help older adults see the world from the comforts of home.

- Are you seeking new adventures, or do you miss being able to travel? Did you know that you can take a tour of the world's greatest sights from home? Many museums have developed virtual tours that help visitors see world-renowned artwork. Theaters, both large and small, are taking performances online and zoos and aquariums are offering scheduled Facebook Live access to feedings, tours, behind-the-scenes looks and more.
- While you may not be able to travel, you can still go on a trip across the world through virtual, online experiences— without a passport.
- Here is a listing of some additional virtual tours and opportunities:
 - Take a Trip without Leaving your Home
<https://www.cntraveler.com/story/all-the-museum-exhibits-symphonies-and-operas-you-can-enjoy-from-home>
 - 101 Ways to Travel Without Leaving Your House
www.cntraveler.com/story/101-ways-to-travel-without-leaving-your-house
 - 10 virtual tours: Travel the world without leaving home
<https://www.newsday.com/travel/travel-virtual-tours-1.44202689>



For more ideas on ways older adults can explore the world while physical distancing, check out our fact sheet, [Staying Connected at Home During COVID-19](#), which was produced in partnership with the Eldercare Locator (eldercare.acl.gov). Find the fact sheet at www.agingolderadults.org/covid19.

Engaged and Connected: Get Creative During COVID-19

As the national dialogue on the impact of social isolation grows, many are beginning to analyze new and innovative ways to address social isolation among older adults while at home. Organizations working with older adults can use the sample blog post below to help older adults stay connected to the community—and reduce the likelihood of social isolation.

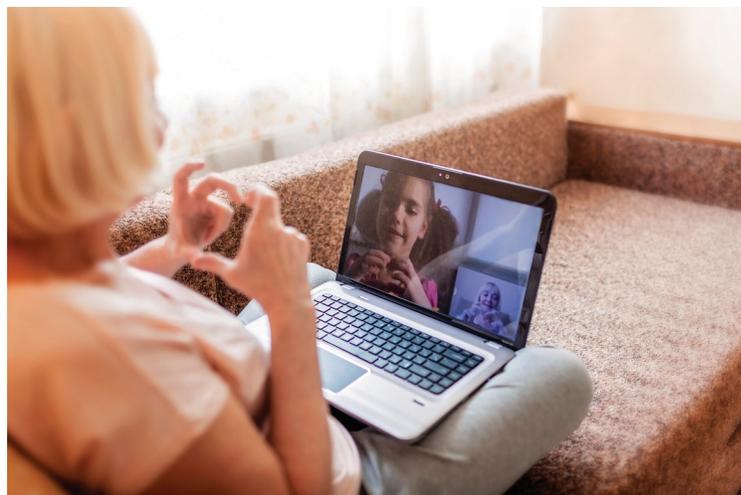
- For many, the act of making visual or literary art is a fond memory from our youth. But as we mature, art often takes a backseat to education, work and family.
- Now is a great time to take the first step to feeling healthier, happier and reconnected through the arts. Even for those who don't consider themselves to be artistic, there are many ways to stay engaged through the arts. In fact, the arts are not only fun, they are good for your health! Research suggests that older adults who participate in an arts program will be happier and more self-confident and improve their memory.
- Feeling creative? Draw a sketch, write a poem or short story, or start journaling. This is a great time to record what you are seeing, thinking and feeling through different mediums. Why not send a sketch you've drawn to a friend or family member and ask for one in return? The important thing is to do something you enjoy or try something new!
- Caregivers: Find fun ways for your loved one to get creative and keep up with hobbies while staying at home. Play cards, checkers, dominoes or find easy online puzzles or games that you both can enjoy.

For more ideas on ways to help reduce social isolation that may occur among older adults during COVID-19, check out our fact sheet, *Staying Connected at Home During COVID-19*, which was produced in partnership with the Eldercare Locator (eldercare.acl.gov). Find the fact sheet at www.engagingolderadults.org/covid19.



Engaged and Connected: Learn How to Use Online Tools During COVID-19

There are many opportunities for older adults to remain engaged and connected to their friends, family and community through online tools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever people of all ages are using the internet, cell phones and other technologies in new and exciting ways. To help older adults get started using online tools, use the sample blog post below in a newsletter or on social media.



- In a matter of seconds, you can send a message or email to your son or long-distance caregiver, receive a photo from your granddaughter, attend virtual religious services or read a book online.
- While younger people are typically seen as the “experts” on these new resources, many older adults also utilize the internet, social media, tablets/computers and cell phones to communicate and receive information. These tools are an effective way to connect with your family and friends.
- Need help getting started? “Stuck at Home Guide: How to Get Online,” a guide from engAGED partner Senior Planet, contains helpful tips for getting started online, on social media and on Zoom meetings. Find it at www.seniorplanet.org/stuck-at-home-guide-get-online.



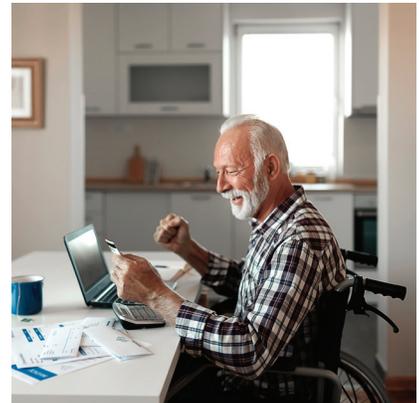
For more ideas on ways older adults can use online tools to stay connected to the community check out our fact sheet, [Staying Connected at Home During COVID-19](#), which was produced in partnership with the Eldercare Locator (eldercare.acl.gov). Find the fact sheet at www.engagingolderadults.org/covid19.

Engaged and Connected: Help Others from Your Home During COVID-19

As older adults adopt physical distancing to reduce the likelihood of contracting COVID-19, the importance of social connections must be addressed. Share the message below with older adults in your community via a newsletter or social media to help older adults learn about ways they can volunteer while physical distancing at home.



- Many older adults are embracing opportunities to contribute in new ways by volunteering from home, sharing a lifetime of knowledge and experience to improve the lives of people in their communities.
- But volunteering not only benefits society—research shows it can also pay big dividends in better health as you age. If you volunteer for as little as two hours a week, or about 96 hours per year, you may experience improved mental, emotional and physical health—benefits that many older volunteers are reaping because, on average, they contribute almost twice as many hours as any other age group. Volunteering can help to reduce depression, lessen chronic pain and give your brain a boost.
- Do you need another reason to get on the volunteer bandwagon? You can volunteer and share your skills from home. It's easy to develop a virtual mentoring relationship by contacting a local high school or college or contact your local Area Agency on Aging to find other opportunities.



For more ideas on ways older adults can stay connected to the community during COVID-19, check out our fact sheet, [Staying Connected at Home During COVID-19](#), which was produced in partnership with the Eldercare Locator (eldercare.acl.gov). Find the fact sheet at www.engagingolderadults.org/covid19.