

# How Our Kids Can Overcome COVID-19 Social Isolation

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This winter is a first for being separated from large groups of people due to the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. The good news is that this soon should pass as more of our elders and community members are vaccinated from this debilitating and deadly virus. But, until we can play with others again, how do we stay connected with our friends, families, and keep our kids socialized? Here is a list of various activities that families have reported success with during these last few months:

## Family-Based Projects

As more families are locked into small spaces, they are teaching their children to become entrepreneurs. Some of these kids are partners with others and starting a small

business like designing and creating stickers, holiday decorations, and crafts. Others are building computers for producing games, movies, and other products. Still others are having their children learn to cook and bake interesting new recipes for the family. This spring many will be planting vegetable and flower gardens. Our kids can learn how to install sprinkler systems that conserve water. Others will learn how to build container gardens. Some will learn how to help their parents with various household repairs and construction projects. Families that bond together when completing these critical services are teaching their children effective house management skills that reinforce academic learning and teamwork.

## Support the Community

Many families have expanded their community services by participating in environmental cleanup days, writing letters to the military and isolated community members, and fundraising for families that need food and other basic needs. Some families are helping with various fundraising activities by participating in virtual sporting events that raise funds while others are writing grants for community service organizations. The skills your children will gain will contribute to their future career development skills and compassion for those in need.

## Host Virtual Reunions

Most families are seeing each other now more than ever through various virtual platforms. Many host regular

holiday celebrations online in addition to ongoing monthly social hours or online family game nights. There are a multitude of online family games all can play in addition to regular games that can be fun online. For example, grandparents taught grandkids how to play Candyland and Chutes and Ladders online. The grandkids had the board game at their home and could watch their grandparents online as they demonstrated how to play the game. These activities will entertain kids for hours. Grandchildren can also play remotely with dolls, construct art projects, dictate stories that are kept in grandparents' journals, and receive help with homework.

## Plan Family Outings

Many plan regular family outings to local and state parks. The children can plan and fix the family menu. They can study a map and decide how the family will drive to their destination. The kids can research the various costs and activities that can be pursued at the park and create the daily budget. They can also organize a treasure hunt, a hike, or picture taking adventure. These events will be remembered for years.

Treasure these special times together as this added dedicated time with our kids and families will soon be a treasured time in our past as more folks are vaccinated and free to return to work, travel, and school.

Enjoy the journey!

Mary Ann

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