

## 20 Great Things to Help Keep Seniors Connected

1. Find ways to get out and get engaged – a walk to the park, a wheelchair ride to visit the local pet shop or dog run, clothes shopping (even if items cannot be tried on in the store).
2. Locate a senior center which has a variety of activities. Make sure there is a good transportation system to get there.
3. Take out a membership at the local Y that has classes for senior citizens.
4. If the senior has sufficient assistance, consider adopting a small dog or cat from a shelter. Have a back-up plan for the pet if the senior is no longer able to care for the pet.
5. Enroll the senior in an art class or a museum program for people with Alzheimer's.
6. Arrange for an art therapist to come into the home and give some drawing classes or art appreciation classes.
7. Purchase concert, opera or theater tickets. Get two tickets, or more, so that a friend and/or aide may go. Think about sitting up close if eyesight or hearing is a problem. Call ahead to arrange for storage of walker or wheelchair during the performance.
8. Get a local music student to come to the home and play for the senior and friends.
9. Find a vintage movie theater and go to see an old movie together. If that's not possible, make sure there is access to movie channels.
10. Get a large flat screen TV so it is easier to see and be involved in shows and movies. There are amplifier devices that can be purchased so the sound is not too loud for others in the room.
11. If the senior has difficulty going out, arrange for a physical therapist or personal trainer who specializes in the elderly to come to the home each week.
12. Involve the senior in the daily running of the household. Take him or her to the grocery store to pick out favorite food and supplies. Small trips with a grocery basket held on the lap while someone pushes the wheelchair works well.
13. Make sure the senior gets to family gatherings. This may involve special car service plans for trips outside of town as an alternative to previous modes of transportation.

14. Be sure to involve the senior in conversations – even if you have to speak a little loudly. If a senior resists getting a hearing aid, suggest a small easily held amplifier with a microphone that attaches to headphones (try various headphones). This can make conversations much easier for both parties.
15. Check on local car services and set up an account so that the senior has easy transportation around town and doesn't have to worry about having cash each time.
16. Look for special exhibits at museums that you could both go to. Don't forget the Botanical Garden, Zoo, and Aquarium. Almost all museums can be accessed with a wheelchair, if necessary.
17. Talk to the elderly person about life as a child or growing up. It's amazing the first-hand knowledge of history he or she will have. It will be a time of exploration for both of you.
18. Look at old photographs together. Reminisce.
19. Identify important memories and find representative symbols (like a hat or sweater with a favorite school logo) that will bring ongoing pleasure.
20. Go out to a local restaurant that is accessible. If the senior has an aide, this is a nice way to show appreciation to the aide as well, or a time to give the aide a chance to be alone.