

COMMUNITY CURRENTS



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Staying Connected

Macon Bibb Citizen Advocacy will continue to provide protection and advocacy throughout the coronavirus pandemic. We will find creative, out-of-the box ways for people to connect. For example, Connelly will go to the nursing home where Frazier lives and call inside to ask if someone would please push Frazier’s wheelchair to the front door so he can wave and say “hi” – in this way, Frazier knows that Connelly is thinking of him and will visit inside as soon as possible (all nursing homes in Macon are closed to visitation at this time)



The Importance of Human Connection

Research shows us that loneliness is on the rise, and that a lack of human connection can be more harmful to your health than obesity, smoking and high blood pressure.

In today’s age, we live busy lives, trying to strike a balance between work, school, hobbies, self-care and more. Often, our social connections fall by the wayside. But connecting with others is more important than you might think. Social connection can lower anxiety and depression, help us regulate our emotions, lead to higher self-esteem and empathy, and actually improve our immune systems. By neglecting our need to connect, we put our health at risk.

The reality is that we’re living in a time of true disconnection. While technology seems to connect us more than ever, the screens around us disconnect us from nature, from ourselves, and from others. Wi-Fi alone isn’t enough to fulfill our social needs – we need face-to-face interaction to thrive. Technology should be enhancing our connection to others, not replacing it. <https://cmha.ca/blogs/the-importance-of-human-connection>

Covid-19 has limited our face-to-face connections, but we can look forward to a time soon when we can connect in the healthiest way. Touch is important. Hugs are important. Seeing others’ smiles is important. Let us look forward to connecting again with those we care about in the most meaningful way!

The Sound of Music



April 2020 is a special time – it celebrates four years that David and Jared have been “hanging out.” Then the coronavirus made its way to Macon, Georgia and everything changed. When I asked David if he was able to get through by telephone to the group home where Jared lives, he had a pretty unusual response. “Absolutely! In fact, I don’t call them, they call me, every 2-3 days to tell me that it’s time to talk to Jared.” David was delighted to share with me that when he talked with Jared this week, Jared had been playing his keyboard and was saying Edelweiss, over and over, pronouncing the w as a v, the way it is correctly pronounced in Austria! I had to smile, and I shared with David that I hadn’t seen The Sound of Music in years. Through these regular and frequent telephone calls, Jared knows that David is there for him and the two will get together as soon as possible.

How are YOU Staying Connected?

When Georgia Governor Brian Kemp declared a Public Health Emergency on March 14, 2020 to help contain the spread of coronavirus, things began moving even more quickly in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. Sports leagues suspended seasons, metro Atlanta schools shuttered classrooms, grocery store aisles were picked clean, clergy members canceled services, festivals and events were scrapped and Delta Air Lines announced the largest reduction of flights in its history. <https://www.ajc.com/news/state--regional-govt--politics/kemp-declares-unprecedented-public-health-emergency-georgia/gdTeQfD6zJPb1kbYIRLHRO/> With the number of cases rising daily, “social distancing” quickly became one of the ways to slow the spread of the virus. This distancing comes at a price though. How can we stay connected to the ones we love?

Some of the common ways people are staying connected is through social media. This can mean apps like Facebook Messenger, Skype, Discord or Zoom (all video chats). Even if someone you care about is in a restricted environment, one of these ways may still be possible. Having a trust relationship with a caregiver or staff member who could facilitate a video chat might mean the world to someone on the inside. If this is not possible, we might need to get creative. Try calling inside and asking that a person’s blinds be raised so that you can wave or send letters and cards on a regular basis. If nothing else works, try calling weekly and asking that a message be given to the person. All are ways of saying, “I care.”

How are YOU staying connected? Email us your ideas and out-of-the-box creative thinking to asmithmbca@bellsouth.net. We would love to feature them on our website and/or Facebook page.

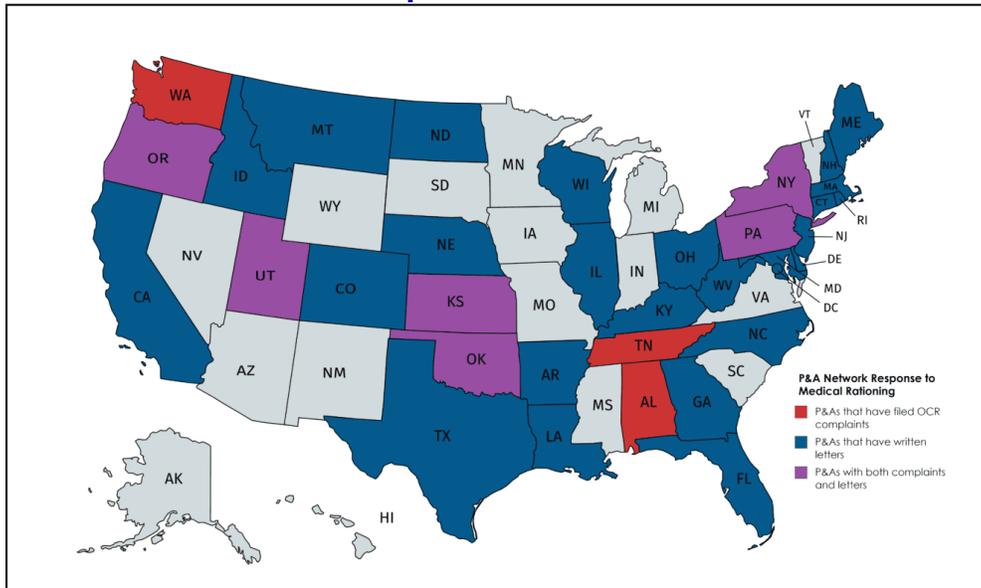
*Ask
questions
from the
heart and
you will be
answered
from the
heart*

Proverb from
the Omaha
Tribe

*The only way
to have a
friend is to
be one*

Ralph Waldo
Emerson

P&A Network Response to Medical Rationing



Complaints filed due to medical rationing schemes: Washington, Alabama, Kansas, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Utah, Oregon, New York, Oklahoma. States that have written letters to governors (or mayor for DC): New York, Florida, Ohio, Illinois, New Jersey, Delaware, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Texas, Nebraska, Colorado, Georgia, New Hampshire, California, Montana, Connecticut, Massachusetts, District of Columbia, Rhode Island, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Dakota, Maine. States that have filed complaints and have written letters: Kansas, Pennsylvania, Utah, Oregon, New York, Oklahoma.

<https://www.ndrn.org/issues/covid-19/>

Many communities are feeling overwhelmed by the novel COVID-19 pandemic, with many state and local governments declaring a state of emergency. As the number of COVID-19 cases increase, health care professionals predict that there will be a lack of acute care services & equipment, notably ventilators, to meet the increasing demand. As a result of this fear, some states and medical professionals have begun developing guidance protocols for rationing acute medical care, meaning guidelines to determine who will have access to life-saving treatment. Many of these plans rely on disability-based distinctions, illegally discriminating against people with disabilities. <https://www.centerforpublicrep.org/covid-19-medical-rationing/>

Staying Healthy

Covid-19 Safety Guidelines

Clean your hands often

[Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Stay at home as much as possible Put **distance between yourself and other people**. Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus. Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others

You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities. The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected. Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker. Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

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An Invitation to Action

Citizen Advocacy is an opportunity to stand by, for and with another person, taking action to ensure a better life and an enrichment of opportunity for a person who may, because they have a disability, have been subject to isolation and segregation, rejection and abuse, poverty and injustice.

Donate online at:
maconbibbcitizenadvocacy.org
or by mail to:
Macon/Bibb Citizen Advocacy
613 Cherry Street
Macon, Georgia 31201

We welcome and depend on your support!

Thank You

Citizen Advocacy is a community-strengthening endeavor that depends on the support of local citizens. All investments directly benefit the Macon/Bibb County community. Our thanks to these folks who have invested from January 2018 through April 2020.

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