Welcome! The program will start promptly at 9 a.m.
Age Positive

2020 ReVision

Welcome and Conference Announcements

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Age Positive 2020 Planning Committee Member

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Opening keynote address:
Social Isolation by Default and Design

Kathy Greenlee
President and CEO of Greenlee Global LLC

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Social Isolation by Default and Design

Kathy Greenlee, J.D.
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Social Isolation and Older People

• We knew social isolation was bad
• We proved social isolation was bad
• Social isolation now, because we must
The Three Plaques

- Loneliness
- Helplessness
- Boredom

- Dr. Thomas’ story
What are Old People For?

• “A lonely person needs companionship the way a thirsty person needs water. [It] is one of the essential ingredients of well-being.”

• “Nursing homes are academies of helplessness. The buildings themselves . . . actually disable the people who live there.”

• “Boredom is a great crushing weight that can squeeze the life out of any human being. It is the pain we suffer when we seek but cannot find variety and spontaneity in daily life.”
Vision/Mission

Celebrating Transformation Coast to Coast

Now more than 17 years strong, Green House homes have transformed long-term and post-acute care as we know it.

Vision
The Green House® Project (GHP) envisions homes in every community where Elders and others enjoy excellent quality of life and quality of care; where they, their families, and the staff engage in meaningful relationships built on equality, empowerment, and mutual respect; where people want to live and work; and where all are protected, sustained, and nurtured without regard to the ability to pay.

Mission
We partner with organizations, advocates, and communities to lead the transformation of institutional long-term and post-acute care by creating viable homes that demonstrate more powerful, meaningful, and satisfying lives, work, and relationships.

The Green House Core Values
Social Isolation by Default

• The three plagues:
  Loneliness
  Helplessness
  Boredom
• My eureka moment: I called Dr. Thomas
• The three plagues are ubiquitous
• What role does ageism play?
• These plagues represent deep problems
Being Old

• Older people feel dismissed
• Society stops expecting anything from the old (this is a form of ageism)
• What are the developmental milestones?
• Are the milestones positive or negative?
• The diminutive use of the word “still”
Question 1:

• Think of the older adults you know or serve
• Which of the 3 plagues do you see most often?
  • Loneliness
  • Helplessness
  • Boredom
Social Isolation & Loneliness

- Different but related terms
- Social isolation: the objective state of having few social relationships
- Loneliness: a subjective feeling of being isolated

- Report sponsored by AARP Foundation
- Published February 2020
Prevalence

• According to the NASEM report
• 24% of community-dwelling adults age 65+ are considered socially isolated
• 35% of adults age 45+ report feeling lonely
• 43% of adults age 60+ report feeling lonely
Risk Factors

- Living alone
- Loss of family or friends
- Chronic illness
- Sensory impairments
- Social isolation and loneliness may be episodic or chronic
What interventions will help?

• Lack of a strong evidence base
• Need for research and best practices
• AARP Foundation Connect2Affect
  Emily Allen will discuss next
• AARP Foundation was ahead of the curve (prior to the pandemic)
Question 2: Prior to the pandemic did you work specifically to address social isolation?

- Yes
- No
Social Isolation by Design

- Stay home, stay safe
- Major impact on older people
- People with cognitive impairment, any age
- People with mental health conditions, any age
- Exacerbates issues like lack of broadband access
- Increased risk and ageism
Fear and Reality

• Dying alone
• No hospital visitors
• Quarantine and separation when ill
• Nursing homes, assisted living, independent living
• Loss of precious time
• Loss of family and touch
The new family separation

• Inability of nursing home residents to receive visitors
• Short-term solution for a long-term problem
• Family visitors are essential
• Residents have rights
• Need additional focus on the risk of family visits
• Lack of rapid response testing major hurdle
Disparate impact by race and ethnicity

- The COVID Racial Data Tracker [https://covidtracking.com/race](https://covidtracking.com/race)
- Project of *The Atlantic* and Boston University Center for Antiracist Research
- Black people are dying 2.4 times the rate of white people
- Deaths of black people account for 22% of deaths
- American Indian, Hispanic, and Latino death rates higher than white people
- This resource tracks data by state
Why such impact on people of color?

- Discrimination
- Social determinants of health
- Healthcare access and utilization
- Occupation
- Housing (including nursing homes)
- Poverty
Question 3: How does your current social isolation related work compare to before COVID-19?

- Significant increase
- Modest increase
- No change
Priorities right now

- Connection and reconnection
- Virtual visits are helpful but not sufficient
- Trauma and resilience
- Facilitation and barriers
- Vision loss and hearing loss
- In-person and safe
Ideas

• Telephone reassurance
• Virtual visits
• Virtual programming
• Drive-thru meals and drive-up concerts
• Letters and cards
• Robotic pets
Resources

- Advancing States
- AARP Foundation connect2affect
- National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- Administration for Community Living
- Alzheimer’s Association
- National Council on Aging
QUESTIONS?

Look for an email with a link to a participant evaluation immediately following this session.

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Break time!

The next session, “Combating Social Isolation in Your Community” will begin promptly at 10:15 a.m.

Upcoming sessions
Thursday, Sept. 10:
• 9 a.m.: Addressing Loneliness and Social Isolation Through a Circle of Friends
• 10:30 a.m.: Programming for a Moving Target

Friday, Sept. 11:
• 9 a.m.: Resources to Help You Navigate Through the Pandemic
• 10:30 a.m.: Reframing Aging During COVID-19

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