

## For Community Services

# COVID-19 Factsheet: Continuing to deliver social support services

We know our clients and their loved ones will be worried about their health during this time and will be asking you about how the COVID-19 outbreak affects our ability to deliver their usual services. Our priority is to ensure people continue to receive the vital services they need so they can remain safe and well in their home. We recognise we need to make changes to the way we deliver certain services.

### What's changed?

All Australians over the age of 70 should stay in their homes, unless they need to leave for essential services. All group social support services must stop immediately and we need to change the way we traditionally run our group sessions and / or transition clients over to individual sessions wherever possible.

### Continuing to deliver social support services

Our main aim during this time is to ensure that our community clients still have a range of different social support options available to them, so that they can keep interacting with others while staying safe in their own homes.

### Options you can implement

Please also refer to the [How to Guide: Using Phone or Video](#) for further instructions if you decide to use these options.

**1**

#### **Continue to provide 1:1 social support services in the home.**

**Set up technology** for clients in their home – we can offer technology through their package if they need a device. For example:

- **Technology basics** – connecting to wifi, how to use devices
- **Technology & communications** – communication apps, websites, emailing, video conferencing
- **Technology & entertainment** – online videos (YouTube clips), podcasts, online games
- **Technology & exercise** – online fitness channels, videos and resources

**Drop off 'Activity boxes'** to help clients stay occupied whilst they are staying at home (e.g. colour in books, crosswords, books, memory activities).

**Distribute resources** from the community centre (e.g. commonly used for SSG & CBR activities) so that clients can continue to use these resources in their own homes. Cycle resources around to different clients each week.

## 2

### **Conduct 1:1 phone calls (e.g. if they don't want in-home support).**

Check in each week to chat with the client. Take the opportunity to understand if the client needs any other services at that time.

Spend time with clients over the phone:

- Ask them about their life story, discuss: their childhood, favourite travel memory, favourite foods, funniest memory, etc. If you need some inspiration for questions to ask to get the conversation flowing. See "More details of this Factsheet"
- Complete a crossword over the phone
- Read books over the phone.

## 3

### **Help to facilitate online & over the phone connection**

Hold virtual sessions with either individuals or groups. Refer to xx for details of how to do this.

Set up and manage group chats for Social Support Group members. Find instructions here:

Facebook groups or <https://www.postplanner.com/how-to-create-a-facebook-group/>

WhatsApp messenger groups <https://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Group-in-WhatsApp>

Online communities could be based on client's different interests – e.g. book club (see tips <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/book-clubs/getting-started/>). Members could upload photos and share their recommendations with the group each week.

Distribute SSG members' mobile numbers/email addresses, allowing clients to keep in contact with each other and with staff remotely.

Create an email chain with the email addresses of all SSG members. Staff could provide email templates for clients to fill out and share with others.

Operate as the 'go-between' for SSG members who are friends, taking messages/letters/videos from one member and delivering it to another.

Run group phone call or video competitions:

- E.g. bingo: email or mail out the sheets in advance and mail out prizes afterwards.
- E.g. trivia quizzes: email or mail out the questions in advance and mail out prizes afterwards.

Create a 'morning tea video group' where SSG members and staff can join each week with a cup of tea to chat with each other. Staff to introduce different conversation themes each week.

Create a buddy system that links school children up with SSG clients. School kids to send clients drawings, written stories, crafts, etc. Facilitate video chats between school kids and clients.

## **Contribute your ideas and experiences**

We are currently developing new ways for Blue Care to continue providing services to customers and we will share this with you as soon as it's ready.

In the meantime, your experience and expertise is valuable, and we invite you to share any techniques you have used to continue the support our customers need.

**Please share your feedback** on our Workplace group **“COVID creativeness”**

# More details

## How to Start a Book Club

Taken from <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/book-clubs/getting-started/>

“When you sell a man a book you don’t sell just twelve ounces of paper and ink and glue — you sell him a whole new life. Love and friendship and humour and ships at sea by night — there’s all heaven and earth in a book, a real book.” —Christopher Morley

## Five Steps to Starting a Book Club

1. **Step One: Decide what kind of Book Club you want to start.**
  - Is the purpose of your Book Club to read or to socialize?
  - Do you want to read a specific genre, bestsellers, high literature, etc.?
2. **Step Two: Based on the type of Book Club you have decided upon, choose a setting.**
  - Do you want to meet in someone’s home, in a public space, in an online forum, through a blog or website, etc.? How often do you want to meet? *Once a month is the standard, but if you plan on reading longer books you may want to meet every 6 weeks.*
  - How to Host a Book Club Online.
    - Coordinating a time and a place to meet is one of the largest challenges for many book clubs. Hosting your Book Club online makes meeting easy and convenient for members wherever they may be.
3. **Step Three: Invite Your Members.**
  - The ideal size of a Book Club is between 8 and 16 members
  - A great way to gather a large diverse group is to invite 3-5 people and ask each of them to invite 3 or 4 friends.
4. **Step Four: Set up a Pre-Book Book Club Meeting.**
  - Gather everyone together to discuss the first book option, the permanent meeting location and time, how the Book Club will be run, and the goals for the Book Club.
  - Bring one or two options for meeting times and the first book. Take a vote if you would like to have everyone involved in the decision making process.
5. **Step Five: Select your first book and send out a Meeting Schedule for the remainder of the year.**
  - Happy Reading and Good Luck!
  - [View a Book Club Planning Check List \[Downloadable PDF with a check list\]](#)

## Questions to kick start phone or online conversations

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### GREAT QUESTIONS FOR ANYONE

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Can you tell me about a person who has been kindest to you in your life?

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Can you tell me about one of your happiest memories?

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Can you tell me about one of your most difficult memories?

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Can you tell me about someone you'll always remember?

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Can you tell me about someone who has had a big influence on your life? What lessons did that person teach you?

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What do you feel most grateful for in your life?

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What are some of the most important lessons you've learned in life?

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What is your favourite memory of me?

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What are you proudest of in your life?

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Can you remember a time in your life when you felt most alone?

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If you could hold on to one memory from your life forever, which would it be?

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How has your life been different than what you'd imagined?

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How would you like to be remembered?

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Do you have any regrets?

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If you were to die suddenly this evening, what would you regret not having done? Why haven't you done it?

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When was the last time you cried and why?

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What does your future hold?

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What are your hopes for me? For my children?

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If this was to be our very last conversation, is there anything you'd want to say to me?

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For future generations of your family listening to this years from now: is there any wisdom you'd want to pass on to them? What would you want them to know?

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Is there anything that you've never told me but want to tell me now?

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Are there things about me that you've always wanted to know but have never asked?

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Turn the tables: tell the person you're interviewing what they've meant to you.

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### GRANDPARENTS

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Where did you grow up?

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What was your childhood like?

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Who were your favourite relatives?

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Do you remember any of the stories they used to tell you?

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How did you and grandma/grandpa meet?

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What was my mom/dad like growing up?

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Do you remember any songs that you used to sing to her/him? Can you sing them now?

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Was she/he well-behaved?

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What is the worst thing she/he ever did?

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What were your parents like?

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What were your grandparents like?

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How would you like to be remembered?

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Are you proud of me?

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## **RAISING CHILDREN**

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When did you first find out that you'd be a parent? How did you feel?

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Can you describe the moment when you saw your child for the first time?

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How has being a parent changed you?

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What are your dreams for your children?

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Do you remember when your last child left home for good?

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Do you have any favourite stories about your kids?

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## **GROWING UP**

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When and where were you born?

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Where did you grow up?

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What was it like?

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Who were your parents?

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What were your parents like?

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How was your relationship with your parents?

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Did you get into trouble? What was the worst thing you did?

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Do you have any siblings? What were they like growing up?

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What did you look like?

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How would you describe yourself as a child? Were you happy?

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What is your best memory of childhood? Worst?

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Did you have a nickname? How'd you get it?

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Who were your best friends? What were they like?

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How would you describe a perfect day when you were young?

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What did you think your life would be like when you were older?

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Do you have any favorite stories from your childhood?

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## **SCHOOL**

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Did you enjoy school?

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What kind of student were you?

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What would you do for fun?

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How would your classmates remember you?

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Are you still friends with anyone from that time in your life?

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What are your best memories of grade school/high school/college/graduate school? Worst memories?

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Was there a teacher or teachers who had a particularly strong influence on your life? Tell me about them.

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Do you have any favourite stories from school?

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## **MARRIAGE & PARTNERSHIPS**

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How did you meet your husband/wife?

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How did you know he/she was "the one"?

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How did you propose?

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What were the best times? The most difficult times?

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Did you ever think of getting divorced?

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Did you ever get divorced? Can you tell me about it?

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What advice do you have for young couples?

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Do you have any favourite stories from your marriage or about your husband/wife?