

Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness



About Us

- Coalition dedicated to ending social isolation and loneliness for people with disabilities and older adults in Wisconsin
- Established in 2020
- We meet monthly with five work groups that focus on:
 - Policy and advocacy
 - Research and measurement
 - Detection and access to resources
 - Health equity
 - Raising awareness



Wisconsin Coalition to End
Social Isolation & Loneliness

Social Isolation & Loneliness Awareness Week Activities

November 13-19, 2022

Press Release

Wisconsin Coalition
to End Social Isolation
& Loneliness

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11/13/2022

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Governor Evers Proclaims Social Isolation & Loneliness Awareness Week as Coalition Efforts Battle Growing Public Health Challenges

(MADISON, WI) Loneliness and social isolation are on the rise in Wisconsin and across the United States, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. While people of all ages and backgrounds can experience loneliness and social isolation, older adults and people with disabilities are uniquely susceptible which puts them at risk for significant health problems. Governor Evers recently declared November 13-19, 2022, as Social Isolation & Loneliness Awareness Week in Wisconsin to bring attention to the growing challenges and new initiatives to support people in Wisconsin communities.

In the U.S., 40% of people who have a disability and 43% of people age 65 or older say they feel lonely some or all of the time. According to a 2020 AARP Foundation report, two-thirds of adults in the U.S. are experiencing social isolation, with 66% reporting that their anxiety levels have increased during the pandemic. Given the scope of the problem, researchers, agencies and organizations throughout the state have joined forces to form the Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness (WCESIL) to address the challenges and find community-based solutions.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

At one time or another, we've all experienced loneliness. For most of us, it's temporary. But for many older people and people with disabilities, being isolated and lonely is a constant reality.

In the U.S., 40% of people who have a disability and 43% of people age 65 or older say they feel lonely some or all of the time which is associated with physical, emotional, and psychological health impacts such as greater risk for cardiovascular disease, depression, memory problems and even abuse or neglect.

So, what can we do? Let's all remember our friends, family and neighbors - around the holidays, but afterward too. Make a phone call, stop by, schedule a video chat. Ask if they need anything - groceries, supplies for a hobby, their driveway or walk shoveled. Invite them to an activity or to join you for coffee. They'll benefit from the human contact – and so will you.

So, get in touch and stay in touch. The simple act of reaching out and showing you care can make a world of difference for someone who is alone and lonely.

YOUR NAME

YOUR AGENCY

Radio Scripts

:30 Seconds

Tips to Building Connections:

Check-in on Your Neighbor

Here is today's 'Tip to Building Connections ...'

People of all ages and backgrounds can experience loneliness and social isolation.....Older adults and people with disabilities are uniquely susceptible, putting them at risk for significant health problems. Why not check in on your neighbor today? Leave a note in the door, give them a call, or deliver a homemade treat to brighten their day and lift their spirits. Show others in the community how to take care of one another. This tip brought to you by the Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness.

:30 Seconds

Tips to Building Connections:

Social Isolation/Loneliness: Community problem

Here is today's 'Tip to Building Connections ...'

Just because you don't feel isolated or lonely, doesn't mean the problem is someone else's to manage. Social isolation and loneliness affect 40% of people with disabilities in the US, and 43% of people aged 65 and older feel it too. Parents, grandparents, neighbors, and friends. It takes a community to help solve a community situation.

Reach out to someone new with a random act of kindness today. Lift their spirits and give their mental health a boost.

This tip brought to you by the Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness.

Talking Points

Talking Points

Headline: it is Social Isolation and Loneliness Awareness Week in Wisconsin

Key point #1: Loneliness and social isolation are on the rise in Wisconsin and across the United States, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Supporting points:

- While people of all ages and backgrounds can experience loneliness and social isolation, older adults and people with disabilities are uniquely susceptible which puts them at risk for significant health problems.
- In the U.S., 40% of people who have a disability and 43% of people aged 65 or older say they feel lonely some or all the time.
- According to a 2020 AARP Foundation report, two-thirds of adults in the U.S. are experiencing social isolation, with 66% reporting that their anxiety levels have increased during the pandemic.

Key point #2: YOUR ORGANIZATION has taken action in our community to address social isolation and loneliness.

Supporting points:

- HIGHLIGHT 1 ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE DOING
- HIGHLIGHT 2 ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE DOING
- Additionally, we have joined alongside researchers, agencies, and organizations throughout the state to form the Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness (WCESIL) to address the challenges and find more community-based solutions.

Key point #3: So, what can we do? Let's all remember our friends, family, and neighbors - around the holidays, but afterward too.

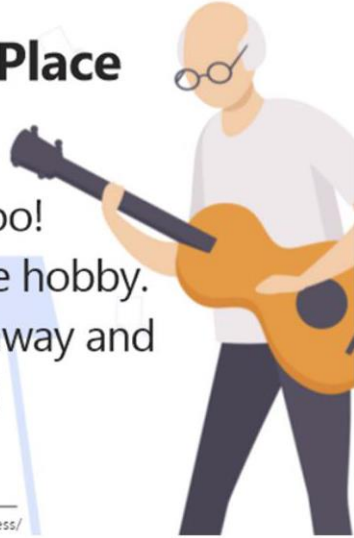
Supporting points:

- Make a phone call, stop by, schedule a video chat. Ask if they need anything - groceries, supplies for a hobby, their driveway or walk shoveled. Invite them to an activity or to join you for coffee. They'll benefit from the human contact - and so will you.
- SUPPORTING POINT ABOUT HOW THEY CAN GET INVOLVED LOCALLY

Tips for Building Connections

Tip for Building Connections: Make Your Hobby Your Happy Place

What do you love to do? There are likely others in your area that love to do that too! Connect with people who enjoy the same hobby. You'll have something in common right away and it's a great way to grow your social circle!



Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness - wihealthyaging.org/initiatives/isolation-and-loneliness/

Tip for Building Connections: Getting around is a game-changer

Driving isn't just about getting to where you're going. Reliable transportation — your own car or riding with others — helps you stay connected in your community. Don't let a lack of transportation hold you back. **Reach out for a ride!**



Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness - wihealthyaging.org/initiatives/isolation-and-loneliness/

Tip for Building Connections: Volunteer!

Do you have time to share? You can make a big difference in your community — and grow your social circle — by volunteering. You'll be amazed at what you get in return.



Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness - wihealthyaging.org/initiatives/isolation-and-loneliness/loneliness/

Data and Background Information

Data/Background information on social isolation and loneliness:

- Everyone needs social connections to survive and thrive. But as people age, they often find themselves spending more time alone. Being alone may leave older adults more vulnerable to [loneliness and social isolation](#), which can affect their health and well-being.
- Studies show that loneliness and social isolation are associated with higher risks for health problems such as [heart disease](#), [depression](#), and [cognitive decline](#).
- You also may be at greater risk if you:
 - Live alone
 - Can't leave your home
 - Had a major loss or life change, such as the death of a spouse or partner, or retirement
 - Struggle with money
 - Are a caregiver
 - Have psychological or cognitive challenges, or [depression](#)
 - Have limited social support
 - Have trouble hearing
 - Live in a rural, unsafe, and/or hard-to-reach neighborhood
 - Have language barriers where you live
 - Experience age, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity discrimination where you live
 - Are not meaningfully engaged in activities or are feeling a lack of purpose
 - People with [hearing loss](#) may find it hard to have conversations with friends and family, which can lead to less interaction with people, social isolation, and higher rates of loneliness.
- While Black people are less likely to live alone than non-Hispanic Whites, factors like race-related stress, low income, lower quality neighborhood and community environments can accumulate over a lifetime and increase social isolation. (National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine)
- For the LGBTQ community, social isolation may result from legal structures, institutional policies, and cultural norms that create a sense of otherness. ([Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013](#)). SI can also occur from interpersonal rejection, bullying, and stigma.
- LGBTQ older adults are twice as likely to live alone as non-LGBTQ adults and often face social isolation and vulnerability. (SAGE, Diverse Elders Coalition, 2022).
- Fifty-nine percent of LGBTQ older people report feeling a lack of companionship and 53 percent report feeling isolated from others. (Fredriksen-Goldsen, *Aging and Health*).
- Black people are six times more likely and Latinxs three times more likely than White people to rely on public transit ([Center for social inclusion](#)). Lack of access to reliable transportation decreases community members' social connectedness.

Data/Background information on SIL in Older Adults:

A study by the [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#) showed:

- More than one-third of adults aged 45 and older feel lonely, and nearly one-fourth of adults aged 65 and older are considered to be socially isolated.

Resources

Resources:

Category of Resource	Resource
Interventions / Programming	<p>Customizable Social Isolation and Loneliness Resource Guide: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CUfubg3GoDC8beQyxc2UX5uqr2KHXoXY54KrZPeoF_A/edit</p> <p>engAGED Social Engagement Innovations Hub https://www.engagingolderadults.org/hub</p> <p>Hello4Health https://hello4health.org/connection-activities/</p> <p>Cycling Without Age: https://wisconsinbikefed.org/what-we-do/programs/cycling-without-age/</p>
Outreach / Messaging	<p>Social Isolation and Loneliness Outreach Toolkit by NIH National Institute on Aging https://www.nia.nih.gov/ctctoolkit#resources</p>
Individual Supports	<p>Staying OK Engaged-Staying OK: Tips for supporting your social connections and emotional wellness (squarespace.com)</p> <p>Connect2Affect: Self-Assessment https://connect2affect.org/</p> <p>Tips for Staying Connected: https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/loneliness-and-social-isolation-tips-staying-connected</p> <p>Far From Alone: https://farfromalone.com/</p> <p>Find Help: https://www.findhelp.org/</p> <p>Family Caregiver Toolkit: https://states.aarp.org/wisconsin/caregiver-resources</p>

Action Steps

Action Steps to Promote:

- Volunteer in your community! *(Include a link to where someone can find volunteering opportunities)*
- Reach out to your neighbor or family member who you haven't talked with in a while.
- Start a group with folks who have similar interests as yours!
- Reach out to get or give a ride. *(Include a link to where someone can find this kind of resource or volunteer)*
- Join the Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness.
 - [Join as an individual](#)
 - [Join as an organization](#)
- When you think about the groups you lead and participate in have you considered including the voice of older adults and people with disabilities to inform what you do?
- [Reach out to your community leaders](#) to find out how they are addressing social isolation and loneliness

Wisconsin Coalition to End
Social Isolation & Loneliness

Wisconsin Social Isolation & Loneliness Awareness Week

November 13-19, 2022

When:

Tuesday, Nov. 15
Noon – 1:30 pm

Thursday, Nov. 17
Noon – 1:30 pm



Wisconsin Coalition to
End Social Isolation & Loneliness

Creating Meaningful Connections:

Reducing Social Isolation and
Loneliness in Wisconsin
Communities

Innovative Approaches to Addressing Social Isolation & Loneliness

Looking for ways to support older adults and people with disabilities who are lonely and/or isolated in your community? Join us for these webinars where you'll learn how volunteer opportunities provide bi-directional support to the community and hear about successful local initiatives that may be

Who should attend?

Community members and professionals with an interest in developing community responses to loneliness and social isolation including those working in community-based

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What Can You Do?

- 1) Share the LTE and press release locally. Add your own content and send to local media.
- 2) Share graphics on your own social media accounts with local information on local resources in the caption.
- 3) Share the webinar information with others in your agency or community you think will be interested – and attend yourself!
- 4) Brainstorm other ways you can engage people who are lonely and/or isolated in your community.