

## Friendships During COVID

COVID has made things hard. It's okay to be upset or overwhelmed about all of the changes happening in your lives and the lives of your loved ones. We can't change our feelings, but we can name our feelings, and choose what to DO with those feelings.

What are three feelings you have had this week:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

When you are upset, what are three things you can do to calm down (listen to music, play basketball, draw, etc.)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

When you are feeling lonely, what are three things you can do to care for others (text a compliment to a friend, bake a treat for a neighbor, etc.)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

COVID requires us to find new ways to connect. We can grow our friendship skills even when we can't see our friends regularly. Keep your eyes and heart open for ways to build connections when you are physical distanced from others. Acting in kindness, practicing listening, learning more about ourselves, and the suggestions below can help us be better friends when we are together.

- **Making connections with old friends** – Maybe there is a friend you have lost track of that you can get reconnected to via messaging or chatting.
- **Finding connection outside of school** – Play outside with friends (be sure to keep physical distance), siblings, or pets. Or, take an online class about a topic you enjoy (like coding or cooking). You may also be able to find faith groups or social clubs that are meeting online.
- **Being creative** – Make something artistic to send to someone who is alone. For example, you can create an online puppet show for younger relatives to watch, or paint a picture and send it to an elderly neighbor.
- **Making time to laugh** – Find ways to laugh with someone else. For example, you can watch a funny video at the same time a friend is watching the video, then talk about it online afterwards to bring some needed joy to both of you.
- **Asking for help.** If you are struggling, you don't have to struggle alone. Reach out to a caregiver, a school counselor via message, or another trusted adult.