

How to Improve Family Relationships during Quarantine

Written by Mrs. Beutel, Catholic Charities Counselor

1. Eat meals together.

Eating breakfast, lunch, and dinner together can foster a stronger sense of connectedness. While I understand this may not always be possible, I encourage families to do this as much as possible to keep communication flowing. Making meals together is another way to cultivate stronger family relationships.

2. Hold family meetings.

Another way to keep communication flowing and increase connectedness is by having family meetings. Family meetings can be a time to communicate problems in need of a solution, brainstorm solutions, and decide on a solution to try. Try holding a family meeting once a week for 15-30 minutes.

Need some more ideas on what to do during the family meeting? Check out this great article by Dr. Jane Nelsen who developed the Positive Discipline program: <https://www.positivediscipline.com/articles/family-meetings>

3. Do indoor family activities.

Doing family activities yields many benefits: creates positive memories, decreases boredom, gives children something to look forward to, improves family relationships, and more.

Some ideas of family activities include:

- Attend live-streamed Mass together.
- Pray together.
- Play Pictionary. If you don't already have the game, grab some paper and pens or use a dry erase board, and use the free Pictionary Generator (<https://randomwordgenerator.com/pictionary.php>).
- Play word games. One fun word game is Wordsters.
- Play trivia games, such as Bible Trivia.
- Hop on Zoom or another similar video platform and chat and/or play games with relatives or immediate family members away from home. The

games above can easily be played over video. For example, for Pictionary, Zoom has a whiteboard feature that can be visible through screen sharing.

- Make a family scrapbook or album.
- Do art projects together.
- Have a dance party.
- Watch movies together as a family.

4. Go outside together.

- Sit outside on your porch or deck to eat, hold your family meeting, play games, or have a conversation.
- Take a walk together around your neighborhood to chat and get some exercise, which is also good for mental health.
- Go to the park for a nature walk and family picnic. Virginia Parks remain open with social distancing requirements in place.

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/covid-19-update>

5. Encourage family members to speak to each other in one another's love language.

- Well-known counselor, Dr. Gary Chapman, developed the concept of the five love languages. His theory is when we understand one another's love language and communicate with each other in the other's primary love language, love is felt and relationships improve.
- Want to find out what your and your family members' love languages are? You and your family members can take a Five Love Languages Quiz to find out: <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/>