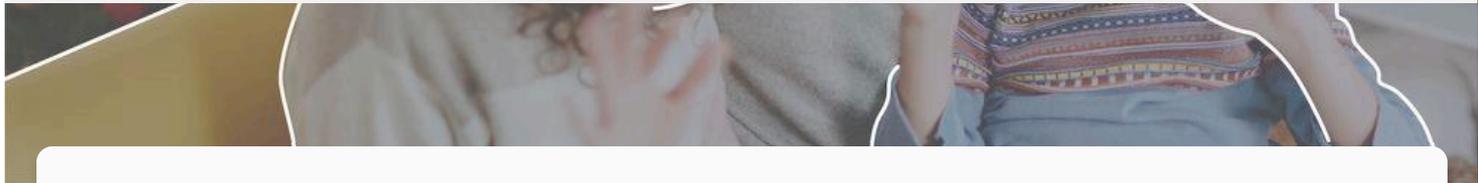


Holiday Activities For Families Who Are Apart

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 Article •  5 Minutes

Getting family together for the holidays can be tough. Use some of these fun ideas to stay connected.

Is your family spread apart this holiday season? Distance might make it hard to get together. However, you can still prioritize connecting with one another over the next few weeks! With a bit of thought, you can recreate the experience of being together even when you aren't all in the same room.

Getting Together Can Be A Challenge

The holidays are a time when people want to be together celebrating. However, it's not always possible, especially as families grow and change. Barriers to celebrating the holiday season together can include:

- Difficulty traveling due to your loved one's physical or cognitive challenges.
- Busy work or personal schedules.
- Illness.
- Challenge of hosting a large event for family members.
- Family members who argue or don't get along.

Benefits Of Intergenerational Relationships

It can feel easier to skip family holiday events, but there are important benefits of getting together. Intergenerational relationships aren't just between older adults and children—in fact, they can benefit the whole family. Anytime people who are different ages connect, there are benefits like:

- Passing down family history or information.
- Decreased feelings of depression or anxiety.
- Having more hope for the future.
- Increased feelings of purpose.
- Increased empathy for other generations and people with different abilities.
- Better social skills.
- Increased feelings of stability.



Explore Ways To Connect

Making the effort to connect with one another will still give you benefits. As you plan new ways to connect this year, remember to give yourself and your family members grace. You are all doing the best you can. Here are a few ideas that can inspire you to plan your own events that connect you this season and beyond.

Video Or Text

- **Start a family caroling chain.** Record a video to send over text of you singing the first part of a holiday song. Then the next person records the next part of the song and sends it along to someone else.
- **Share old holiday photos or videos** via text.
- **Create a fun virtual event.** Have everyone make pancakes and jump on a video call together for a Pajama Pancake Party, or even just a cup of coffee.

Social Media

- **Start a family recipe thread on social media** to share your favorites. You can also share photos of recipes you try out.
- **Ask a younger family member to create an easy holiday dance.** Then have different family members do the dance and post it to a private social media thread or send it to one another via email.
- **Ask a family trivia question** every week using social media.
- **Play games together** via online versions of scrabble, poker, or other favorites.

Sending Mail

- **Draw names and addresses to assign family pen pals.** Have pen pals send letters and treats to their assigned person throughout the holiday season.
- **Make and send a holiday decoration** to every household in the family.
- **Start a family journal** where you answer a few reminiscing questions and then ask a few before mailing the journal to the next family member.
- **Send cards with personalized notes** in the mail to one another.

Make It Person-Centered!

Help Your Care Recipient Participate

Some of these activities may be new to your care recipient. There are many ways you can support their participation! For example:

- **Schedule phone calls with individual family members** and treat it like an event. Make hot cocoa and talk about it all day as you look forward to it.
- **Help navigate social media, video chats, and other apps** so they can still participate.

- **Encourage them to share their thoughts and reminisce about the past.** Video record these and share them for family members to enjoy, too.

Any of the above ideas can create connections, relationships, and even family jokes that will last well into the next generation. You might even start a new tradition without realizing it.