




The Importance of Social Connection

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My Scholarly Family

- Social worker & Psychologist
- My research focuses on social & psychological factors that influence the health of Black elders







Social (Dis)Connection

quality of
relationship

size of
social circle



social support

frequency of
interactions

closeness

satisfaction with
relationship

Social Isolation vs. Loneliness



Social Isolation = lack of social ties or social interactions



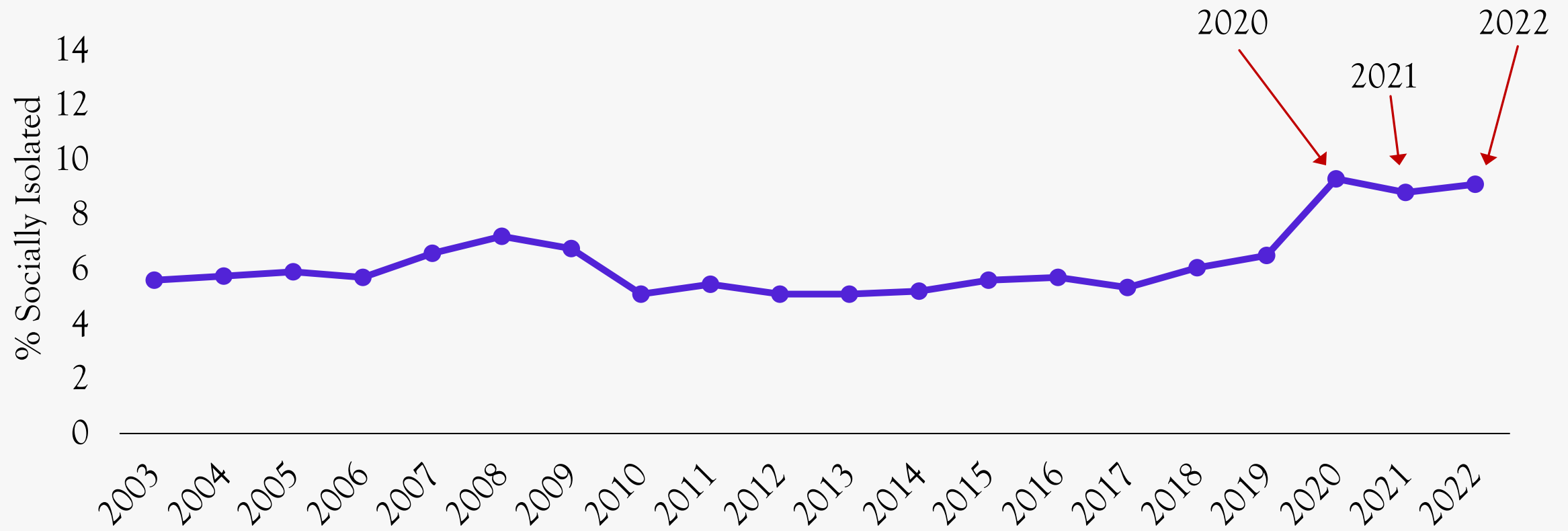
Loneliness = feeling like you don't have enough social ties or social interactions



Where Have
We Been?

Where Are We
Now?

Social Isolation Over the Past 20 Years

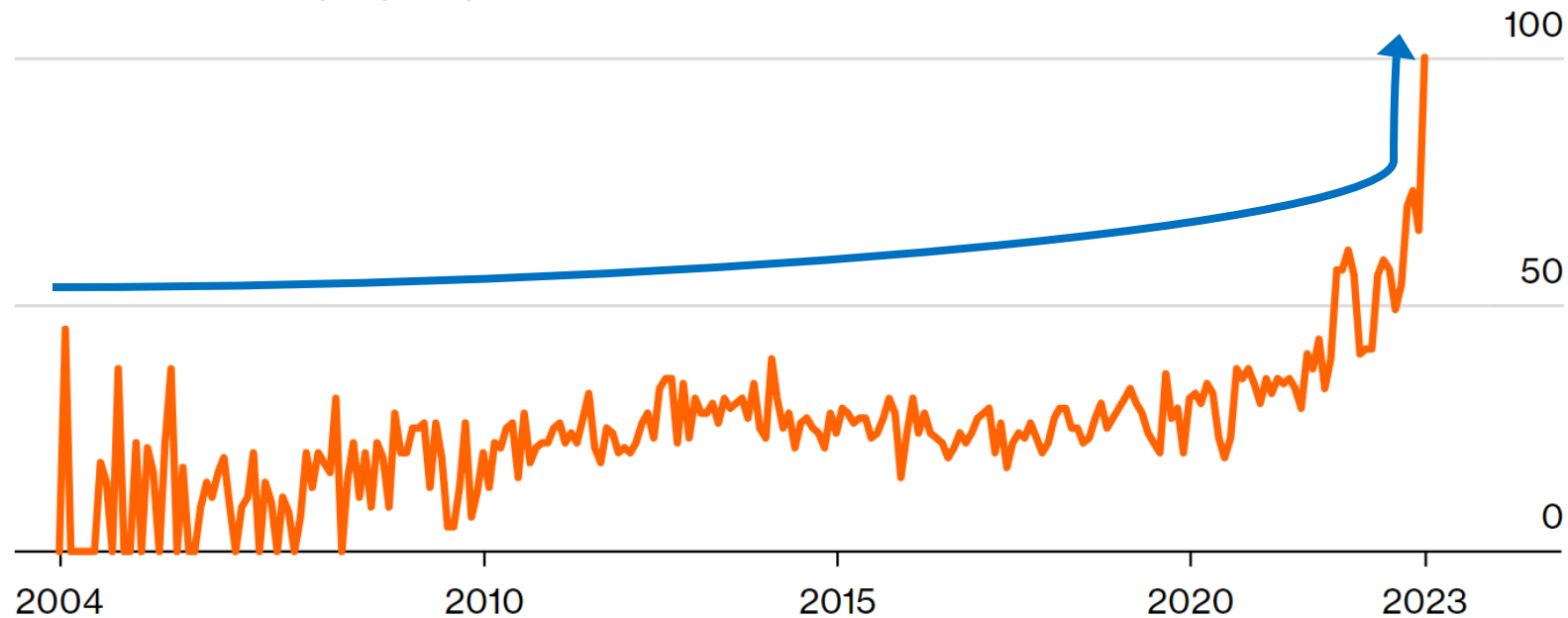


Google Search Trend for “where to meet people”

The Loneliness Epidemic in a Search Term

Google Trends show that interest in finding connection is at record highs.

— "where to meet people" queries (US)



Source: Google Trends

Numbers represent search interest relative to the highest point on the chart for the given region and time. A value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term. A score of 0 means there was not enough data for this term.

A silhouette of a person sitting on a swing set, looking out over the ocean at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright reflection on the water. The sky is a mix of orange and yellow. The swing set's frame and chains are visible in the foreground.

1 in 4 adults worldwide
feel lonely.

Loneliness won't end when the pandemic ends

By Maria Morava and Scottie Andre
5 minute read · Published 3:04



TIME



Home Football Newsletters Business Environm

This article is more than 1 year old

'Socially stunted': aggravated young

Combination of lockdowns, pe
in 'digital bubbles' has left man
friendless



Just under one in 10 people aged 16 to 2
analysis of ONS data. Photograph: Photogr



US

Watch Listen

Japan was already grappling with isolation and loneliness. The pandemic made it worse

By Jessie Yeung and Moeri Karasawa, CNN
4 minute read · Updated 5:31 AM EDT, Fri April 7, 2023



You

Loneliness Among Older Adults Before & During the COVID-19 Pandemic

October 2018		March-June 2020
34%	Felt a lack of companionship	41%
27%	Felt isolated from others	56%
28%	Had infrequent social contact	46%

How Japan is tackling 'hikikomori' – a syndrome that created a generation of recluses

Authorities step up efforts to counter the social and economic impact of a wave of loneliness affecting million young people

Nicola Smith
Asia Correspondent, in Tokyo

Related Topics
Global Health Security, Japan, Asia, Mental health

31 July 2023 12:05pm BST

64



Last November, a government study estimated that nearly 1.5 million people in Japan were living as recluses

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ASIA/PACIFIC

Japanese prime minister appoints 'minister of loneliness' to Cabinet

BY JOSEPH CHOI - 02/22/21 3:24 PM ET

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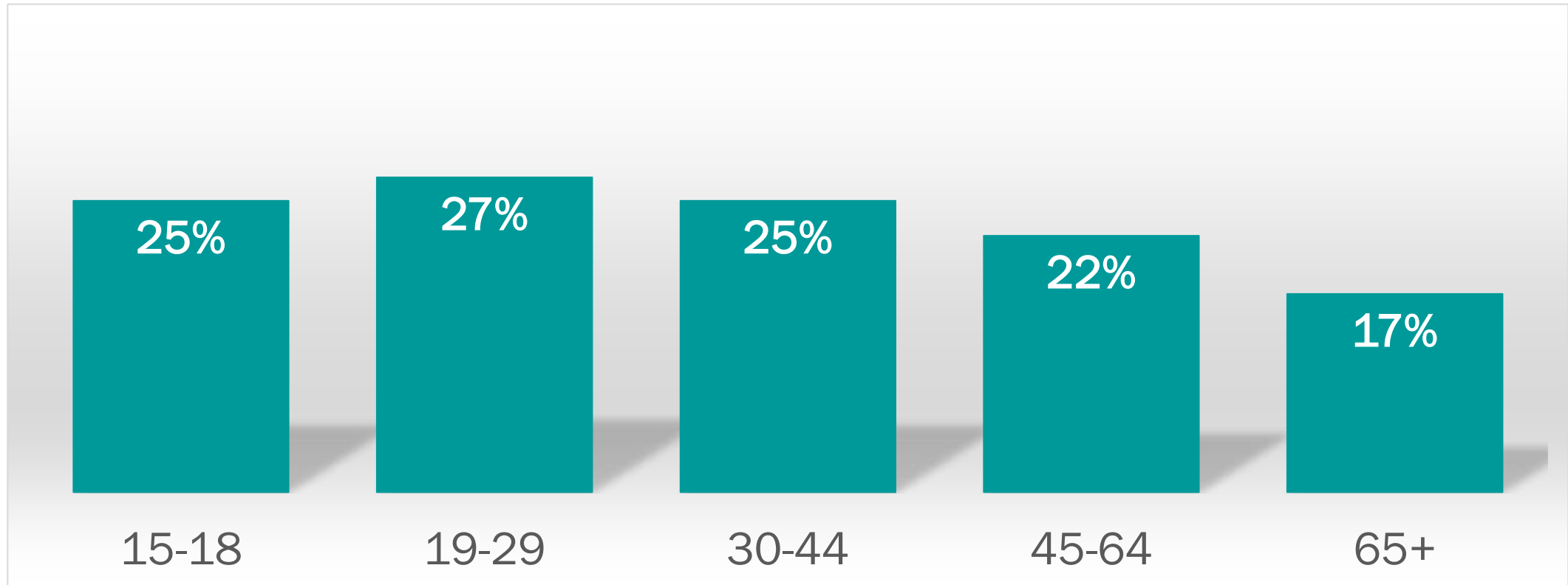
Most Popular

1 Pollsters: Don't be so sure Trump will outperform our surveys

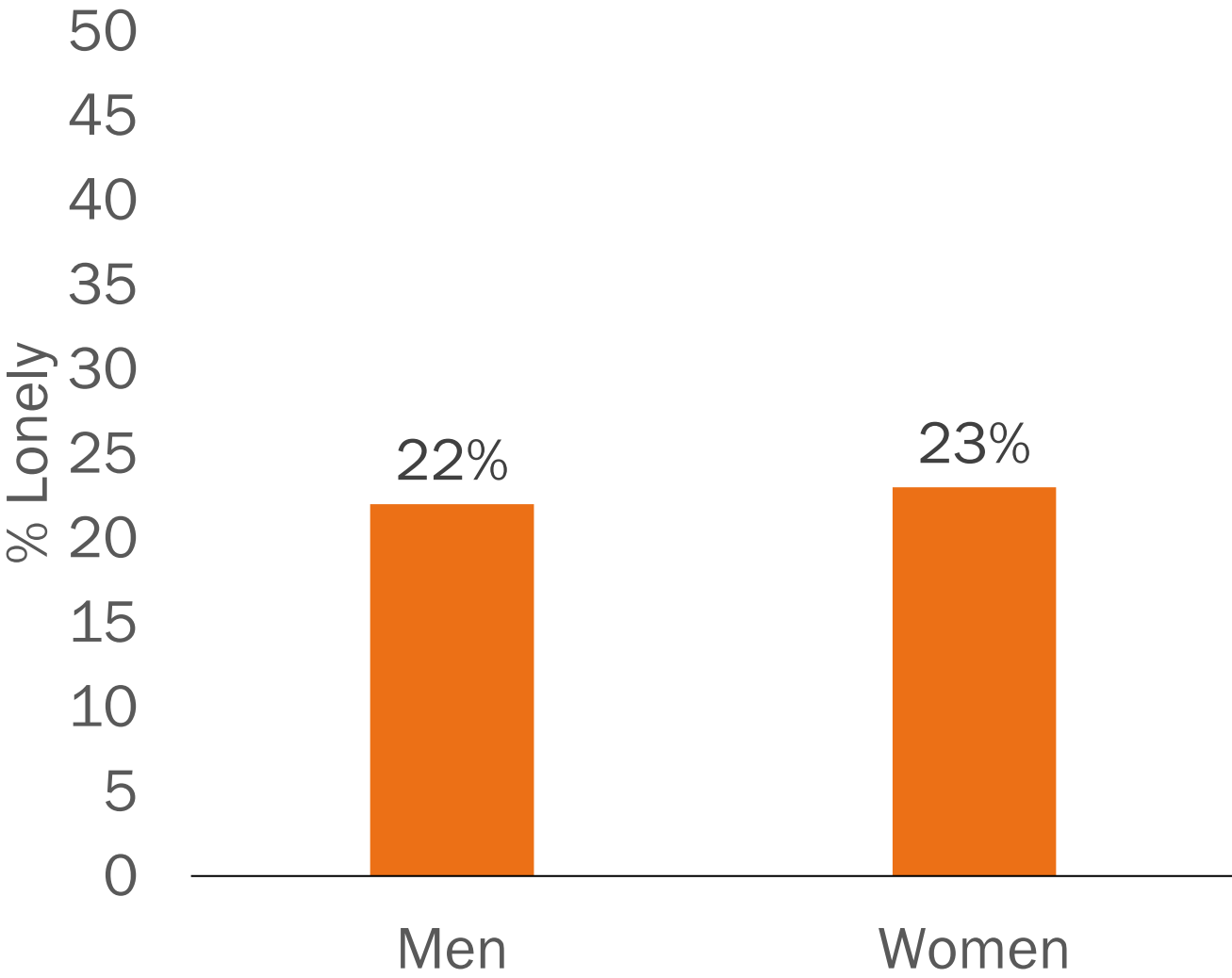


Who Is More Likely
to Lack Social
Connection?

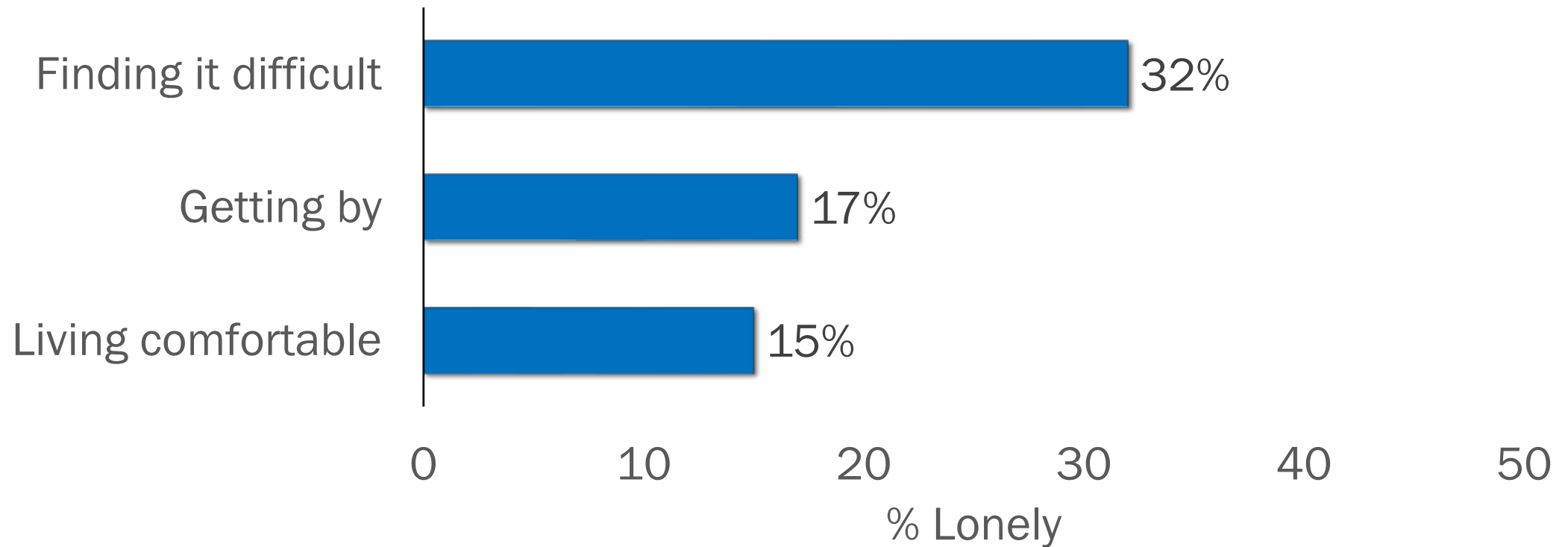
Loneliness by Age



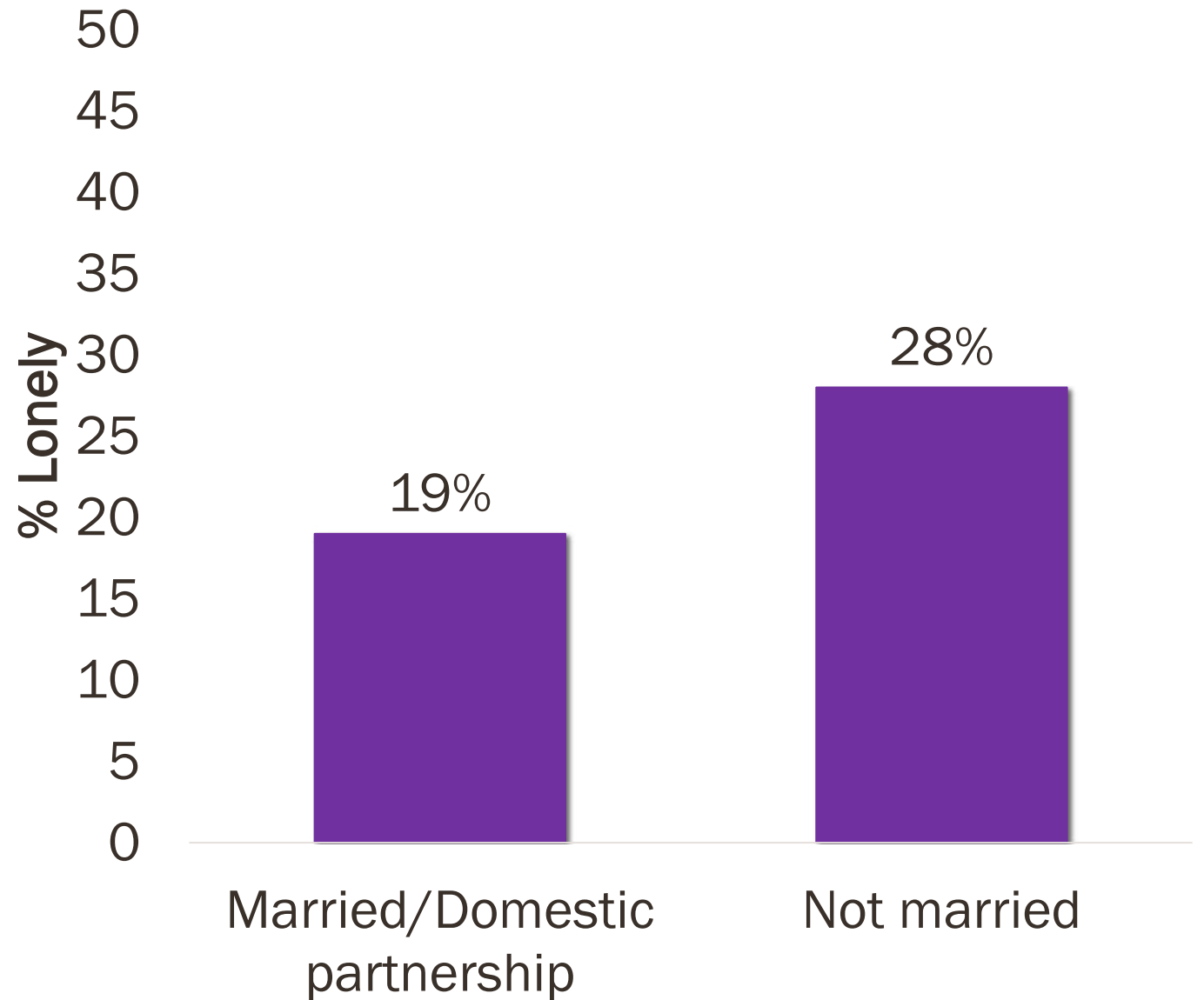
Loneliness by Gender



Loneliness by Household Income



Marital Status





Who Is At Risk for Social Isolation?

- Young adults
- Older adults
- Low income
- Living alone
- Immigrants
- People who identify as LGBTQ+

Racism Can Shape Social Connection

- Racism shapes environmental factors that can influence social connection
 - Neighborhoods with disadvantaged built environments
 - Neighborhoods with limited social and economic resources
 - Gentrification



Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation



2023

The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the
Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community



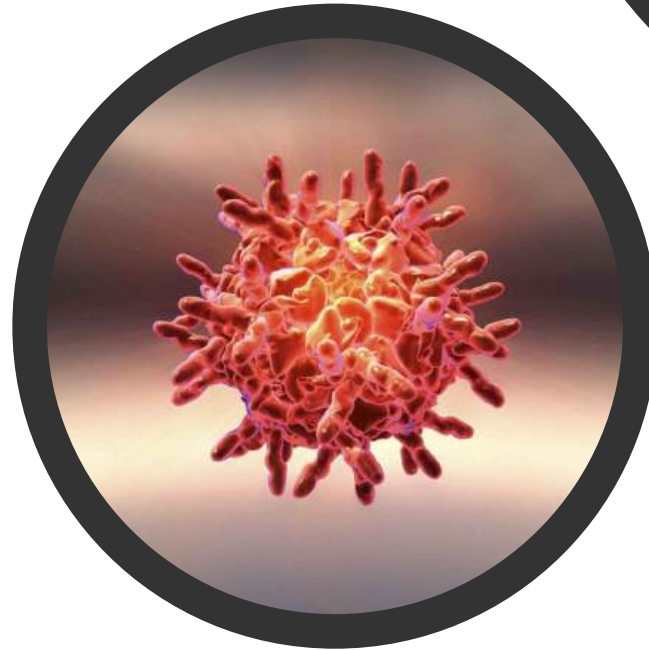
U.S. Surgeon General's Report

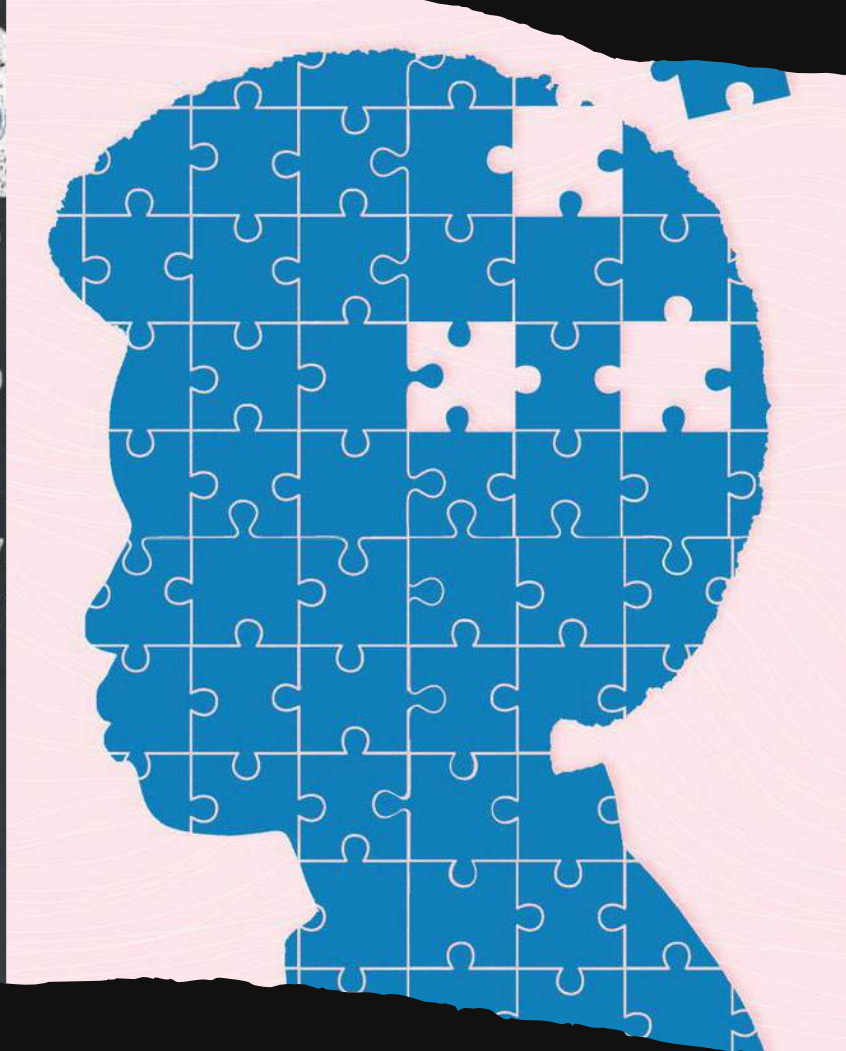
- Issued May 2023
- Labeled social isolation & loneliness as a public health epidemic
- Identified mental and physical health outcomes of social isolation & loneliness



Lack of social connection is as dangerous
as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Physical Health Effects of Loneliness & Social Isolation





Mental Effects of Loneliness & Social Isolation

2022 Crisis Text Line Issues

CRISIS TEXT LINE |



2022 National Summary*

1,323,230

Conversations

730,785

Texters in
Crisis

1 out of 3 had
relationship problems

Issues



1 out of 5 were socially
disconnected

Eric Klinenberg

HEAT WAVE

SECOND EDITION
WITH A NEW PREFACE

A SOCIAL
AUTOPSY OF
DISASTER
IN CHICAGO



 **Chicago Tribune**
Wednesday, July 19, 1995

1995 Year—No. 200 • Chicago Tribune • 7 Sections • 16

County heat deaths will surpass 400

Coroner's methods continue to be questioned

By Joel Kaplan and Cindy Schreder
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITERS

As the total of heat-related deaths reached 378 Tuesday—doubling earlier figures—more questions surfaced about the criteria used by the Cook County medical examiner to blame hot weather for the staggering toll.

Dr. Edmund R. Donoghue said his office still must examine 110 more bodies, so he expects the number of heat-related deaths to

County Medical Examiner's Office since Friday, last week's excessive heat was a contributing factor in 376 of them, Donoghue said.

Almost as many heat-related deaths have been recorded in Chicago since last Friday as occurred in the entire country in the summer of 1986. That summer, one of the hottest and driest of the century, claimed 454 lives nationwide, according to federal health statistics.

By Monday night, the medical examiner said that heat had con-

because his staff was able to examine 180 bodies held at area funeral homes, in addition to 92 bodies brought directly to the morgue.

Of those examined at funeral homes, 137 were determined to have died from heat-related causes. Donoghue said his staff will examine 80 more bodies held at funeral homes and 50 held at the morgue.

Donoghue said that officials from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in

On Tuesday he continued to defend the large number of deaths listed as heat-related despite questions about whether heat really had been a significant factor in many of them.

"I think my criteria are absolutely fair," Donoghue said. "I think the criteria are excellent."

is heat-related; if nature of the disease or above, found at home setting officers report temperature is unusual the deceased is found in a home with a temperature

Record number of fatalities attributed
The Cook County Medical Examiner's Office reports that heat-related. What is not known is whether the heat was

The volume of victims
On an average day, 335 people die in Cook County. Of those, 17 typically are taken to the medical examiner. Of the 575 bodies examined since Friday, 180 were at funeral homes, a rare occurrence.

Deaths investigated by medical examiner

Reported heat-related deaths:	Total number examined:
Fri. 23	Fri. 23
Sat. 87	Sat. 87
Sun. 83	Sun. 83
Mon. 110	Mon. 110
Tue. 92	Tue. 92

Friday-Tuesday at funeral homes: 137

Source: Cook County Medical Examiner's Office


BBC

Home News Sport Business Innovation Culture Travel Earth Video Live

The 'romance scammers' cashing in on lockdown loneliness

1 December 2020 Share

By **Chermaine Lee**, Features correspondent



Alamy

Forbes

FORBES > MONEY > RETIREMENT

Cautionary Tale: A Romance Scam Can Fool Your Lonely Aging Parent

Carolyn Rosenblatt Contributor Follow

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Jan 5, 2024, 07:34pm EST

The New York Times


Retirees Are Losing Their Life Savings to Romance Scams. Here's What to Know.

Con artists are using dating sites to prey on lonely people, particularly older ones, in a pattern that accelerated during the isolation of the pandemic, federal data show.

Share full article Share Bookmark



Kate Kleinert of Lancaster County, Pa., was the victim of a romance scam in 2020 that she said left her destitute. Federal officials say older Americans are increasingly being targeted in such schemes. Amanda Mustard for The New York Times

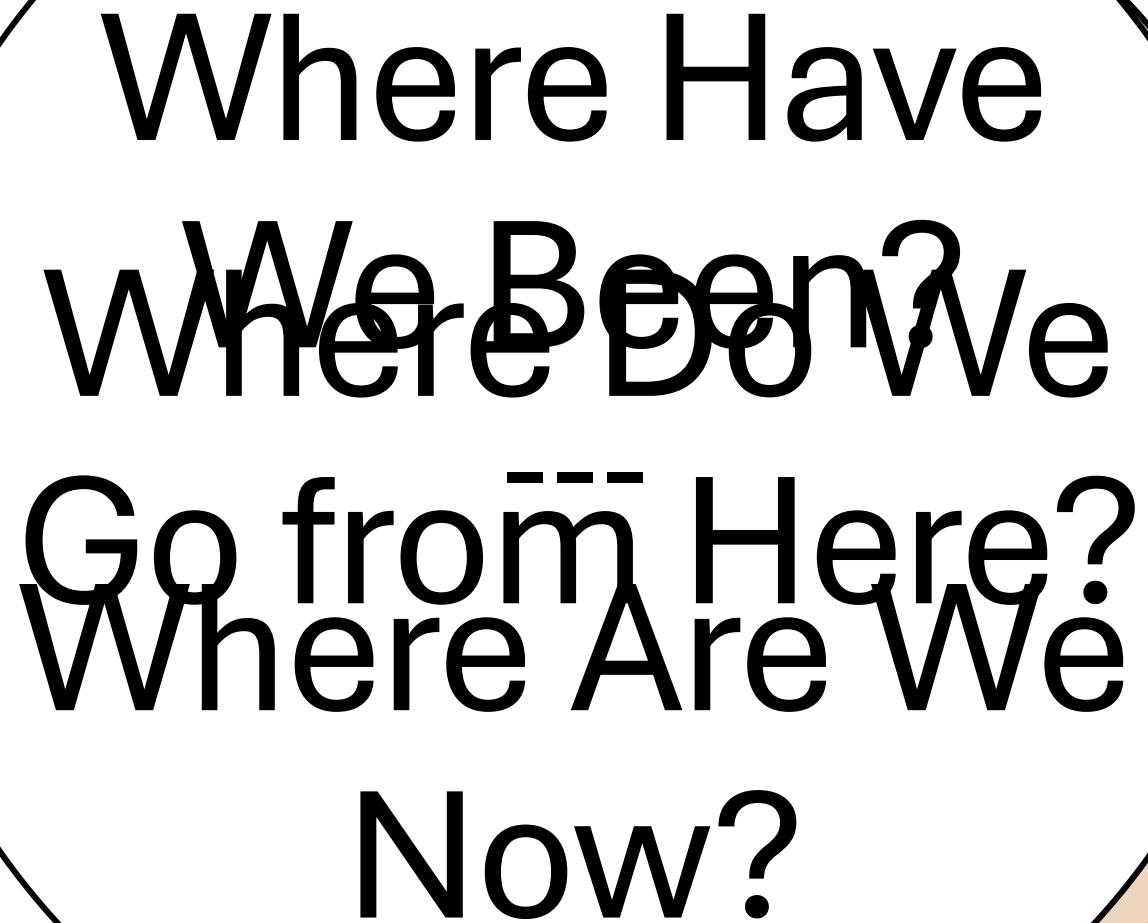
 **By Emily Schmall**

Feb. 3, 2023

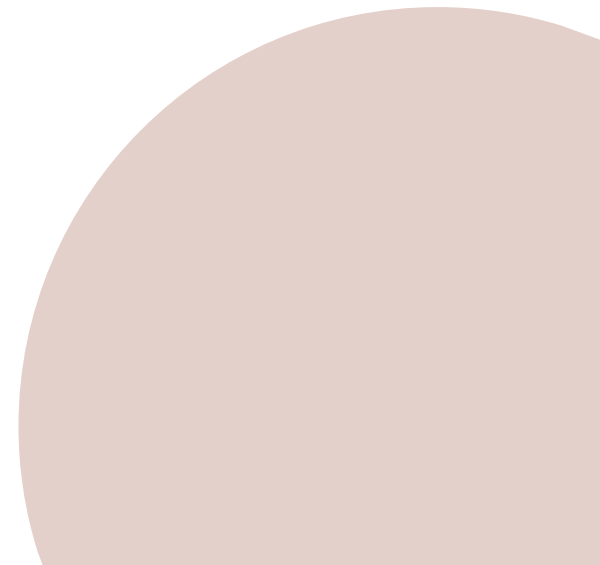
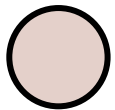
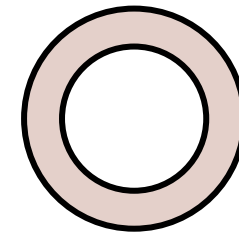
How Does Social Connection Influence Health?



How changes in the world
What does the world
What does the world



Where Have
We Been?
Where Do We
Go from Here?
Where Are We
Now?





South Korea is paying ‘lonely young people’ \$500 a month to re-enter society



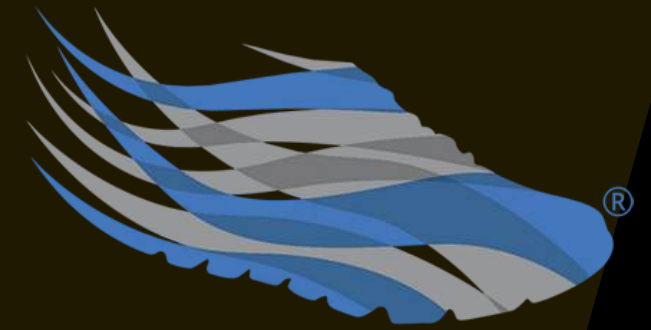
By Jessie Yeung and Gawon Bae, CNN

3 minute read · Updated 3:50 AM EDT, Fri April 14, 2023





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Therapy

Support Groups

- ◆ To teach social skills
- ◆ To address causes of social disconnection (for example: caregiving)



What Can I Do To Increase Social Connection?

- Seek opportunities to serve and support others
- Participate in social and community groups
- Invest in your relationships
- Make time for community activities
- Reduce activities that lead to feelings of disconnection from others





What Can Parents & Caregivers Do?

- Invest in your relationship with your loved one
- Model healthy social connection
- Help children and adolescents develop strong, safe, and stable relationships with supportive adults
- Encourage healthy social connections with peers
- Be attentive to how young people spend their time online



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