

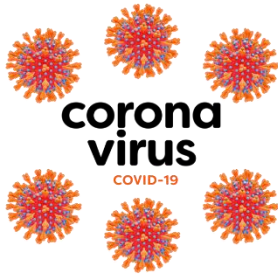


Keeping Connected and staying Well

Easy Read Summary



This report is about how people with learning disabilities have been supported to use technology during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Covid-19 has made life very difficult for people with learning disabilities in lots of ways.



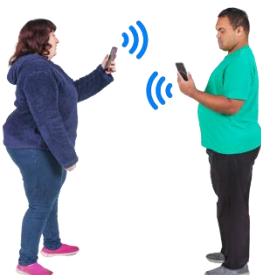
Between July and September, we spoke to people who support people with learning disabilities.



Most of these supporters did not live with the person they were supporting.



They were providing support from their own homes and over the phone or on the internet.



We spoke to them about how they were using technology to support people with learning disabilities.



When we talk about technology, we mean things like, mobile phones, iPads, WhatsApp, Facebook, Zoom and the internet.

What we did:



We sent out a questionnaire and asked people if we could interview them about what they had been doing to provide support.

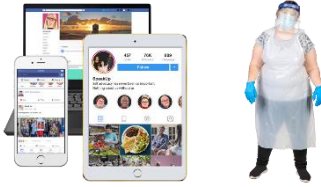


106 Supporters filled out a questionnaire and 55 people were interviewed.



We asked them how they have been using technology to help people with learning disabilities stay in touch with friends and family and to stay safe and well.

What we found out:



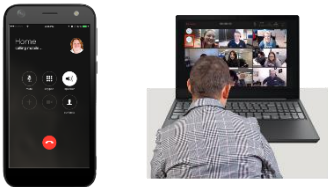
1. Supporters were using a mix of technology and other methods.



This was because not all people with learning disabilities wanted to or had access to technology.



2. Supporters were using lots of different types of technology to help people with learning disabilities to stay connected.



Mobiles phones and Zoom were most used to help people stay connected.



3. Supporters who did use technology to help people with learning disabilities to stay connected before the covid-19 pandemic had to learn new things and see what did or did not work.



4. The supporters said it was really important for people who lived with a person with a learning disability, like a carer or a parent, to help them to use technology.



5. Some supporters shared stories of people with learning disabilities who did not have access to technology.



6. Some shared stories of people with learning disabilities not knowing how to use the technology.



7. Some supporters said that people with learning disabilities did not have the right support in their homes to use technology.



8. There were good stories of people with learning disabilities who were able to use technology during the Pandemic.



They said it helped with their mental health and wellbeing. It also helped them to connect with family and friends.



9. The use of technology during the Coronavirus Pandemic has shown the amazing things that people with learning disabilities can do, with the right support.

Conclusion:



This work has shown how important it is for people with learning disabilities to have access to technology.



It is really important that they have the right support to help them to use it.



This support needs to come from people they live with as well as other places such as Self-Advocacy groups and Day Services.



All those who provide support to people with learning disabilities need to know how to use the technology and make sure that they have access to it so they can keep connected and stay well.