



Abilities in Motion

Helping individuals with disabilities live
independent, self-determined lives

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Abilities in Motion Launches Talk Line during Social Distancing

Doctors and psychologists agree—social isolation can have profound effects on physical and mental health. During this time of social distancing, we must recognize that staying connected requires intent, something we all have a responsibility to cultivate by checking in on our neighbors, friends, and family, especially those who are elderly or have disabilities or other chronic conditions.

A recent article in *The Guardian* referred to this phenomenon as a “social recession” that mirrors the economic downturn. With no end in sight yet, the interminable loneliness many of us feel as we attempt to protect each other by self-isolating is completely natural, albeit not pleasant. Long periods of social isolation can increase inflammation in the body, aggravate the heart, and cause depression and anxiety, while social connection does the opposite.

We are social creatures, dependent on each other for communication, companionship, friendship, compassion, and much more. Relationships form the crux of our everyday lives. This disruption we are all feeling now can only begin healing through each of us taking up the responsibility of connecting with intention.

To address the negative effects of social isolation on the health of our community, Abilities in Motion has launched an initiative to serve those in need of human connection. Our new “Social Connection” talk line allows people in our community who are feeling isolated to connect with someone at Abilities in Motion and chat with them.

Call 610-790-9632 to speak to someone in English or 610-823-5237 for Spanish. The veterans’ line is available in both English and Spanish at 484-987-4393. Call today to connect with one of our compassionate staff members and stave off the negative effects of social distancing. The “Social Connection” talk line is not for program services or emergencies.

Executive Director Stephanie Quigley gave the following statement:

“We know that during a time like this, maintaining a social connection is difficult. There are many Pennsylvanians that are suffering the negative effects of the economy as well as the serious health effects of the virus. We are offering our ‘Social Connection’ line for anyone in the community or in a facility that simply wants to talk and connect with a human being for some positive interaction. We recognize that some people do not have access to the internet, and we want them to know there are still ways to make a social connection with us.”

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Abilities in Motion is Berks County’s Center for Independent Living. We offer support services, education, and advocacy for over 3,700 individuals with disabilities in over 30 counties in the state. AIM’s purpose is reflected in the Rehabilitation Act, which states that “disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to live independently, enjoy self-determination, make choices, contribute to society, pursue meaningful careers, and enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of American society.”