Welcome and Introduction of Presenter
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Kansas City Public Library and Age Positive 2020 Planning Committee Member

Combating Social Isolation in Your Community
Emily Allen
Senior vice president of programs, AARP Foundation

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Social isolation affects nearly 1 in 5 older adults.
About AARP Foundation

AARP Foundation works to end senior poverty by helping vulnerable older adults build economic opportunity and social connectedness.

As AARP’s charitable affiliate, we serve AARP members and nonmembers alike. Bolstered by vigorous legal advocacy, we spark bold, innovative solutions that foster resilience, strengthen communities and restore hope.
Isolation & Loneliness

Objective

Isolation involves quantifiable measurements, such as the size of one’s social network (and the frequency of engagement with it), availability of transportation, and ability to access resources and information.

Subjective

Loneliness (also known as subjective isolation) denotes how people perceive their experience and whether or not they feel isolated.
Isolation is a health issue.

Research shows that the negative health effects of chronic isolation and loneliness, while harmful at any age, are especially dangerous for people over 50. Social isolation and loneliness are associated with:

- Higher blood pressure
- Increased susceptibility to the flu
- Greater risk of heart disease
- Earlier onset of dementia
Subjective feelings of loneliness can increase the risk of death by as much as **45 percent**.

17% of adults age 65 and older are isolated.

46% of women age 75 and older live alone.

Older adults who describe themselves as lonely have a **59% greater risk of functional decline** and a **45% greater risk of death**.
The Costs:

Social isolation among older adults is associated with an estimated $6.7 billion in additional Medicare spending annually.

Each month, Medicare spent an estimated $134 more for socially isolated older adults ($1,608 more annually).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Additional Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social isolation</td>
<td>$134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>$117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>$163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>$241</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>$270</td>
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Isolation is the result of being disconnected from support groups of family, friends and community. **Risk factors and causes of isolation include:**

**Societal / Community**

- Limited/unaffordable transportation
- Rural, unsafe or inaccessible neighborhood
- Societal barriers (ageism or other forms of discrimination)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A low income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being a caregiver</td>
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<td>Chronic health conditions</td>
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<td>Hearing/vision loss</td>
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<td>Retirement</td>
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<td>Limited mobility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living alone</td>
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<td>Loss of memory</td>
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<td>Loss of a spouse</td>
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AARP Foundation Connect2Affect.org

Connect2Affect features tools and resources to help evaluate isolation risk, reach out to others who may be feeling lonely and disconnected, and find practical ways to reconnect to the community.

Project Goals:
• Increase social connectedness by addressing the root causes of social through a consumer portal of curated evidence-based content and activities

• Develop an easy-to-use online system that offers recommendations for programs, activities and resources that can help users connect to others and engage in the community, based on their individual needs, interests, and abilities

• Create a center of excellence and clearinghouse of best practices and evidence-based solutions to address social isolation
Social Isolation is more than feeling lonely

How connected are you?

Social isolation has reached epidemic proportions and has a negative impact on our emotional and physical health.

Are you or a loved one at risk for social isolation? Take this assessment to find out if you are at risk.

**17%** of adults age 65 and older are isolated

**26%** increased risk of early death due to subjective feeling of loneliness

**46%** of women age 75 and older live alone
Connect2Affect

Community Workshop

Welcome!

Learn more about staying connected

with the generous support of

UnitedHealthcare®
What is Connected Communities?
Connected Communities connects older adults to their senior housing communities by enabling them to access community information using just their voice. The program works with affordable senior housing providers to equip their residents and staff with tools that help seniors maintain the social connections they need to remain independent and age in place longer.
AARP Foundation ChatBot

Getting started is easy
Text "Hello" to 845-610-6472 and get started in seconds
Chatbot will start to learn more about you to give you a personalized coaching experience.

CHAT IN MESSENGER

CHAT THROUGH TEXT

How It Works
Thank you!

Key websites:

www.Connect2Affect.org
  • Isolation risk assessment
  • Resource finder
  • Info, articles, monthly newsletter
  • Links to volunteer opportunities

www.aarpfoundation.org
QUESTIONS?

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

Tweet about this event at #AgePositiveKC
See you tomorrow!

The next session, “Addressing Loneliness and Social Isolation Through a Circle of Friends” will begin promptly at 9 a.m., tomorrow morning.

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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