



# Leader's Guide

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## Lesson Objectives

As a result of participation in this program, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of feeling connected to family members.
- Learn about specific strategies and resources to assist in building long distance relationships.
- Apply specific ideas for strengthening family relationships from a distance.

## Lesson Planning

- Study and learn the information and ideas presented in the leader's guide and member's guide.
- Plan a lesson introduction, which may include the suggested activity or your own ideas.

**NDSU**  
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## Handouts

Materials to be made available should include:

1. **Leader's Guide** – one per club;
2. **Member's Guide** – one per member;
3. **Overhead #1** – "Tips on Building Long Distance Connections" – one per club
4. **Handout #1** – "My Father's Story," **Handout #2** – "Brainstorming Long Distance Connections," and **Handout #3** – "20 Long Distance Activities for Parents Over Miles" – one per member;
5. **Evaluation** – one per member.

## Time Schedule

**Introduction** (5 minutes)

### **Activity Ideas:**

- Share the story "My Father's Voice."  
Ask participants to respond and share experiences of "long distance connection" that have been meaningful to them.

**Presentation of Key Concepts and Lesson** (5-10 minutes)

**Building Family Connections at a Distance**

## **Learning Activity** (10-20 minutes)

- Handout #2 or #3, depending on your audience, to brainstorm and share ideas for “long distance connections.”

## **Lesson Review and Program Evaluation** (5-10 minutes)

# **Key Concepts – Building Family Connections at a Distance**

### **To say:**

One of the biggest factors that makes it challenging for family members to feel connected today is found in one word — distance. We live in a mobile society today. Distance from one another as family members too often means that you miss the little moments that build lasting family connections.

How is it possible, then, to build family connections at a distance? Most persons suggest one of the most important parts of family life is “feeling connected” to the other members of the family. Finding ways to foster such connections is important to happy family relationships.

At times, parents may be separated from children due to divorce, business travel, military service, or other circumstances. Even more common is the fact that many older persons are separated from family members they love by distance. This lesson is about the importance of family connections and practical ways to build long distance family relationships. What are your ideas?

## **Going Through the Lesson**

Share the story called “My Father’s Voice” (Handout #1) to prompt opening discussion. Do not give the handout to participants until after reading the story.

### **My Father's Voice - story**

Discussion questions following the story might include:

- What challenges did distance create in this story?
- What helped the child to feel a connection in this story?

### **Lead discussion on "Tips on Building Long Distance Connections." Use Overhead #1 if desired.**

Discuss the following in your own words:

#### **Tips on Building Long Distance Connections**

- Establish Regular Routines for Connection
- Take the Initiative
- Brainstorm Creative Activities from a Distance
- Work to Maintain Relationship Satisfaction
- Take Advantage of Technology

This section is summarized on the overhead and also included in the Member’s Guide. Possibly use props or examples to prompt responses and discussion.

## **Learning Activity – "Brainstorming Long Distance Connections" or "20 Long Distance Activities for Parents Over Miles**

Have participants engage in the learning activity (use Handout #2 or #3). As part of the activity, prepare materials beforehand to actually do or demonstrate two or three of the activity ideas. Encourage participants to brainstorm their own ideas.

## **Do Lesson Evaluation**

Conduct the lesson evaluation that is provided.

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