

Creating a sense of connectedness

As humans, we all need to connect. This means that isolation, lock down and social distancing are especially hard.

We can help our children to feel connected by...

1. Enjoying special time

Make time each day to fully connect with each of your children for ten minutes. Set a timer, put your phone away, and ask your child what they would like to do with you. Follow their lead- show that you're paying attention, and join in. If your child doesn't yet play, pay full attention to their communication, gestures and movements, and copy these back. At the end of ten minutes, remind your child that special time is over, but that you'll play again tomorrow. Ten minutes can make a big difference!

2. Thinking about how to show love

Help your child to think about what they can do instead of hugging people or shaking hands. Do they want to pull funny faces for others to copy, or make up a handless handshake? Would they enjoy doing the same activity as a friend or family member on a videocall, like drawing or gaming?

3. Using video and voice messages

Even if your child doesn't seem to be paying attention to the person on the end of the videocall, it is a great way to experience someone's presence. Your child might enjoy doing their own thing while their family member or friend is 'present' with them via video. Your child might prefer pre recorded videos and voice messages from family and friends, which they can listen to as much as they want to. Perhaps family members could record your child's favourite songs or stories.

4. Reconnecting with memories

Photos are a great way to help your child reconnect to their family, community and friends, and to the happy times they have enjoyed. Your child might enjoy physical prints, or want to create a scrapbook with you. They might like to see a slideshow of photos on the TV or tablet. Photos are also great for feeling hopeful- you can think together about where you'd like to go, and what you'd like to do, as lockdown eases.