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Staying Connected - Staying Safe

AARP Community Connections

AARP has launched a new online service that helps coordinate extra help through mutual aid groups. Mutual aid groups are informal groups of volunteers that band together to find effective ways to support those people most in need who live in their local community. Mutual aid can include picking up groceries, providing financial assistance, or lending emotional support to your neighbors.

[AARP Community Connections Website](#)

Free Video Conferencing Apps

Communicating with your friends and family using your phone, iPad or computer, is a great way to stay safe while connecting.

[Google Hangouts](#)

- the free video chat app from Google is an easy connect - you can have up to 10 participants; the video quality is good. How to Use Google Hangouts:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfZ1Wyltxjo>

[Skype](#) - video conferencing from Microsoft with up to 10 participants - you need to download the app to your desktop or phone. How To Use Skype:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S38e-t6rhKA>

[Zoom](#) - video conferencing that has a free pared down basic plan that allows you to have 40-minute calls - requires that you download an app - very easy to set up and use. Best accessed with Chrome:

Zoom 101 Sign Up & Download Meeting Client



Wearing a Mask

If you are meeting with your family in person and/or you have underlying medical conditions, it's beneficial for you and your family members to wear a mask - especially if they are actively going out into the community with most states re-opening businesses. Many states also require masks out in public. Wearing a mask can be challenging for people with autism. Some people with autism are very sensitive to touch and just don't like anything touching their faces, and the mask can cause unpleasant sensations from the fabric on the face and the elastic touching the ears. These resources may help alleviate some stress:

[I Can Wear a Mask \(Autism Research Institute\)](#)

[We Wear Masks \(Autism Speaks\)](#)

Safe Outdoor Activities

Take photos

Walk around your neighborhood or drive to your local park and take photos of nature, architecture, whatever strikes you as interesting. Taking photos outside is a great way to get outdoors and soak up some sunshine (which has great mood enhancing benefits all by itself) but it also can be used as a grounding technique to help you focus in on an activity in the here and now which can reduce anxiety.

Take A Hike

Find a local hiking trail that is open - many national and local parks are open right now - just make sure you bring your face mask in case you need to wear it leading up to the trail and getting back to your car as some states like California require wearing face

masks in public when you are around other people. Check your area for a list of trails; Orange County, CA has a wide range of trails at the beach, in canyons, and in local hills. Check out this guide to Orange County trails that shows their difficulty level and length to easily determine which ones are right for you! [Hikes In Orange County](#).

Have a Picnic

If you have underlying conditions or just want to be cautious, consider having an outdoor picnic to meet with family and friends that don't live with you. You can use food delivery or curbside pickup for meals and meet at a local park that has picnic tables. Meeting outside minimizes the risk of infection by avoiding indoor areas that use recycled air.

Start a Vegetable Garden

Gardening is a great relaxing activity and vegetable gardening has the extra added benefit of providing an extra food source that you don't have to go to the grocery store to procure! This is also something you can have your grandchildren help with when they visit (or if they live with you)... If you don't have a big yard, consider container gardening. check out this list of [16 Vegetables That Grow in Containers](#)



How to Grow Vegetables in Containers // Container Gardening // Self Sufficient Sunday!

At Home Entertainment

BOOKS ABOUT AUTISM

The Reason I Jump - You've never read a book like *The Reason I Jump*. Written by Naoki Higashida, a very smart, very self-aware, and very charming thirteen-year-old boy with autism, it is a one-of-a-kind memoir that demonstrates how an autistic mind thinks,

feels, perceives, and responds in ways few of us can imagine. [View on Amazon.](#)

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time- Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the color yellow. This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighborhood dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years. [View on Amazon.](#)

In a Different Key: The Story of Autism- Nearly seventy-five years ago, Donald Triplett of Forest, Mississippi, became the first child diagnosed with autism. Beginning with his family's odyssey, *In a Different Key* tells the extraordinary story of this often misunderstood condition, and of the civil rights battles waged by the families of those who have it. [view on Amazon.](#)

[READ MORE FROM AUTISM SPEAKS](#)

BEST MOVIES ABOUT AUTISM

Inside Out

First on our list is *Inside Out*, the Disney and Pixar film that impressed families the world over when it came out in 2015. Beautifully designed and imaginatively told, *Inside Out* is the story of a young girl, Riley, who is forced to cope with her emotions when her family picks up their lives and moves from the Midwest to San Francisco. Rent this movie on [Amazon Prime Video](#) OR [iTunes](#) OR [Google Play](#) OR [Disney Channel](#).

Life Animated

Based off of the book of the same name, *Life, Animated* is the tale of journalist Ron Suskind and his son, Owen, who lives with autism. This movie documents Owen's life after being diagnosed with autism at age 3. With Owen's parents worried and unsure of what to do to help their son, they discover the power of animated movies. Rent this movie on [Amazon Prime Video](#) OR [iTunes](#) OR [Google Play](#) OR [Hulu](#).

The United States of Autism

This is another moving film, a documentary about a father searching for answers to help his son with autism. "Follow one man's 11,000 mile, 40 day journey across the American landscape to visit twenty families and individuals affected by autism while searching for answers for his own son. Rent this movie on [Amazon Prime Video](#) OR [iTunes](#).

Fly Away

Fathers and sons get a lot of attention in the movies on our list, but it's often mothers who come to know their children with special needs the best. *Fly Away* is an emotional story about a mother doing her best to care for her daughter, who faces significant challenges due to being on the autism spectrum. Rent this movie on [YouTube](#) OR [Amazon prime Video](#).

The Boy Who Could Fly

This film follows a young girl, Milly, who finds herself living next door to a nonverbal boy with autism, Eric. With a backdrop of family loss and heartache in both Eric's and Milly's families, this movie addresses challenging topics in a heartfelt, uplifting way. Rent this movie on [Amazon Prime Video](#) OR [Google Play](#)

Temple Grandin

Last on our list of top autism movies is a familiar name in the autism community. Temple Grandin, herself diagnosed with autism, has become famous through her writing, speaking, and advocacy about the challenges she faced growing up. From building large, complex contraptions to soothe herself during meltdowns, to becoming an extremely successful professor of animal science and consultant for the livestock industry, Temple Grandin's story will absolutely inspire you and your family. Rent this movie on [Amazon Prime Video](#) OR [iTunes](#) OR [Google Play](#) OR it's available on [HBO](#).

Check out this Talks at Google presentation: *The Autism Brain: Thinking Across the Spectrum* by Dr. Temple Grandin



Dr. Temple Grandin: "The Autistic Brain: Thinking Across the Spectrum" | Talks at Google

BEST TV SHOWS ABOUT AUTISM

Atypical

High school student Sam Gardner is on a mission to find love and, thanks to the often-inappropriate advice from his friends and family, it seems that autism is far from the thing stopping him. Featuring a lot of chuckles, some questionable autism depictions and the fantastic Brigette Lundy-Paine as Casey (who must be SO toned from carrying the entirety of season 2 on her own) *Atypical* is the premier autism show for young adults. This TV series is available on [Netflix](#).

Everything's Gonna Be Okay After the passing of his terminally ill father, 'neurotic' 25-year-old Nick takes guardianship of his two younger half-sisters (one of whom is autistic)

and suddenly must learn the ropes of adulting after a life as a lay about. Covering concepts of love, grief, diversity and self-understanding, Everything's Gonna be Okay is sure to bring both tears of joy and tears of sorrow from the get-go. This TV series is available on [Hulu](#).

The A Word

A BBC drama television series, based on the Israeli series *Yellow Peppers*. The series follows a young boy and how his family cope with the revelation that he has autism. This TV series is available on [Amazon Prime Video](#) OR [YouTube TV](#) OR [BBC One](#).

eBay Donations: "Stay At Home" Cleaning

Now is the perfect time to sort through our cupboards, drawers and closets. Most of us have collectibles and other worthwhile items that our children do not want. Donations to the Grandparent Autism Network are tax-deductible. Create more space for all the fabulous things that you love AND benefit grandparents and families affected by autism.



All donated items are sold through our [e-Bay for Charity store](#), raising money to support our programs.

We welcome donated goods such as:

- New, unwanted gifts
- Collectibles, Home Accessories, Craft Items
- New Clothing, Shoes and Handbags
- Fine, Vintage, and Costume Jewelry
- Mobile Phones, Tablets and Laptops

You can mail or drop off donations for GAN at the UPS Store located at 23785 El Toro Road, #103, Lake Forest, CA. Please [check this website](#) for directions and hours of operation. Contact us at info@ganinfo.org for possible pickup options in Orange County, CA and for donation forms.

Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.
Tax ID# 20-5230144.

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