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Grandparenting From Afar During COVID-19

COVID-19 means no hugs for grandma and grandpa as grandparents across the country are currently “grounded” from seeing their grandchildren who may be so near yet so far. Safety means separation for grandparents, which goes against all our ideas of togetherness and contact with our grandchildren.

However, staying apart does not need to mean staying unconnected. We need to do physical distancing but not social isolation. Grandparents and grandchildren have turned to technology and other means to keep their relationship strong. Staying connected with their grandchildren allows grandparents to maintain their ties and lessen feelings of isolation. Grandparents can also help their own children who may be working from home and trying to cope with homeschooling and increased childcare demands.

Here are some suggestions how to remain connected even if you can't be there in person:

- Reading stories on FaceTime or zoom
- Helping with homework assignments
- Share cooking class
- Play interactive games online, battleship, hangman, taking turns in real time
- Tell jokes
- Create “cousins time”, cousins who live far away from each other can interact online
- Have a talent night
- Share a movie night and then afterwards discuss the movie
- Seeing each other from a distance curbside if live closeby
- Zoom special family occasions, birthdays, anniversaries, special holidays
- Car caravan with banners or balloons to celebrate special occasion if live nearby
- Establish a daily meet up time online to read books, play games or do activities
- Dance together online to favorite songs

