



Dear Families,

I am grateful for you and our direct support staff who tirelessly support your loved ones. This week, I am sharing a letter from a family member, Pam, who also works at Advocates. I hope you find comfort hearing how she has connected with her daughter and the staff during these challenging times.

We've begun to see the recovery of many people in the Advocates community with COVID-19, which brings hope and light to the end of this dark tunnel.

Here is a brief update:

- 46 staff and 42 people we support are currently testing positive for COVID-19
- 13 staff are recovered and returning to work

As always, visit www.Advocates.org/COVID19 for more updates and please reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Take care and stay healthy,
Diane Gould
President & CEO

Dear Fellow Family Members,

Like many of you, I have a loved one who lives in a group home at Advocates.

Kate is my daughter and I typically see her at least once a week to take her to the movies, out to eat, for walks, or whatever seems good for the day. I haven't gone more than two weeks without seeing her since she was born, 32 years ago. The separation that has come due to Coronavirus has been challenging.

I listen to friends talk about phone calls and Zoom meetings with their adult children who don't live with them. Kate has limited communication skills, so talking on the phone is difficult. We tried video chatting, but her eyebrows were furrowed and she looked like she would rather be listening to her music on her tablet than listening to me chat away.

So now I'm doing things differently. I sent a video to her staff of me saying "hi" and "I love you." The staff said she enjoyed that. I am now sending her mail occasionally: cards and little gifts that she would like. These are things that I hope will bring her joy. It also makes me feel like I am still in her life, during this time of social distancing.

While I worry about Kate, and everyone else that I know, I am comforted by the thought that Kate has loving and caring staff who are with her day in and day out. They are keeping her safe and healthy. They are providing activities to keep her engaged and entertained. They keep me connected to her. They send emails, pictures, and videos, so that I can see her in a way that is comfortable for her. For this I am ever grateful.

As I am sure many of you have, I have been trying to think of a way to thank the staff beyond my words of gratitude. I would love to drop something off at the house, but I can't, as Kate would see me and run out to go for a ride with me.

I have been in touch with leadership, and here are a few ways that we can thank program staff for their dedicated support:

- *Mail small gifts, write a letter, send a video or email*
- *Order takeout meals to be delivered to the program*
- *[Make a donation](#) designated to your loved ones program*

Be well everyone and hope we can be together with our loved ones soon.

Pam

Family Communication COVID-19 Update 5/12/20
Subject Line: A letter from a family member.

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