

Combatting Social Isolation & Emergency Preparedness

TOOLKIT



Connected & Resilient

The "Connected & Resilient Toolkit" is your guide to combatting social isolation and addressing emergency preparedness needs for individuals with disabilities and their families. By offering structured activities and resources, this toolkit empowers you to navigate challenging situations with confidence and effectiveness. Together, we can build stronger, more connected communities.





Introduction

The Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) is dedicated to supporting individuals and families living with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). In response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and with grant funding from GCDD, this toolkit was created to assist providers with ways to combat social isolation and address emergency preparedness needs with their participants. This toolkit offers a structured approach and a wealth of resources to help individuals and communities navigate challenging times with confidence and effectiveness.

Scope

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide a structured and broad resource that helps organizations that serve, individuals and families living with intellectual disabilities combat social isolation when the typical routines or activities cannot be followed. By offering a wide range of pre-planned activities, resources, and guidelines, it eliminates the guesswork and makes it easier for people to take proactive steps to address social isolation creatively and effectively.



Easy Implementation



Adaptability



Time Efficiency



Community Building



Resource Access



Sustainability



Empowerment



Promotion of Well-Being



Structured Approach

By offering a structured approach and a wealth of resources, this toolkit serves as a valuable tool for addressing social isolation in times when traditional routines are disrupted. It can help individuals living with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their family members, IDD providers, and the communities that they live in navigate physical distancing requirements or other challenging situations with greater confidence and effectiveness.



**Activities to
Maintain
Wellness and
Combat Social
Isolation**



**Organization-Specific
Activities**



Toolkit Benefits



TOOLKIT COMPONENTS

Easy step-by-step instructions and resources for organizing activities, making it accessible for anyone to implement without needing extensive prior experience.

Easy Implementation

It contains a variety of activities and strategies that can be tailored to different age groups, preferences, and circumstances, ensuring that it can be used in various contexts.

Adaptability

Sharing these pre-planned activities it will save time that would otherwise be spent brainstorming and planning from scratch.

Time-Efficiency

Foster a sense of community by promoting interaction and social connections among individuals, reducing the feelings of isolation.

Community Building

This toolkit should make it easier for users to find relevant resources.

Resource Access

It can help providers and communities establish ongoing anti-isolation activities, ensuring that efforts to combat social isolation are maintained even when faced with challenges.

Sustainability

The resources and guidance empowers providers, individuals and communities to take ownership of their social well-being and actively work towards reducing isolation.

Empowerment

The goal is to improve the mental and emotional well-being of individuals and communities by taking proactive steps when physical distancing is necessary, leading to happier and healthier lives.

Promotion of Well-being

**Activities to Maintain Mental
Wellness and Combat Social Isolation**

Online Events

Encourage interaction and give participants choices by:

- Hosting the same activity at different time of day (10:00 am, 2:00 pm, and 6:00 pm).
- Host three different online events a day with same time model above.
- Offer a variety of activities suitable for community support, group homes, community employment, behavior support, or supported living.

**Activities to Maintain Mental Wellness
and Combat Social Isolation**

**Movie
Discussions**

Watch & Talk (movie club).

How to:

- Give choice of two movies to pick from.
- Go with the majority and use the other movie for another time.
- Select date, time, and platform method.
- Have a few discussion questions.
- Either pause and ask questions as you go through the movie, or wait to the end and have the discussion afterwards.

Benefit:

- Creating a shared experience
- Fostering meaningful conversations.
- Reducing the feeling of isolation.

Here is a list of movies to give an idea of what to watch
Here is a list of movie discussion questions for families.

**Activities to Maintain Mental
Wellness and Combat Social Isolation**

Virtual Tours

Embark on virtual tours:

- **National parks**
- **Disney Land**
- **National Parks Service live webcam**
- **Cooking shows**
- **Zoo's live - animal watch**

Explore the world from the comfort of your home via Google Earth.

**Activities to Maintain Mental
Wellness and Combat Social Isolation**

**Virtual
Cook-Off**

Cook-Off

Prepare meals along with staff.

How to:

- Send out recipes in advance for members
- Send separate ingredient (shopping) list as needed
- Set date and time to meet virtually.
- Set virtual platform to meet.
- Can add judging categories
 - Following directions
 - Presentation
 - Cleanliness (before, during, after)
 - Taste (best reaction from tasting their own food)

**Activities to Maintain Mental
Wellness and Combat Social Isolation**

Online Games

Game Shows (Virtual Version).

- **Name That Tune**
- **Bingo (markers can be Skittles, M&M's, marbles, Cheerios, pebbles, etc.)**
- **Jeopardy**
- **Wheel of Fortune**
- **Outburst**
- **Pictionary**

Allow participants to take turns being the host to add more variety, engagement and fun.

Organization-Specific Activities

**Diversified
Enterprises**

Support Services (Community Access, Supported Employment, Community Living Supports, etc.)

Game days:

- **Responsibilities** - determine staff schedules and role in activities
- **Collaborate** planning of activities, engage participants in being game show host(s).
- **Set days, times, (offer variety of times - morning, afternoon, evening).**

Behavioral Wellness:

- **Create individualized travel guides** - specify length of time and location
- **BOLO game** (be on the look out for - similar to a scavenger hunt)

Training Opportunities:

- **Build on daily activity and employment skills.**
- **Identify skills that can transfer to volunteer and employment opportunities.**

Organization-Specific Activities

**Each One
Teach One
Together, Inc.**

Self-care boxes for local community members.

Use shoe boxes and fill them with essential items such as deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrush, hand sanitizer, lotion, soap, pack of tissue, and female products.

Additional products, such as pen/pencil, pocket notebook or journal, candle, sugar scrub, eye mask, N-95 mask, lotion, can be added by groups or the individual once they receive the box

Decorate the boxes to add a personal touch.

Give to: parent support groups, group homes, shelters, child enrichment centers, nursing homes, etc.

Download instructions to make your own self-care box [here](#).

**Organization-Specific
Activities**

**Exceptional
Living 101**

Chair Yoga with Exceptional Living 101

Virtual chair yoga sessions on Thursdays at 7:00 pm for 30 minutes.

Suitable for everyone.

You need:

- A comfortable chair without wheels
- yoga instructor or chair yoga videos on YouTube if an instructor is unavailable.
- Access to the internet.

Organization-Specific Activities

**The Kyle Pease
Foundation**

Zoom Meet-Ups with the Kyle Pease Foundation

Attend a Zoom meet-up on Thursdays at 7:00 pm for 75 minutes.

Open to anyone with access to Facebook and affiliation with the Kyle Pease Foundation.

Activities vary:

- **Bingo**
- **Story share (memories/favorite moments)**
- **Family updates**
- **Virtual races**

Organization-Specific Activities

**Filling in the
GAPS**

Teens Let's C.H.A.L.K.

Teens connect for therapeutic art and mindfulness activity.

Open to teens aged 12-18.

How to:

- Led by an adult volunteer
- Each session focuses on an activity related to an element of the acronym C.H.A.L.K. (Create, Heal, Aspire, Liberate, Kindle)
- Colored chalk
- Sidewalk/Driveway/Parking lot (low to no traffic area)
- Discuss what they draw and/or write related to C.H.A.L.K.

Download a [Teens Let's C.H.A.L.K. mini facilitator toolkit.](#)

Straight from **the community**



“I missed going to the center and being with our friends. Getting together online wasn’t the same, but it helped because I could see my friends on the screen.”



North Georgia



“Stepping outside of the box, taking time to work with, and teach new technological skills led to employment in IT at the height of COVID-19 and beyond for a few of our clients.”



South Georgia



“We knew our families and their kids were struggling. Because we’ve run summer camps for over 20 years, we had ‘playbook’ to pull from. We just figured out how to adapt indoor activities for outdoors.”



Central Georgia