



Excellence is just the beginning.

Rush System for Health

Illinois Coalition on Mental Health and Aging (ICMHA) and E4 co-present:

Social Isolation: Why It Matters and Innovative Program Models

Agenda

- Introduction
- Social isolation education and interventions
- Panelist program highlights
- Q&A
- Closing from ICMHA President, Elaine Jurkowski

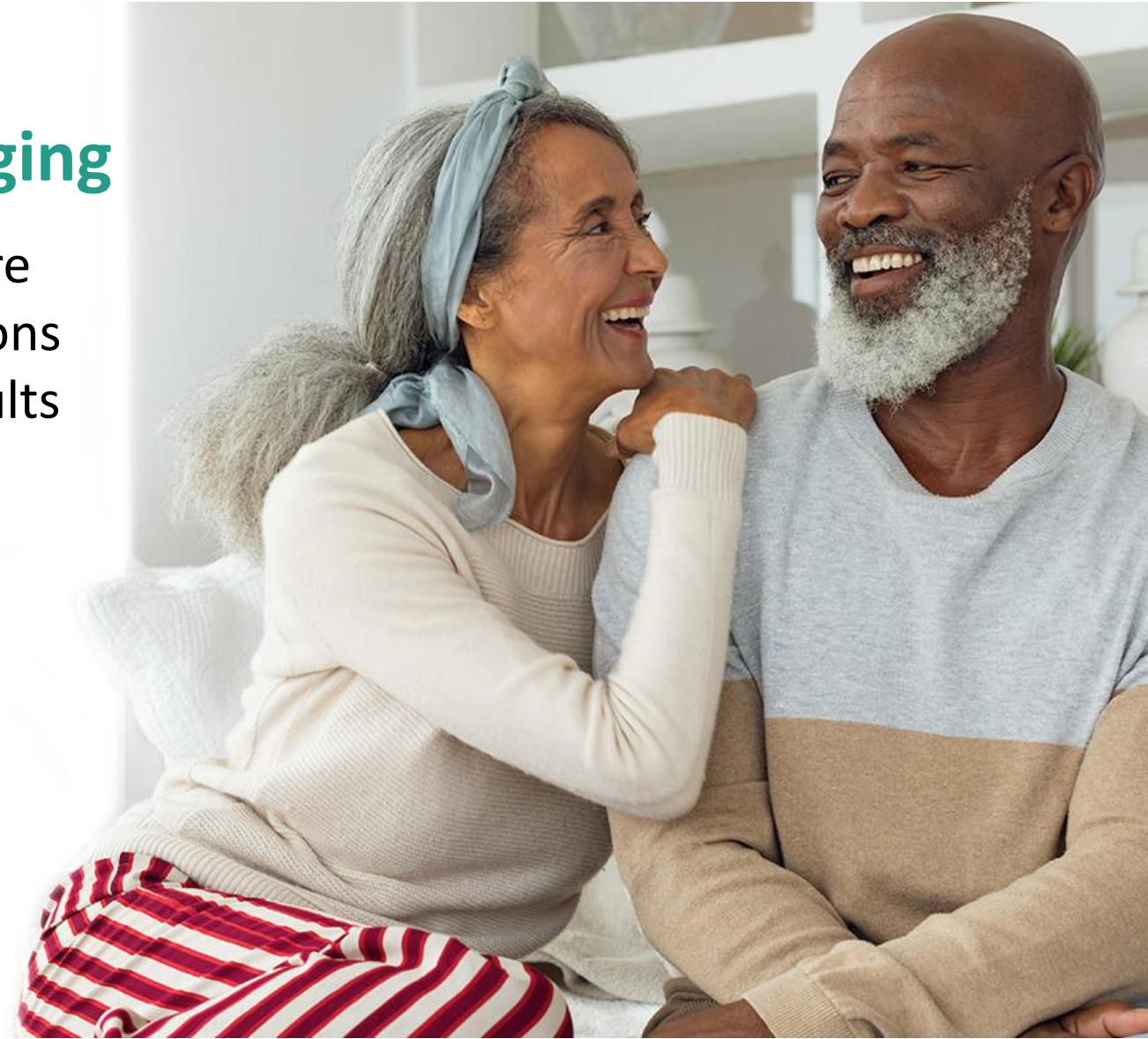
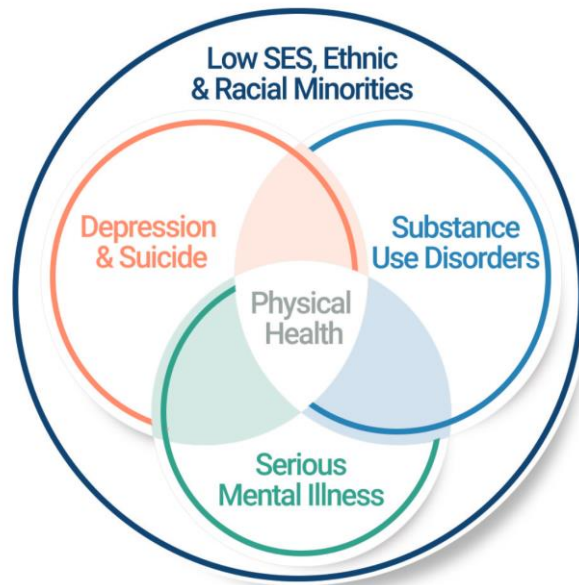


Co-sponsors



E4 Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Disparities in Aging

Engage, Empower, and Educate health care providers and community-based organizations for **Equity** in behavioral health for older adults and their families across the US.



Learning Objectives

Continuing Education credits are available. The course director(s), planner(s), faculty and reviewer(s) of this activity have no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

- 1 Recognize the impact of social isolation on older adults.
- 2 Identify strengths-based interventions to mitigate the impact of social isolation among older adults.
- 3 Describe a variety of program models aiming to address social isolation among older adults.

Speakers

- Sharon Dornberg-Lee, LCSW, Clinical Supervisor of CJE SeniorLife, Counseling Services
- Susan Real, MS, Executive Director at East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, representing I4A
- Julie Schubach, LSW, Senior Resource Center Director, Family Service of Champaign County
- Colette Jordan, Caregiver & Dementia Specialist & Alaine Kvedaras Health Promotion Specialist, Age Guide
- Michelle Newman, MPH, Rush University Medical Center



Social Isolation: Causes, Impacts & Clinical Interventions





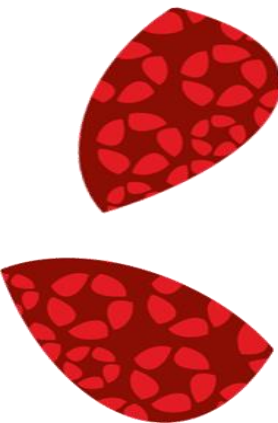
Social Isolation: Causes, Impacts & Clinical Interventions

Sharon Dornberg-Lee, LCSW

Clinical Supervisor, Counseling Services

CJE SeniorLife

www.CJE.net



Aging Alone



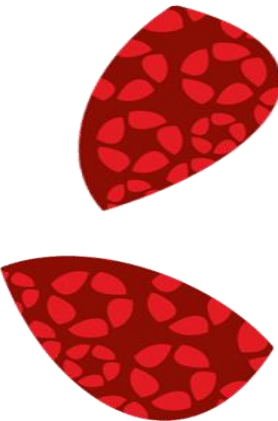
- More than 1 in 5 Americans older than 65 are or are at risk of aging alone – having no available family caregivers to help them.
- 23% of baby boomers will eventually be without family caregivers.
- About 29% of older adults living in the community, or 13.3 million people, live alone. The majority of these are women (9.2 million, vs. 4.1 million men).

(Source: AARP, 2016)



Causes of Solo Aging

- Higher divorce rates
- Lower birth rates
- Fewer intergenerational families living together
- Fewer neighborhood connections – schools, local businesses
- Reduced religiosity, attendance at religious services

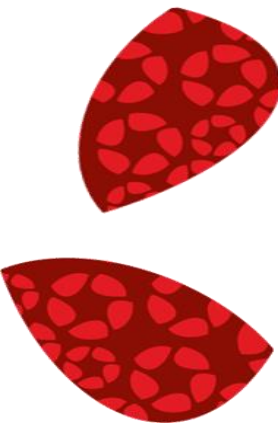




Social Isolation

- About one quarter of older adults are socially isolated according to a new study.
- Social isolation defined as objective lack of social connection to nearly all others.
- Loneliness is the subjective feeling of being alone, regardless of the amount of social contact.
- Social isolation can lead to loneliness in some people, while others can feel lonely without being socially isolated.

(National Academies, 2020)



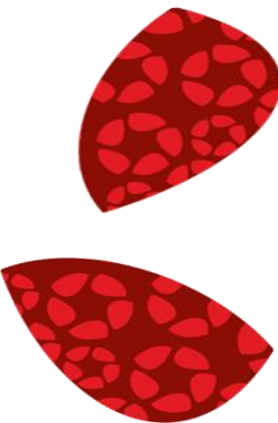


Social Isolation

Research findings include:

- Socially isolated patients with coronary heart disease -- 3x more likely to die within 10 years
- Patients with significant coronary artery disease & no confidant -- 3x as likely to die within 5 years
- Health risks of prolonged isolation equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day

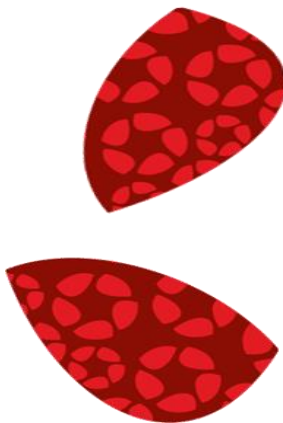
(Source: Cigna, U.S. Loneliness Index, 2018)





National Academies Study

- Social isolation increases risk of early death from all causes – similar in degree to smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity.
- Social isolation associated with 50% increased risk of dementia.
- Poor social relationships (characterized by social isolation or loneliness) associated with a 29% increased risk of heart disease and a 32% increased risk of stroke.





National Academies Study

- Loneliness associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide.
- Loneliness among heart failure patients associated with 4x increased risk of death, 68% increased risk of hospitalization, and 57% increased risk of emergency department visits.



Three pathways link social connectedness to health:

1. Behavioral Link:

Those who are lonely and isolated engage in riskier health behaviors including physical inactivity and smoking.

Source: Valtorta, 2016.



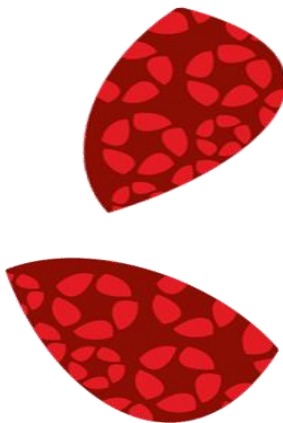


Three pathways link social connectedness to health:

2. Psychological Link:

Loneliness linked to lower self-esteem; more limited use of active coping methods; lower sense of self efficacy.

Source: Valtorta, 2016.



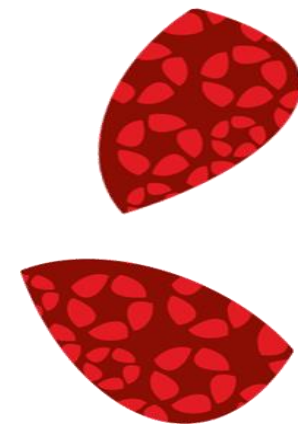


Three pathways link social connectedness to health:

3. Physiological Link:

Social isolation correlated with defective immune functioning, higher blood pressure.

Source: Valtorta, 2016.





But...it's About Perception!

- Individuals who do not perceive themselves to be isolated have 85% chance of very good or excellent mental health.
- Those who feel extremely isolated have only about a 25% chance of claiming very good or excellent mental health.

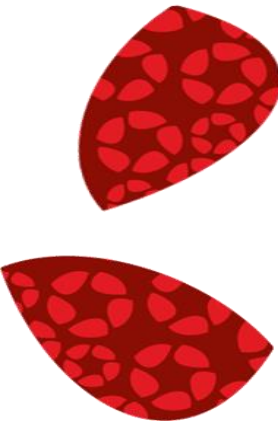
Source: Cornwell and Linda J. White.






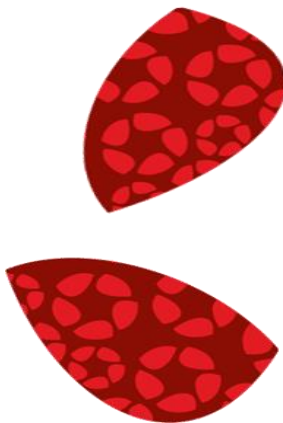
Social Determinants of Health

- Economic disparities come into play regarding options to address challenges of social isolation.
- Especially pronounced differences with regard to housing and care options.
- Ability to access computers, tablets and smart phones also linked to income.





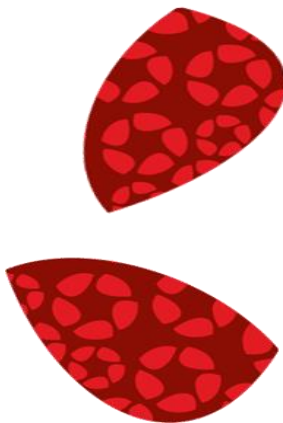
And then....COVID-19





Just What Older People Didn't Need: More Isolation (NYT; 4.13.20)

- 25% of older adults are social isolated and 43% report feeling lonely — all prior to COVID!
- COVID greatly exacerbated the *intensity* and *magnitude* of these concerns.
- More people are isolated than ever before and those who were previously isolated feel lonelier than ever.

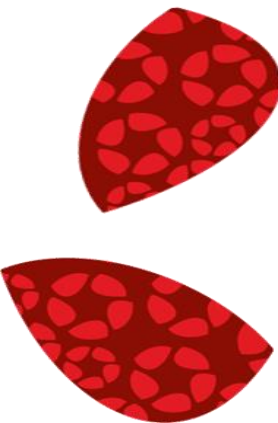




Technology Impact

- Older adults adept at computer use have fewer depressive symptoms than those less technologically connected.
- Social networking – 65% of all adults now use social networks.
- Internet use can build social networks, reducing feelings of loneliness and alienation.

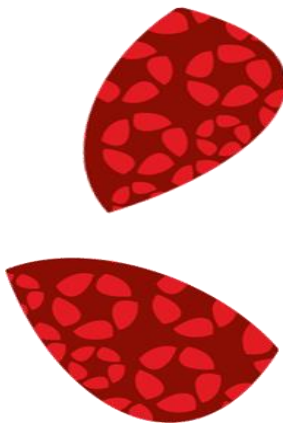
(Lagana & Garcia, 2013)





Just What Older People Didn't Need: More Isolation (NYT; 4.13.20)

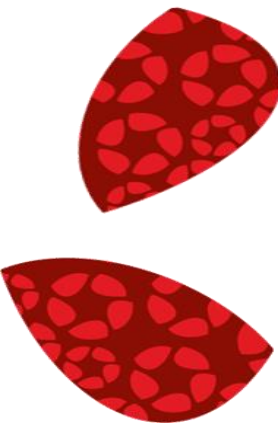
- A significant percentage of older adults aren't comfortable with the technology that has kept many of us connected.
 - Approximately 1/3 of Americans over 65 told Pew Research they weren't confident using digital technology
 - About half need help in setting up new devices
 - Many seniors lack broadband connection





Loneliness

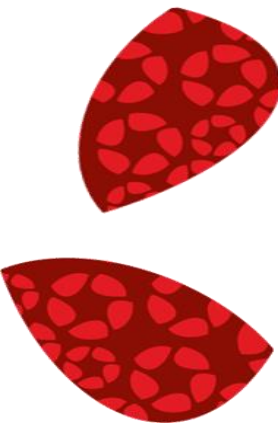
- *Everyone I know talks about their children and grandchildren and I have nothing to say.*
- *My friends have passed away and it's so hard to make new friends at this time in my life.*
- *I was so isolated to begin with, and now COVID has taken away my few social activities, like bingo games in my building.*





Loneliness


- *I feel too young for the senior center and too old for activities that attract people much younger than me.*
- *The phone never rings.*
- *I never did have many friends. I've always felt like an outsider.*
- *I never thought I'd end up alone.*



Assessment for Social Isolation

- Important to assess:
 - *Who do you turn to for emotional support?*
 - *For practical help?*
 - *How has COVID changed that?*
- Social Connectedness Scale
- UCLA 3 Item Loneliness Scale

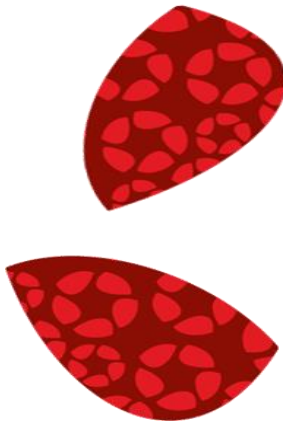




The Social Connectedness Scale

Circle the answer that shows how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

1. I feel disconnected from the world around me.	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Disagree 6
2. Even around people I know, I don't feel that I really belong.	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Disagree 6
3. I feel so distant from people.	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Disagree 6
4. I have no sense of togetherness with my peers.	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Disagree 6
5. I don't feel related to anyone.	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Disagree 6
6. I catch myself losing all sense of connectedness with society.	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Disagree 6
7. Even among my friends, there is no sense of brother/sisterhood.	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Disagree 6
8. I don't feel that I participate with anyone or any group.	Strongly Agree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Disagree 6





UCLA Three-Item Loneliness Scale

How often do you feel that you lack companionship:

Hardly ever, some of the time, or often? 1 2 3

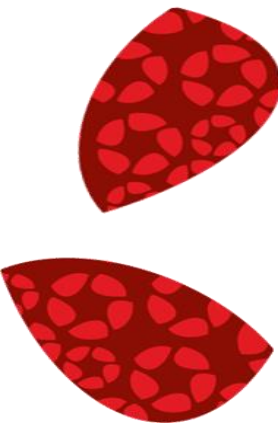
How often do you feel left out:

Hardly ever, some of the time, or often? 1 2 3

How often do you feel isolated from others?

Hardly ever, some of the time, or often? 1 2 3

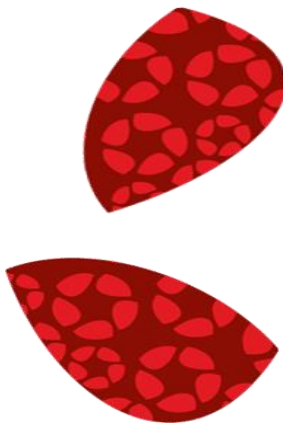
Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2394670/>





Clinical Interventions With Those Experiencing Social Isolation

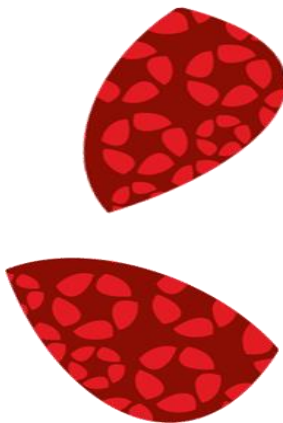
- Avoid subtle messages that may be experienced as shaming:
 - *You have no one at all?*
 - *Why didn't you ever get married?*
- Do not “cheerlead” or minimize
- Acknowledge and make space for the range of emotions that someone aging alone may experience – anger, sadness, fear, shame





Clinical Interventions With Those Experiencing Social Isolation

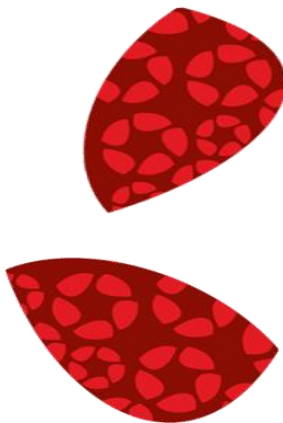
- Case conceptualization is important prior to intervention.
Why is this person so alone?
 - Circumstance?
 - Preference?
 - Difficult personality style?
 - Mental illness?
- Adopt a strengths-based approach. Those with limited social support are often resilient, self-reliant survivors.





Clinical Interventions With Those Experiencing Social Isolation

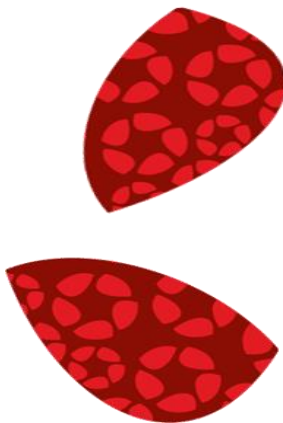
- Allow the person to grieve. Life likely did not turn out as expected or hoped for.
- Acknowledge the additional and unwelcome burden that COVID-related isolation has imposed.
- *What have you lost? And what else?* (Neimeyer, 2021)





Clinical Interventions With Those Experiencing Social Isolation

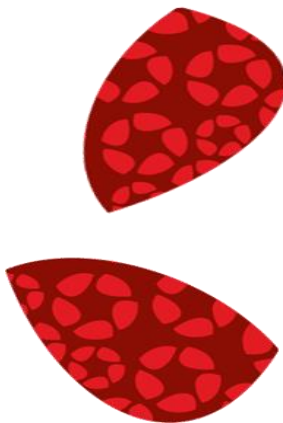
- Provide psychoeducation on the impact of social isolation.
- Explore prior coping strategies.
- Use problem-solving approaches (e.g., PEARLS), CBT, ACT and other evidence-based interventions.
- Be alert to countertransference reactions that may contribute to overly pessimistic views of future or present options for social engagement.
- Understand the client's values framework and work to instill hope.





Clinical Interventions With Those Experiencing Social Isolation

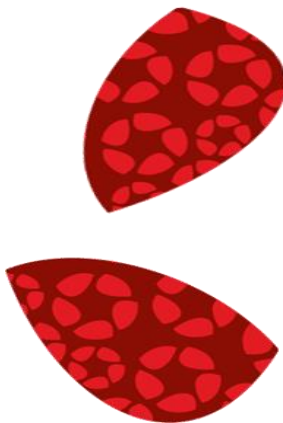
- Consider setting an imagined COVID “end date” and plan for the future - even while acknowledging the uncertainty.
- Safety plan. Prior plans may need updating given COVID restrictions and degree of risk tolerance.
- The risk of emotional, physical and financial abuse may be heightened during the pandemic.
- Use your relationship with the older adult to understand and intervene around relational patterns that may be problematic in forming and sustaining a support system.





Clinical Interventions With Those Experiencing Social Isolation

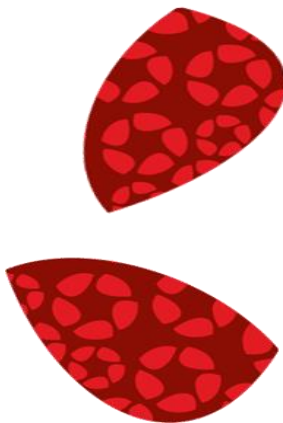
- Explore client's openness to healing cutoffs when it appears it may be feasible and sustainable to do so.
- Offer practical resources and info. on available supports that may help to ease the sense of isolation.
- Help older adults get creative, active, engaged, spiritual.
- Make sure the client has some structure to the day.





Clinical Interventions With Those Experiencing Social Isolation

- Get existential. Help the client to create to a sense of meaning.
- Be persistent (but not pushy) in offering avenues of social connection.
- Acknowledge and address shyness, social anxiety or fear of rejection that may come into play.

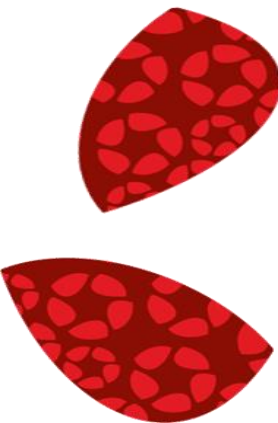




Case Example: Joe

Joe is white, Presbyterian 69-year-old man with a past history of severe alcohol abuse, currently being treated for depression and anxiety. He has no social support.

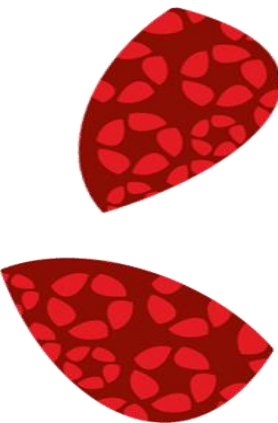
He has a social phobia that prevents him from eating out or interacting with others beyond what is required.





Joe

- Automatic thoughts: "If I eat in the restaurant, everyone will look at me and think I look like a bum."
- Feelings: Anxiety, shame. Intensity (1-100): 80
- Rational Responses:
 - "They'll probably have better things to do than look at me."
 - "I guess I don't stand out. I'll put on a clean shirt."
- Rerate Intensity: 50.

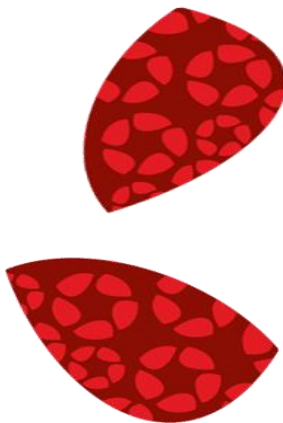




Graded Task

Assignment for Joe

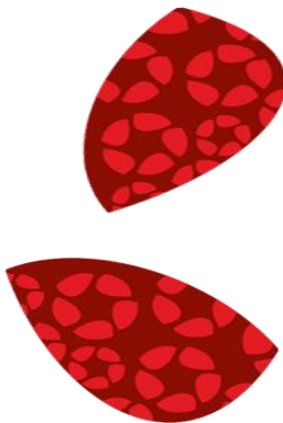
1. Get takeout and say hello to waitress. Note response.
2. Get takeout and say hello to waitress and one of the diners at counter. Note responses.
3. Get takeout and strike up a conversation with waitress. Note response.
4. Eat in restaurant.





Clinical Interventions With Those Experiencing Social Isolation

- Use a motivational interviewing approach to address reluctance to engage in virtual or in-person activities to increase connection.
- Provide practical support and guidance on use of technology to connect to others or find volunteers who can assist.



Resources





Emotional Support & Crisis Intervention

Warm Lines:

Friendship Line: 1.800.971.0016. Open 24/7. The only nation-wide tollfree number offering telephone support to isolated older adults.

Illinois Warmline: 1.866.359.7953. Press 2, then 5. Operates Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.





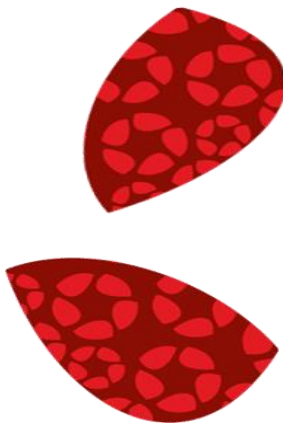
Emotional Support & Crisis Intervention

Crisis Lines:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. 800.273.TALK (8255). 24/7.

NAMI Crisis Text Line. Text NAMI to 741741 to connect with a trained crisis counselor to receive free, 24/7 crisis support via text message.

Illinois Call4Calm service. Residents can text TALK to 552020 to get connected to mental health services (or, for Spanish, text HABLAR to the same number). Call4Calm is free to use, and individuals will remain anonymous. Once a resident sends a text to the hotline, within 24 hours they will receive a call from a counselor employed by a local community mental health center to provide support.





Resources for Managing Stress and Anxiety

Chicago Department of Public Health. Fast Tips on Managing Anxiety:

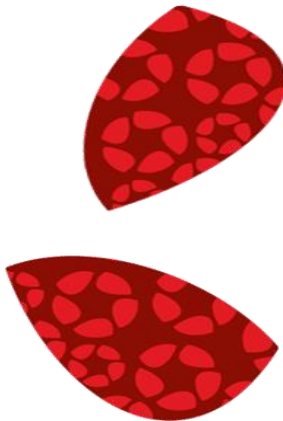
<https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/cdph/HealthProtectionandResponse/COVID-19%20FAST%20Tips%20on%20Managing%20Anxiety%2003.11.2020.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Coping With Stress:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fmanaging-stress-anxiety.html

World Health Organization. Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During the COVID-19 Outbreak:

<https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf>





Resources for Managing Stress and Anxiety

Relaxation and Meditation Exercises

- Guided Mindfulness Practice. CJE SeniorLife video with Chloe Gremaud, LCSW.

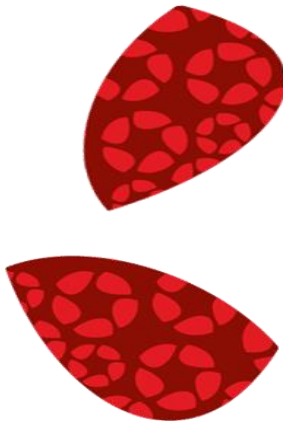
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8WXw8H2iUU&feature=youtu.be>

- InsightTimer App and website. “The largest library of guided meditations on earth.”

<https://insighttimer.com/>

- My Life app. “Short activities tuned to your emotions.”

<https://my.life/>





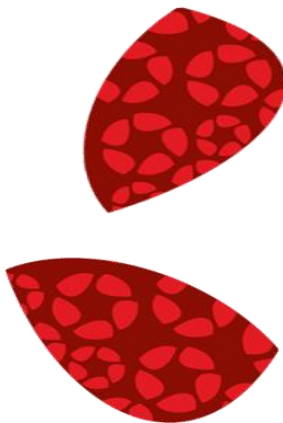
Online or Telephone Social & Educational Activities

- **Google's Arts & Culture.** Digitized access to museum exhibits. <https://artsandculture.google.com/>
- **Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).** Free online courses available for anyone to enroll. <https://www.mooc.org>
- **Open Culture.** Offers more than 1,500 online courses from the world's top universities for free. <https://openculture.com>
- **Mather Telephone Topics.** Call (888) 600-2560. You can view their daily list of events online by visiting: <https://www.mather.com/neighborhood-programs/telephone-topics>
- **Well Connected.** Telephone and online community: <https://covia.org> Social Call
program for friendly conversation, visit: <https://covia.org/services/social-call/>
- **Senior Planet.** Offers a variety of online classes and offers free technology support. <https://seniorplanet.org/>
- **Get Set Up.** Offers free, interactive online technology seminars for older adults. <https://www.getsetup.io/classes>



Social Isolation Resources

- **AARP website** with resources and support for those who are socially isolated or feeling alone:
<https://connect2affect.org/>
- **“Elder Orphans” Facebook page** for those who are aging alone.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/elderorphans/>
- **The Village Model.** Assistance in areas such as home care, transportation to medical appointments, help navigating care and benefits systems, social activities and educational programs. <https://www.vtvnetwork.org/>





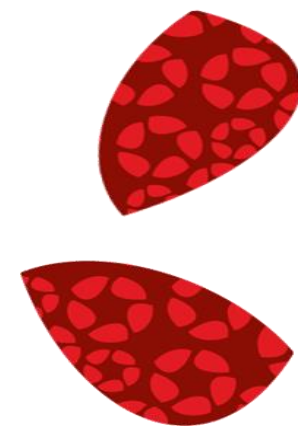
Assessment Instruments

- Social Connectedness Scale:

<https://depts.washington.edu/uwcsc/sites/default/files//Social%20Connectedness%20Scale-Revised.pdf>

- UCLA 3 Item Loneliness Scale:

<https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/Loneliness-Measurement-Guidance1.pdf>





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- Span, P. (2020, April 13). Just What Older People Didn't Need: More Isolation. Retrieved September 16, 2020, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/13/health/coronavirus-elderly-isolation-loneliness.html?action=click>
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State-wide overview & I4A

**Susan Real, MS, Executive Director at East
Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging**



11

*ILLINOIS AGING SERVICES, INC.
RETIREMENT RESEARCH
FOUNDATION GRANT*

Reducing Social Isolation in Illinois



Illinois Aging Services Retirement Research Foundation Grant

\$137,161 - 18-month grant began January 2, 2021

NORC – National Opinion Research Center,
University of Chicago

Louise Hawkley, PhD, Senior Research Scientist
Council for Jewish Elderly (CJE) Senior Life

Rebecca Berman, PhD, Research Scientist at the
Leonard Schanfield Research Institute



Illinois Aging Services Retirement Research Foundation Grant

5 AAA Pilot Projects

AgeGuide AAA (Northeastern Illinois)
East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging
AgeLinc AAA (Springfield area)
AgeSmart AAA (Southwestern Illinois)
AgeOptions (Suburban Cook)

Process Evaluation



REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION PROCESS EVALUATION

1. Determine if AAAs are accomplishing the goals and objectives of the Initiative
2. Document experiences from participant and service staff
3. Collect follow-up data from participants
4. Quantify changes in older adults' reported loneliness
5. Compare effectiveness of different project models



REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION PROCESS EVALUATION

STEERING COMMITTEE – AAA Pilot Projects

STAFF ADVISORY GROUP – Direct Services Staff

OLDER ADULT ADVISORY GROUP – Service Recipients

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP – Friends, Family of
Participants, and other Community Stakeholders



PROGRESS



REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

AARP Foundation & NORC at the University of Chicago

Geography of Social Isolation

Mapping of Social Isolation in Older Adults

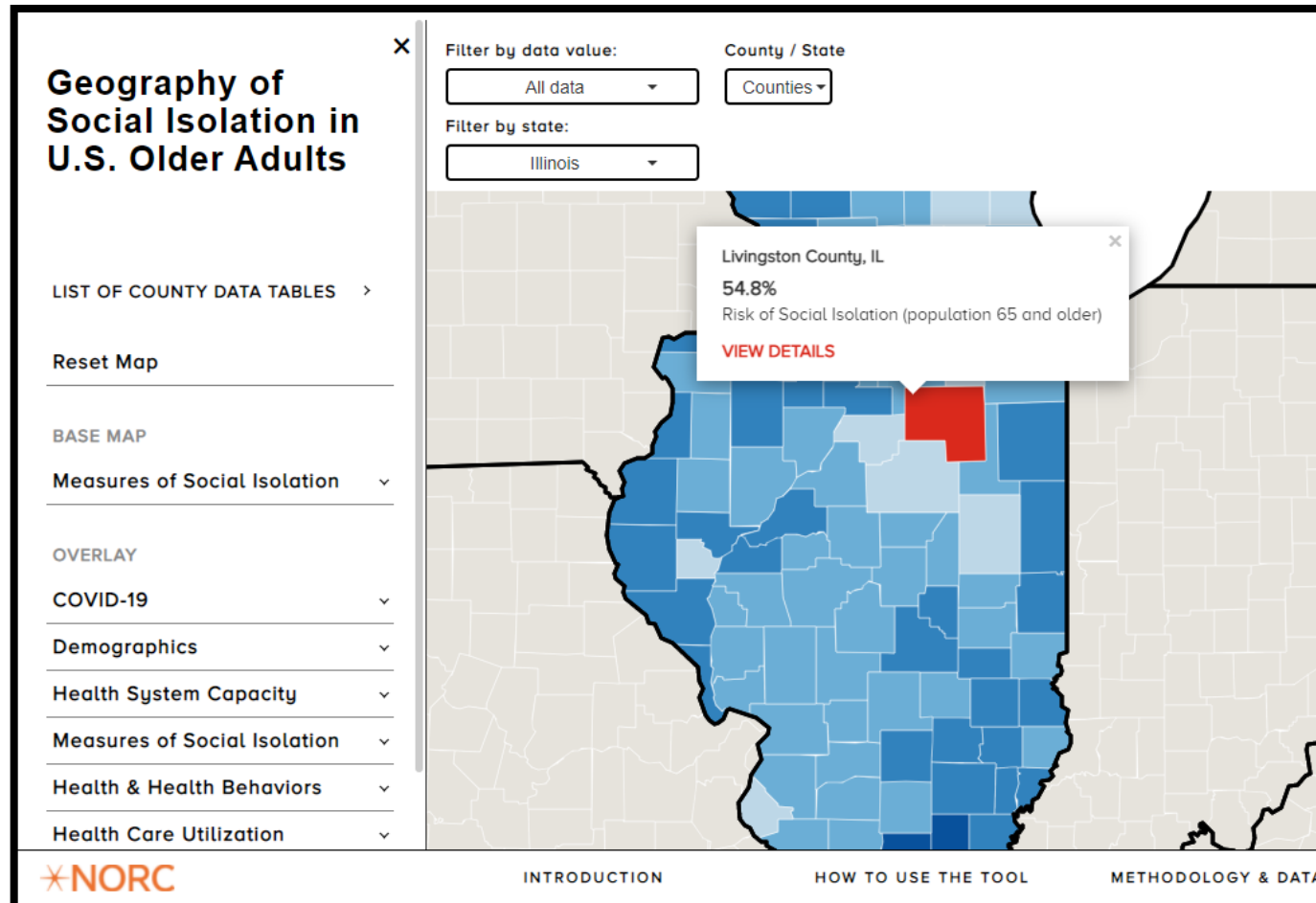
This interactive mapping tool allows you to visualize measures of social isolation and loneliness in older adults in the United States.

connect2affect.org/map



REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

AARP Foundation & NORC at the University of Chicago



Thank You!

*Susan C. Real, Executive Director
East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging & Illinois Aging
Services President
sreal@eciaaa.org*



ENGAGE! Activity Boxes Pilot Project





Family Service

Senior Resource Center

ENGAGE! Activity Boxes Pilot Project

Julie Schubach, LSW
Director of the Senior Resource Center at Family Service

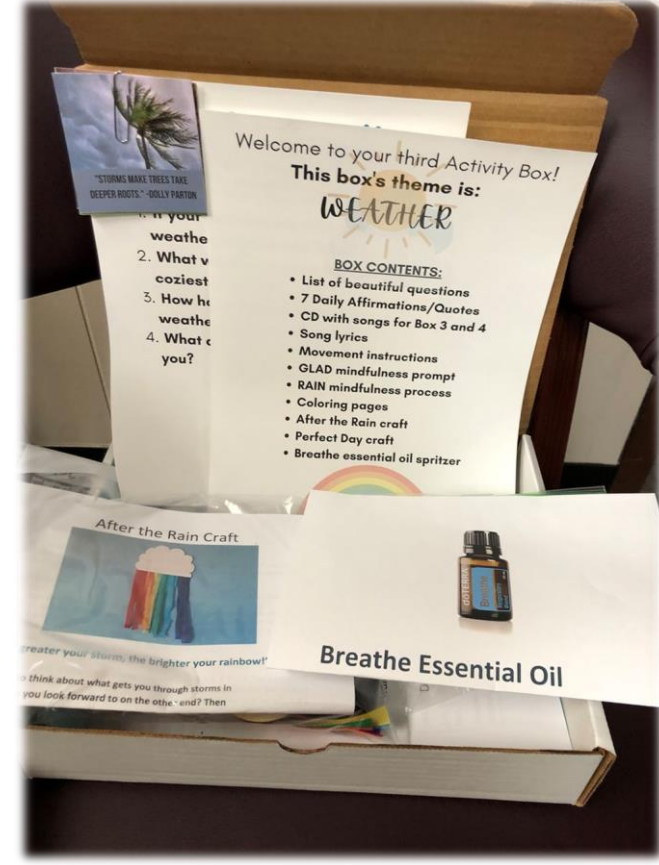
What We'll Cover

- Organizational Alignment
- Program Design & Partners
- Statistics & Scales
- Client Impact
- Lessons learned
 - Ideas for replication and sustaining
- Conclusion

Organizational Alignment



- Collaborative
- Adapting to Community Need
- SRC Mission



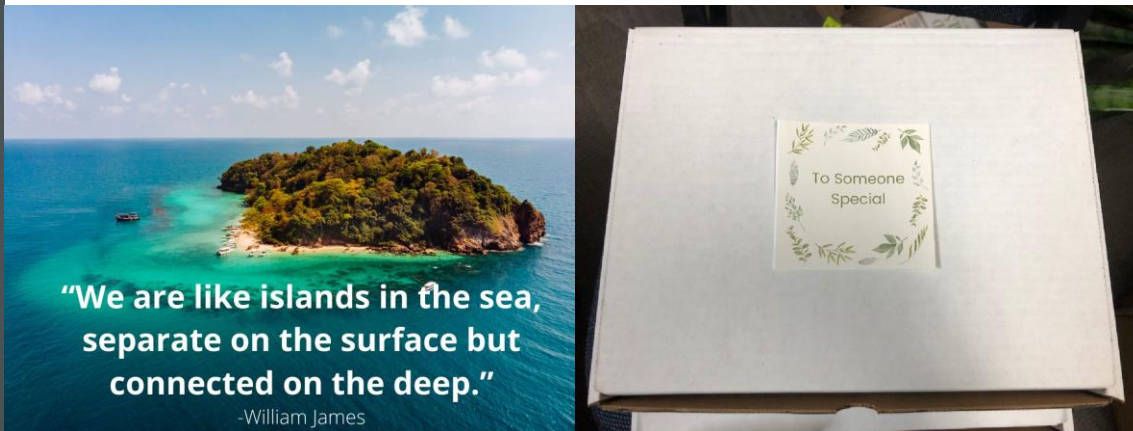
Activity Boxes

A holistic approach to service delivery

Holistic Engagement

- **Activity boxes ENGAGE:**

- Multiple Senses
- Reminiscence and Introspection
- Movement
- Intergenerational Socialization
- Positive Thinking/Mindfulness
- Deep Breathing
- Right Side of the Brain



Activity boxes create a feeling of community despite social isolation.

They remind older adults of their self-worth and that someone cares.

What Sparked the Idea



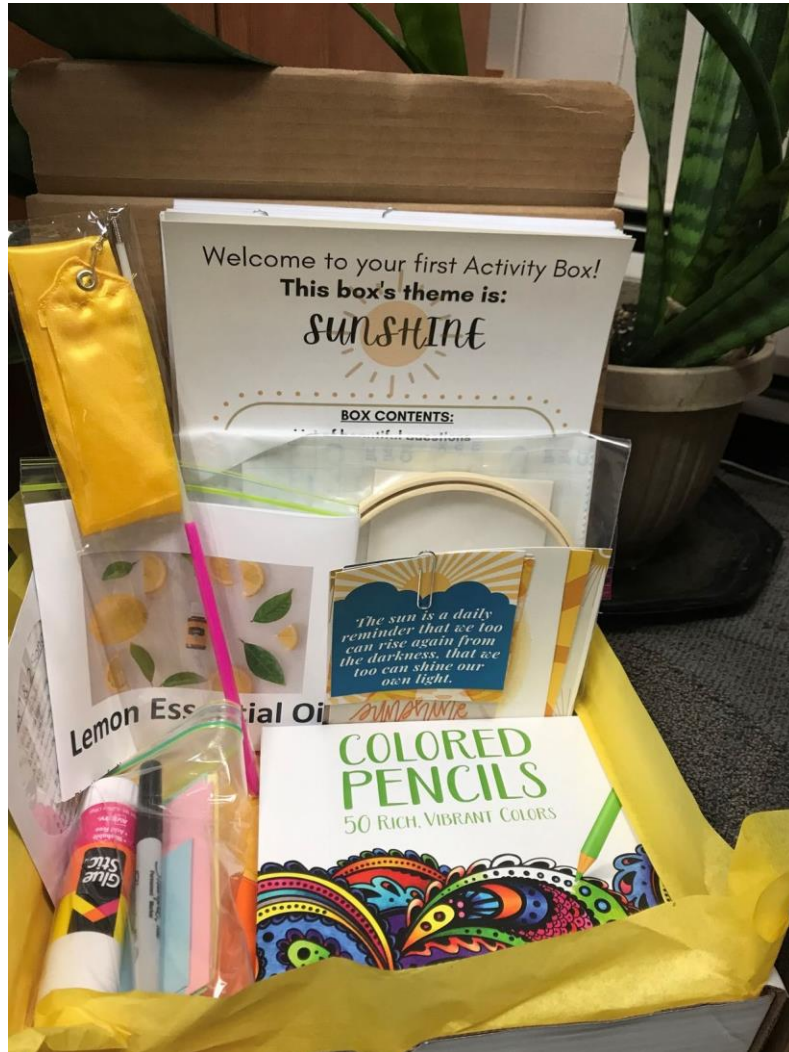
- Creativity is our birthright
- This program is the beginning of a larger effort of the Senior Resource Center to utilize and promote the benefits of creativity in later life.
- We seek to promote the ability of expressive arts to build communities as well as effect individual and societal change.

Program Design/Partners



- **Program Outline**
 - 6 biweekly activity boxes and 12 weekly social calls over the course of 3 months.
- **Parkland College**
 - Boxes were designed by SRC Director and OTA students
 - Boxes are assembled by Parkland student groups.
 - OTA and Nursing students
- **Box Delivery**
 - 7 Parkland nursing students who deliver to 7 of the participants and go through the box components with them.
 - 3 routes that Family Service volunteers deliver boxes to those who do not have a nursing student.
- **Check-in Calls**
 - Parkland Occupational Therapy Assistant or Nursing students, trained as Friendly Callers, call the clients every week.

Activity Box Components:



- **Box Components**
 - Holistic, Positive, Introspective, Themed
- **Each Box Contained**
 - Beautiful questions
 - Positive Quotes/Daily Affirmation Cards
 - Songs
 - Creative movements & instruction
 - Movement aides
 - Introspective craft & instructions
 - Mindfulness and/or deep breathing information
 - Art supplies
 - Coloring pages
 - Essential oil spritzers
- **Themes**
 - Sunshine
 - Trees & Plants
 - Weather
 - Waves
 - Home
 - Animals

Welcome to your first Activity Box!

This box's theme is:

SUNSHINE

BOX CONTENTS:

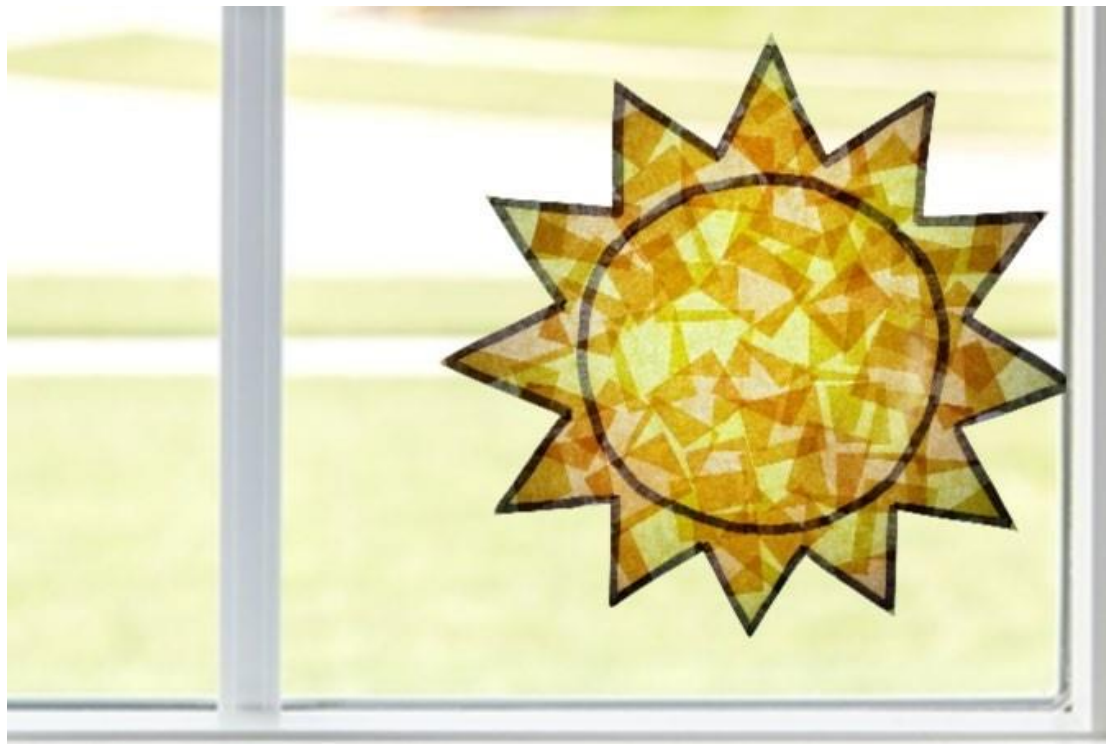
- List of Beautiful Questions
- 7 Daily Affirmations/Quotes
- CD for Boxes 1-6
- Movement instructions & Song lyrics
- 2 Ribbon wands
- Battery Powered Candle
- Journal
- Morning mindfulness
- Deep breathing & Sun breathing
- Journaling ideas
- Coloring book & Colored pencils
- Pencil sharpener & Pencil gripper
- "I Am" Collage craft
- Suncatcher craft

Beautiful Questions

Box 1: Sunshine

Instructions: Ponder your answers to the following questions. Your student caller will do the same and is excited to discuss with you.

1. **How do you find light in darkness?**
2. **What talents or attributes do you consider to be the lights that you share with the world?**
3. **What are the traits that describe you best?**
4. **What is something you are proud of in your life?**
5. **What do you currently value in your life?**
6. **How have your values changed over time?**



The Songs:

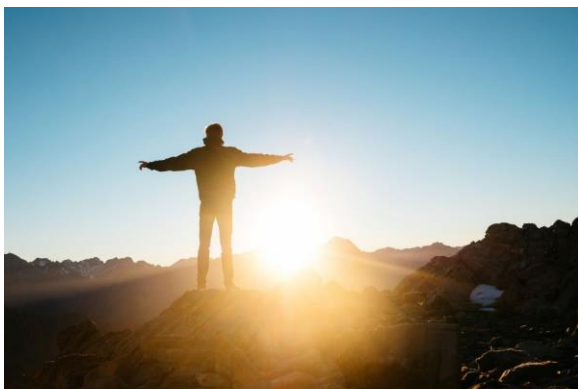
Amen, This Little Light of Mine | Etta James

Walking on Sunshine | Katrina and the Waves

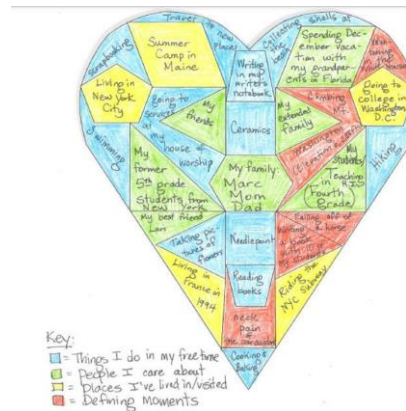
You are My Sunshine | Jimmie Davis

On the Sunny Side of the Street | Billie Holiday





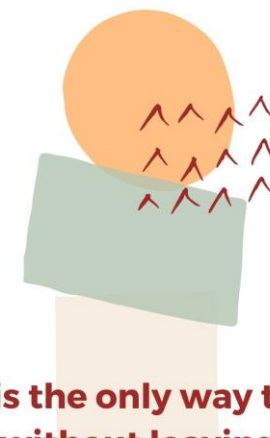
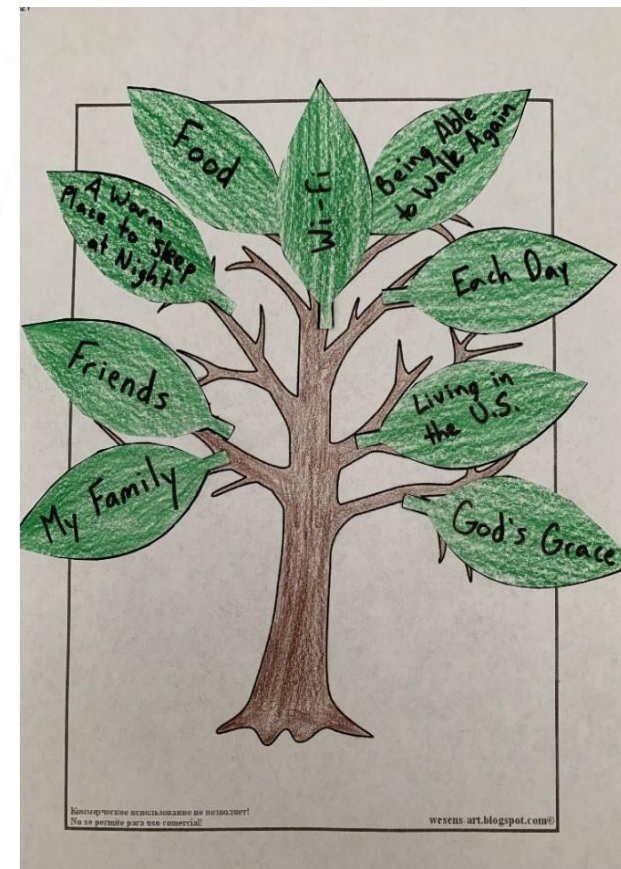
This too shall pass.



After the Rain Craft



"The greater your storm, the brighter your rainbow!"



Art is the only way to run away without leaving home.

Activity Boxes: FY 2021 Statistics

Clients	14 (one in Douglas Co.)
Unique Components	50+
Boxes Delivered	85 (one client withdrew after first box)

Note: The second session of this project just started in late September, so these statistics are only for the first six box session that ran from January to April of 2021.

A poster for the ENGAGE! program. The top half has a blue background with the word "ENGAGE!" in large orange letters. Below it, in white, is "ACTIVITY BOXES FOR OLDER ADULTS". A yellow banner in the middle says "SEPT - NOV, 2021" and "Take part in an exciting, new project!". The bottom half has a dark blue background with white text. At the bottom, there are logos for Family Service Senior Resource Center and Parkland College, along with a paragraph about funding from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, Health Alliance, and East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging.

ENGAGE!

ACTIVITY BOXES FOR OLDER ADULTS

SEPT - NOV, 2021
Take part in an exciting, new project!

Looking for more socialization, movement, or creativity in your life? Try ENGAGE!

For this *free* pilot project, you will receive **6 biweekly activity boxes** and **12 weekly calls** from a Parkland Occupational Therapy Assistant or Nursing student. Boxes are themed and include music, art materials, fun movement instruction and aides, mindfulness tips, coloring pages, craft instructions, and more!

Call 217-352-5100 to register

PROVIDED IN PARTNERSHIP BY:

 **Family Service**
Senior Resource Center &  **PARKLAND COLLEGE**

This program is partially supported by a grant from THE ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL AGENCY, HEALTH ALLIANCE through THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS, & EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS AREA AGENCY ON AGING,

Session 2 Clients

30 (ten in Douglas Co.)

Note: The second session of this project just started in late September.

Activity Box: UCLA Loneliness Scales

Starting Score	4.5
Last Score	2.88
% Change	36%

Note: The second session of this project just started in late September, so these scores are only for the first six box session that ran from January to April of 2021.

Activity Box Session 1: Client Impact

"What a wonderful holistic approach to engage the mind and body. Perfect for isolated seniors and perfect to help with the high anxiety that can result. Very appreciative of the thought that went into adding components that would result in box deep reflections and also memories that promote joy. VERY interested in research and hope something like this can continue."

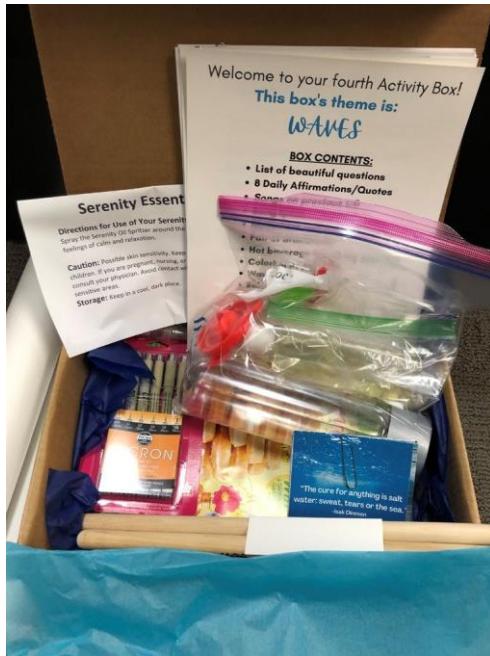
- All but one client answered “yes” that the project improved their mood
 - Not being idle helped her mood. She loves projects.
 - Exercises/ she does them often.
- All but one client answered “yes” that the project increased their social connectivity.
- One participant suggested a booster box set (maybe 2 boxes over 6 months) “to help seniors wean off of these beautiful experiences”
 - We received RSI Flex Comm gap funding for the second session, which allowed us to create a booster box for the Session 1 participants filled with box improvement made in Session 2.

Activity Box Session 1: Client Impact



- “My client really enjoys getting these boxes. She said it is helping her depression and mood swings. She typically has 3-day low periods, and the boxes are helping pull her out of those low periods”- Caseworker
- “My client is sharing the questions and affirmations with some in her building to brighten their day.”- Caseworker
- One participant suggested a booster box set (maybe 2 boxes over 6 months) “to help seniors wean off of these beautiful experiences”
 - We received RSI Flex Comm gap funding for the second session, which allowed us to create a booster box for the Session 1 participants filled with box improvement made in Session 2.

Activity Box Session 1: Client Impact Continued...



- “I’m enjoying every minute of it! There’s enough in here to keep me busy all year.”
- “Everything in the box will last a long time and will be very useful at all times!”
- “I loved the box. It lifted me up and made me feel inspired. I can’t wait to get the next box!”
- “I get excited about the boxes coming which is nice, it splits up the day.”
- “[It] was very nice to receive, very positive themes. you can always go back & do again.”
- "The boxes got better and better, final knocked it out of the park"
- "Loved it, continue to do the project."

Activity Box Session 2: Client Impact



"STORMS MAKE TREES TAKE
DEEPER ROOTS." -DOLLY PARTON

- A current participant has macular degeneration and had been thinking about getting a magnifying lamp. When the client saw that they had one in their box they were thrilled and couldn't wait to try it out. The client stated "You've saved my life. This is going to change my life!"
- One participant feels more comfortable inviting her granddaughter over because they can work on the activities together, prior to the box "she wouldn't because coming up with a task for them to do seemed too daunting"
- "I love the social calls with a student, my grandkids all live so far away so it is nice to chat with someone younger. I also have been sharing items from the boxes..." -Client

It's good to open up the door
and find you standing there
for just to hear you say "Hello".
Can banish every care
And when you come inside the house
You bring so much along;
Companionship, a rousing smile
That turns the hours to song.
The conversation never lags
and time just slides away,
Because there's much for you to tell
a lot for me to say.
These visits give the heart a lift
One can't afford to miss
And life is richer through the years
Because of hours like this.
So come as often as you can;
There's dreams for us to share
It's good to open up the door
And find you standing there!

"I just had to share this with you. Michele and I take activity boxes to two sisters who live together in Tuscola. We have become so fond of them and they just love our visits. Their mother was a poet (we've heard so much about her). This week they shared with us a poem that she had written in 1997. They told us that it is how they feel about our visits with them. They regularly voice how appreciative they are of this program and all of the work and creativity that goes into these boxes. Every week they are astonished by the different activities and gifts within. I just wanted you to know that this program is truly making a difference in not only the seniors lives but, in our lives as well. Just the pick me up we need after studying all week. I have attached a picture of the poem (with their permission). I hope you enjoy it as much as we did!"

Other Impacts

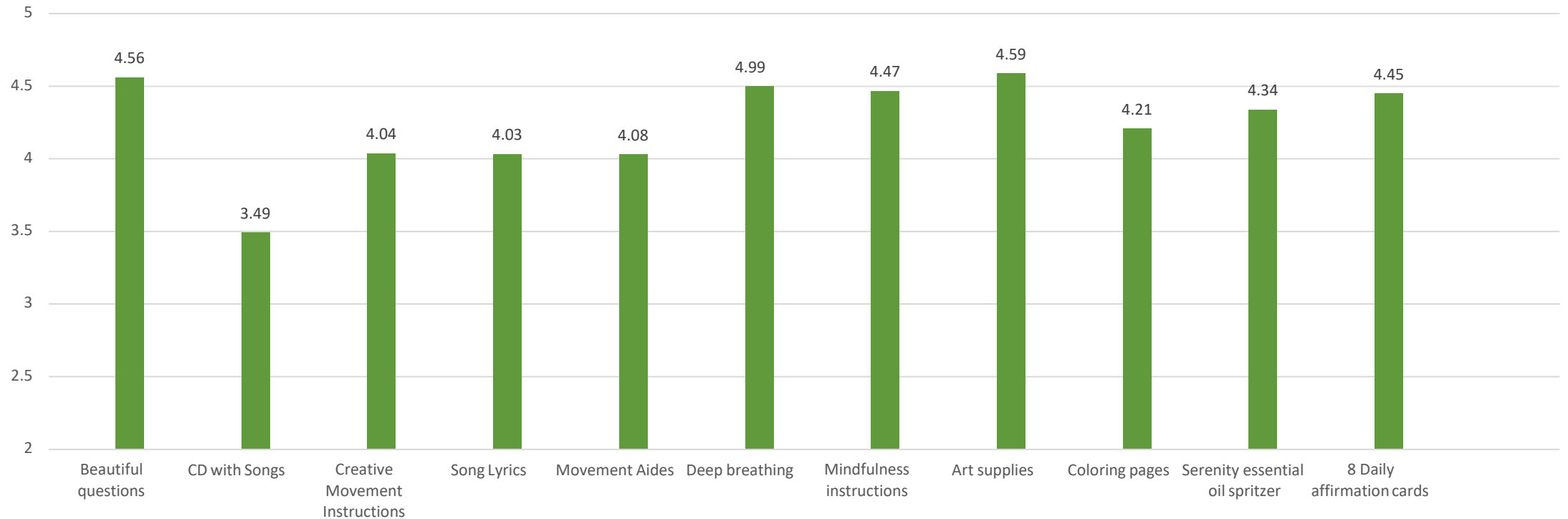
- Parkland Occupational Therapy and Nursing students are learning how to effectively communicate with older adults and build rapport.
- Intergenerational communication can break down ageist beliefs for both students and older adult participants.
- It breaks up the day for older adults and breaks up studying for students.
- Concerns and resource needs are being passed on to the Family Service caseworkers to be addressed.
- More people are checking in on older adults in the community.
- Parkland student groups had projects to engage with the community during the pandemic.

Other Impacts Cont.

- The project gives a sense of purpose to the older adults and the Parkland students
- Reminiscence allows for generativity
- Older adult participants may experience a boost in self-confidence associated with mastering a skill, engaging in introspection and life review, and moving the body.
- New partnerships were formed, strengthening our local Aging Network and reducing the fragmentation of services
- Socialization among peers and family were sparked by the box contents

Activity Boxes: Client Satisfaction

Average Score for all Boxes



Lessons Learned



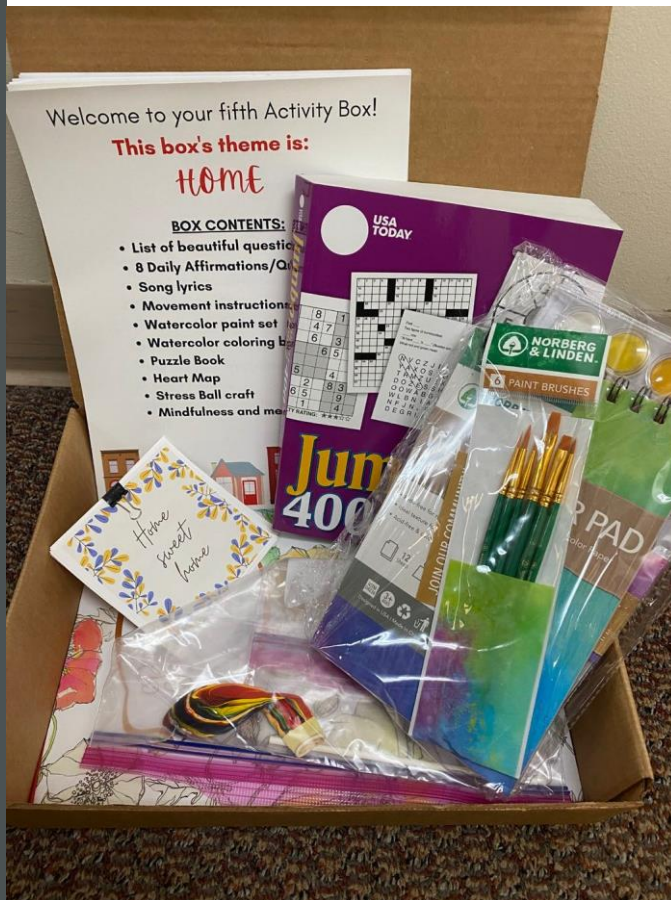
- Your office will become a warehouse.
- Designing, purchasing and taking inventory take more time than you think.
- Canva is your best friend.
- You need help!
- Put together an example box of each for the volunteers compiling the boxes to follow. Give them clear instructions.
- Presentation matters.
- Friendly visiting worked well.
- Intergenerational communication is sometimes preferred.
- Reminiscence is powerful.
- *67 is a nightmare.

Suggestions



- Community interest assessment- find out what your population is interested in.
- Have volunteers take pictures.
- Spread out the boxes “they were so very rich that they all deserved more time.”
- Consider a Family Caregiver line of boxes or other series.
- Consider how boxes can be used to connect with family members and friends.
- Carefully choose your partners.
 - Connect to arts organizations and consider out-of-the-box partners.
 - Include art students/artists in the design of the boxes.
 - Consider your agency or community’s strong points.
- Strong partners and adequate staff time for coordination are key.

Summary



- Creativity plays a role in health and wellness – including healthy aging.
- Engagement in later years is crucial.
- Expressive arts can build communities as well as effect individual and societal change.



Family Service

Senior Resource Center

Julie Schubach

jschubach@familyservicecc.org

AgeGuide Innovative Program Models





AGEGUIDE INNOVATIVE PROGRAM MODELS

ICMHA: NOVEMBER 19, 2021

Colette Jordan, Caregiver & Dementia Specialist
Alaine Kvedaras, Health Promotions and Education Specialist



The Big Pivot

EVERYTHING SHUTS
DOWN, SERVICES GO
VIRTUAL

GOOD MEMORIES

CHOIR

Summer Rocks

Good
Memories
Choir

Prior to the
pandemic
Spring 2019





Good Memories Sing-Along Cafés

Recording...

docs.google.com/document/d/1Hii1u646x8D5Y27Rix24aKy...

SG/GM Sing-Along 2.10.21 Doris Day

All I do is talk to my pillow
Talk to my pillow, talk to my pillow
All I do is talk to my pillow
Talk about the boy I'm gonna marry
someday
Somehow, some way, sometime

Pillow talk, pillow talk
Another night of gettin' my fill of talk talk
talk

stanley Shapiro and maurice richlin
RUSSELL ROUSE AND CLARENCE GREENE

Recording...

12:34 PM 2/18/2021

Participants: Lynn, Mary Ellen, annskwarek, Meridel W, Richard d Liefer, Sarah Dvorin, marciaaham, Katie Frankie

Sing-Along Testimonials

“I am so grateful for the programs that have become available online because of the pandemic. As a caregiver, I was not able to leave my husband alone. And now due to my health, as well as concerns about driving, I still rarely leave my home. It has been wonderful to have programs on zoom, including the weekly sing-along. I love to sing and to learn about different singers or songwriters, or types of popular songs. In addition, it's a weekly social get-together. I've been attending weekly since July 2020, and I think I've only missed sing-along zoom once.”

“Each week we deliberately take an hour (or maybe two) and ignore all the stuff cluttering our lives to have our eyes and ears and sometimes tear ducts opened to artists of the past. It's like a retreat. We benefit from the extensive research done by the hosts. It's a benefit that you all have created and gifted us with. Seeing our fellow singers, whom we can't have contact with (yet), and sinking into the music is a wonderful renewal and calming experience.”

“Both the Virtual Choir and the Singalongs have sustained me and kept me connected to real humans throughout this pandemic. It is my hope we keep this format going in some form!!”



APPLY NOW!

INTERNET CONNECTED TABLETS FOR SENIORS



The Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging, T-Mobile, and The Morris Area Public Library have partnered up to provide an internet connected tablet to citizens, aged 60+, who are at risk of becoming socially isolated. We wish to help them to connect to their family, friends and community through technology. If you qualify and feel isolated, or know someone else who does, apply now.

**Program Starts in
December 2019**

Details at
www.morrislibrary.com/tablet
Or ask John for more
information (815-942-6880)



Tablets to Seniors


- Launched 11/2019
- Funded by IDOA Social Isolation Reduction Initiative
- Intended as a Library Program
- Goal: To connect older adults to family, friends, and their community
- Partnership with T-Mobile




The Result


- Square 1 Program With a Starter Tablet
- Ease of Use Tools
- 3 Tutorial Classes, 3 Topics
- Library Support Post Tutorials
- GetSetUp


AgeGuide in Partnership with GetSetUp





Search Guides and Classes

 [Need Help?](#) [Apply to Host a Session](#) K Kvedaras

 My Home


 Classes

 Schedule

 More

Learn anything


350 classes, 350 things to learn, 350 skills to unlock, thousands of different opportunities to make new friends. GetSetUp helps you live better, longer.



Interest Group: How to Live With Less

05:00 PM, 09 Nov
Starts in 5 hours


Book



Become a Time Management Expert

02:30 PM, 10 Nov
Starts in a day
Taught by Kevin M


Book



Sharing & Collaborating with Google Tools


04:30 PM, 10 Nov
Starts in a day
Taught by Vicki S

Book




Learn Spanish: Story Weaving

03:30 AM, 11 Nov
Starts in 2 days
Taught by Kamal K



Excel Basics

09:00 AM, 11 Nov
Starts in 2 days
Taught by Wade Y



Organizing Your Important Information - Workshop

10:00 AM, 11 Nov
Starts in 2 days
Taught by Lee W


Filter classes

- ☒ All classes
- ☐ New classes
- ☐ Classes this week
- ☐ Coming soon
- ☐ Guides
- ☐ Series

Filter by category

- ☐ All categories
- ☐ Aging in Place
- ☐ Art
- ☐ Business & Entrepreneurship
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Cooking
- ☐ Creativity
- ☐ Financial Planning
- ☐ Health and Wellness
- ☒ Hiring and Jobs
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Social Hours
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Travel

Hi! How can we help you?



AgeGuide Learning Center Testimonials

"The Age Guide classes, they have been such an inspiration, sociable and refreshing source of information and encouragement for me...especially in these times. Age Guide is bringing me to the awareness and perspective that I can and should provide self-care because if I don't take care of myself, I feel like I can't take care of or service others. It also introduces me to new people, faces, ideas, and new places in this new and different world we are living in now. AgeGuide's Learning Center is proving to be one of those very helpful tools...in different areas of my life."

Grandma Brenda M-L. Foster Grandparent

"I want to thank you for providing access to the Learning Center. The diversity of the offerings amazed me. My primary interests lie in technology, but they also have programs dealing with physical and mental health issues, literature, arts, museum tours, food, and more. The instructors are top notch. They know the material and explain it well. They field questions from basic to complex with confidence. They are always enthusiastic, encouraging, and supportive. I've attended over 40 training sessions and gained useful information from every one of them.

Thank you again for providing me with the opportunity to expand my knowledge." --**Joe N. Super User**

Intergenerational Music & Memory Program



Caregiver Testimonial:

"I am following up to let you know how the shoulder speaker has been working. This was a beautiful weekend outside so we took advantage of the nice weather and took along the new speaker. My mom, (participant) loved her music and was so happy as I pushed her in her wheelchair, sat in the backyard enjoying the sun and used her walker to walk past a few houses on our street.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of the innovative program, it really made a difference in her spirit and helped her memory. Happy Easter. (Helper)"

Online Programming

Good Memories Sing-Along Cafés

Good Memories Choir

Tablet Tutorials

Get Set Up!

Music & Memory/Alive Inside

Stress Busting for Caregivers

A Matter of Balance

Bingocize

Wits Workout

Fit and Strong

Tai Chi for Arthritis

Takeaways

Summary

Replication

Sustainability

Programming Impact

Number of persons served DURING the pandemic

- Choir: 177 singers in each of 2 “Summer Rocks” sessions
- Sing-Alongs: over 100 persons registered attending weekly sessions
- Tablets: 200 delivered, average reduction of 25% in UCLA score.
- Get Set Up: Over 200 registered, thousands of hours of classes attended
- Stress Busting: 57 caregivers served
- Music & Memory: 55 persons with dementia (& 55 caregivers) served
- Bingocize 225 and counting

Replicability & Sustainability

- Tablets: “Living” document. Can be adapted/changed to suit class needs
- GetSetUp cost effective at \$15/month/person for unlimited classes
- Good Memories Sing-along Cafes
- Good Memories Choir
- Music & Memory/Alive Inside



YOUR GUIDE TO AGING SERVICES



**1910 South Highland
Avenue**

Suite 100

Lombard, IL 60148

(630) 293-5990

akvedaras@ageguide.org

cjordan@ageguide.org

CATCH-ON Connect: A Program to Increase Technology Access Among Older Adults During COVID-19





CATCH-ON

A HRSA GERIATRIC WORKFORCE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

CATCH-ON Connect: A Program to Increase Technology Access Among Older Adults During COVID-19

Michelle Newman, MPH

Illinois Coalition for Mental Health and Aging Meeting

Friday, November 19, 2021

Disclosure(s)

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This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.



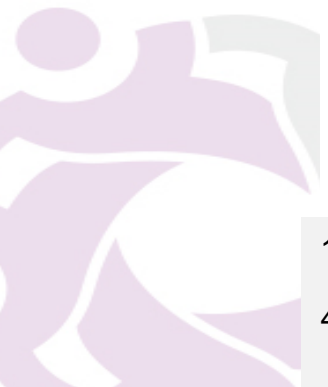
Social Isolation & Technology

- Social isolation and loneliness are especially detrimental to older adults¹
- Older adults face disproportionate barriers to technology access² and training³
- Technology can help connect with social support networks and health professionals⁴



¹Nicholson et al., 2020; ²Fields et al., 2021; ³Vaportzis, Clausen, & Gow, 2017;

⁴Jacobs & Ellis, 2021



CATCH-ON Connect Program Elements

- Free cellular-enabled tablets and individual technical assistance
- Curriculum focuses on What Matters, including education on:
 - 4Ms
 - Telehealth portal
 - Select apps (including Zoom, Facebook)
 - COVID-19



CATCH-ON Connect Inclusion Criteria

- 65+ years old and/or 50+ with chronic conditions
- Cognitively intact
- Ability to see, hear, and comprehend training content
- Sufficient minutes on their phone for training
- Ability to participate as independently as possible
- Lives in an area with adequate cell service



Measures

- Baseline, one-, and three-month evaluations
 - Digital Literacy
 - UCLA 3-Item Loneliness Scale¹
 - Social Isolation Scale in Older Adults²
 - 4Ms Patient Engagement Questionnaire

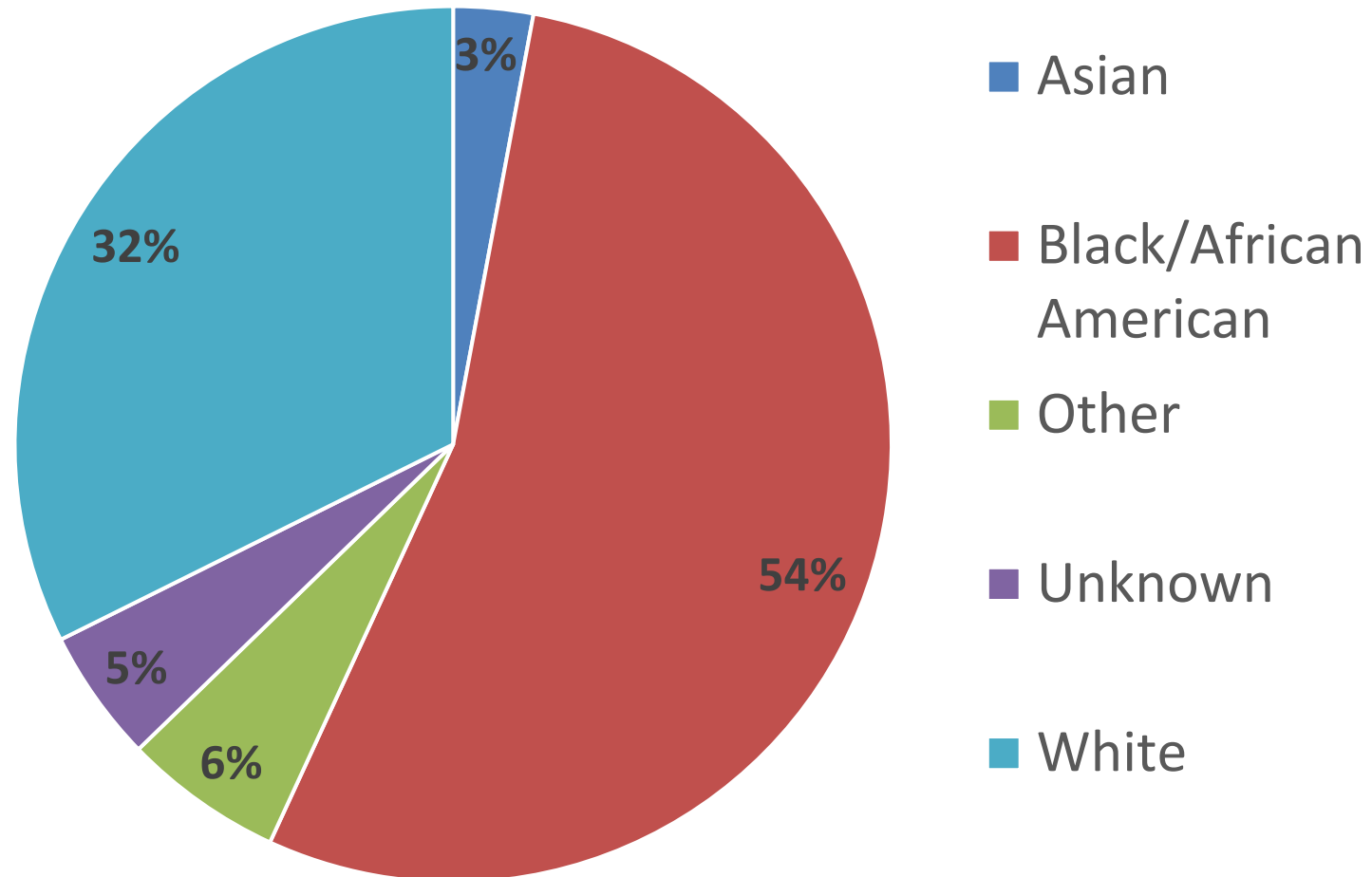


¹Hughes et al., 2004; ²Nicholson et al., 2020

Participant Characteristics

- N=127
- 81% (83) female

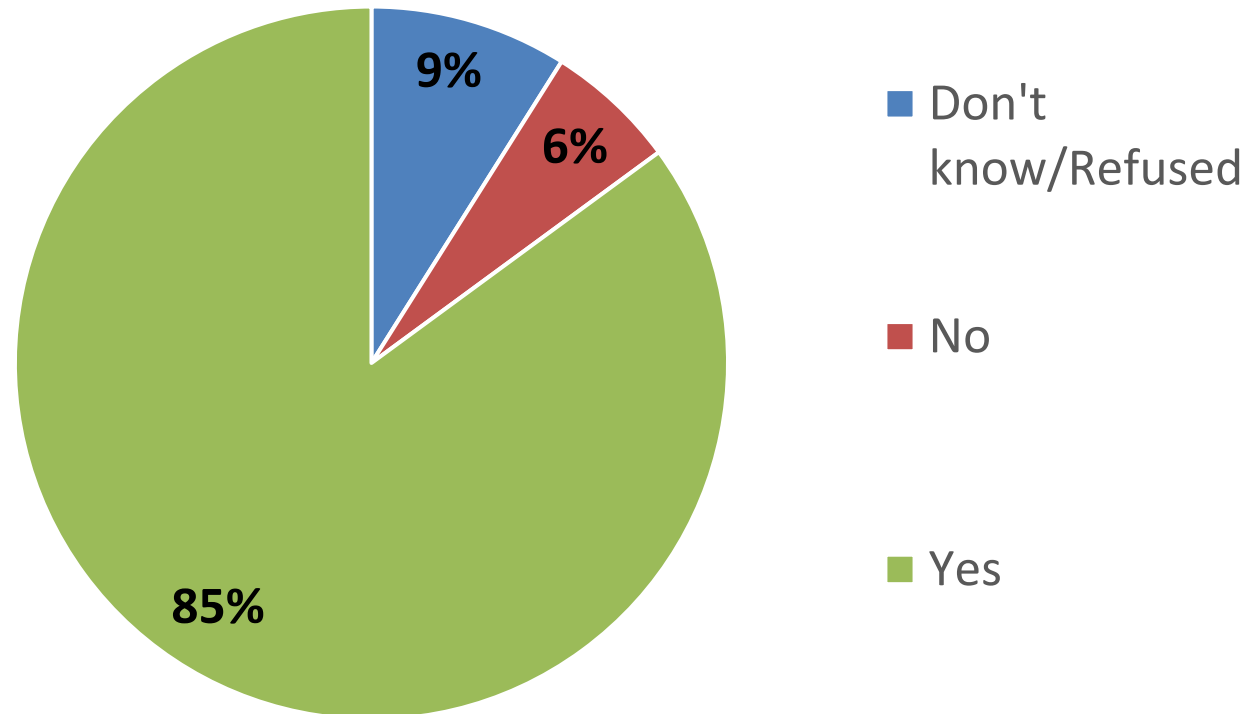
Racial Composition



Results: Process

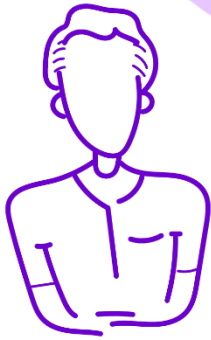
- Mean sessions participant met with tech = 3
- Mean minutes participant met with tech = 175

Did the Training Specialist who provided help address all of your questions about using the tablet? (n=67)



Results: Process

Thank you for having the patience for working with me and being my teacher. I'm a former war veteran in the past and happy I can join my veteran social group meetings via zoom as well as meeting with my social worker.



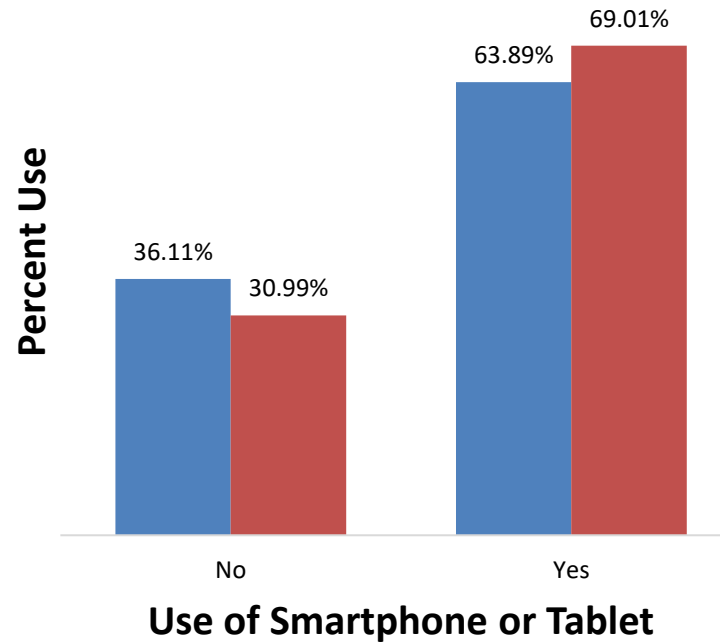
You made learning very easy. I struggled in the past with depression. With the help you've provided I now feel very connected with the things that matter the most to me.



Results: Outcomes

**Have you used a
smartphone or tablet to
communicate with family or
friends?**

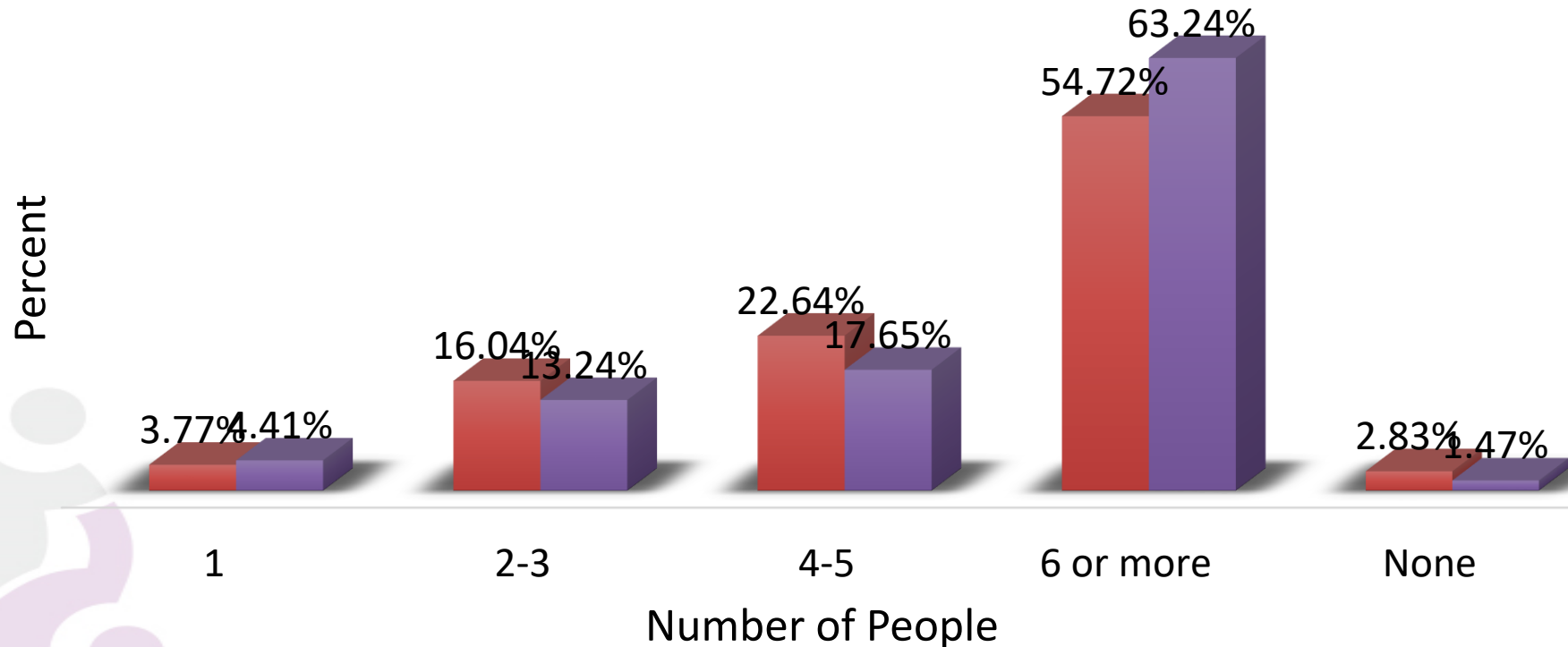
■ Baseline Assessment (n=108)
■ 1 Month Assessment (n=71)



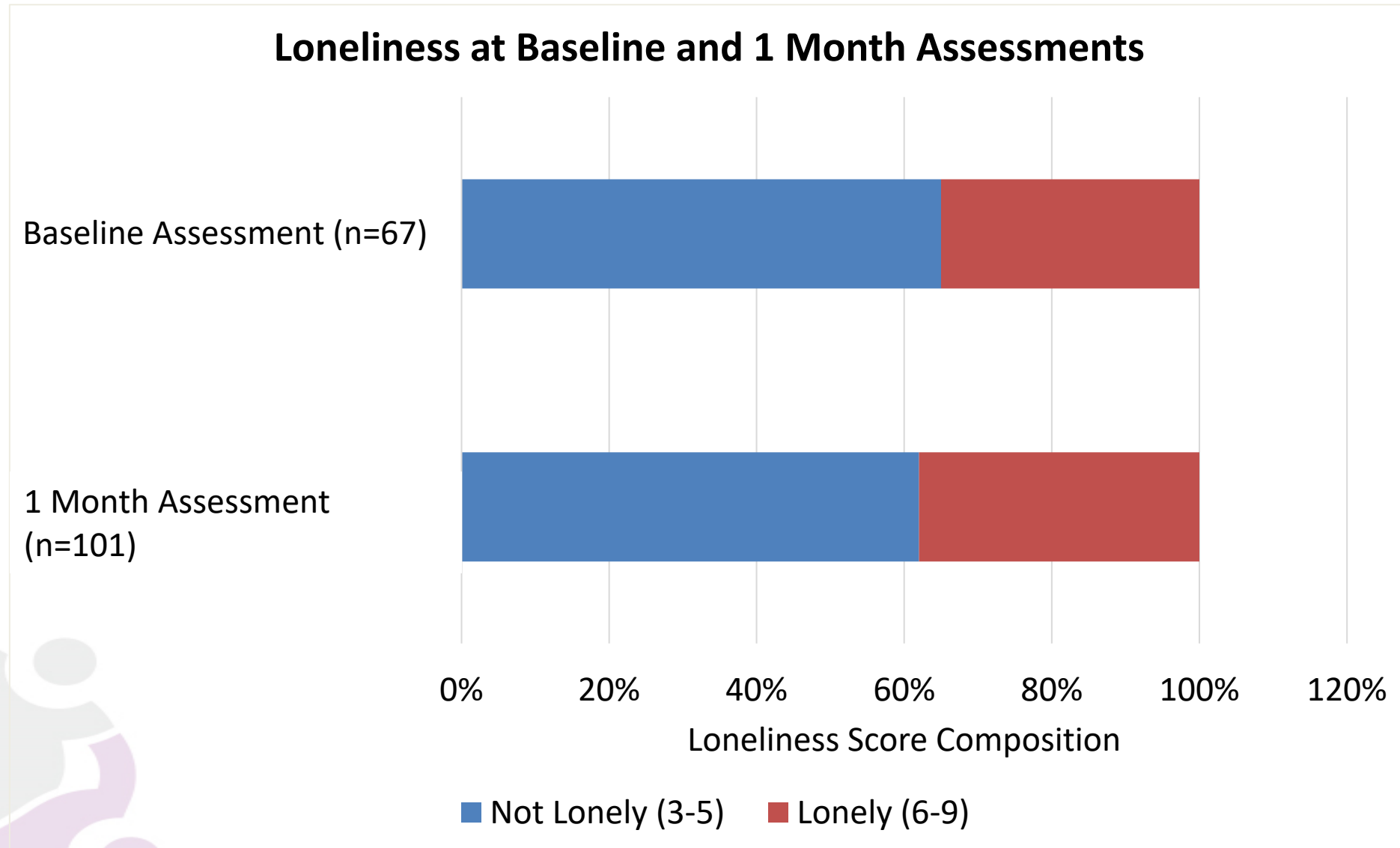
Results: Outcomes

Thinking about your family, friends, and neighbors,
how many do you communicate with on a personal
level?

■ Baseline Assessment (n=105) ■ 1 Month Assessment (n=68)



Results: Outcomes



Discussion



- Statistically significant but not clinically significant changes in loneliness and isolation
- Participant dropout due to concerns about privacy, chronic illness, and death
- Recruit by word of mouth and through social groups is effective

Impact



<https://aging.rush.edu/schaalman/what-matters-community/>



Thank You to our Team!

- Derian Aguirre
- Victoria Beal
- Sara Duffey
- Eve Escalante
- Josie Gemignani
- Danielle Kiel
- Jeff McGrath
- Nece Pinkney
- Steve Reaves
- Ruth Richman
- Janis Sayer
- Yessenia Servin
- Siqi Wang
- Natalie Walser
- All our participants and referring providers!



Question & Answer



Continuing Education

Please use this link to complete an evaluation which will direct you to the CE:

<https://lanitek.com/P?s=173280>

Please email E4Center@rush.edu with any questions.



Closing & thank you!

<https://www.icmha.org/join/>

