

# Social Isolation & Loneliness Amongst Young Adults

## There is an urgent need for action

Research indicates that social isolation and loneliness (SIL) are increasing, particularly among young adults and older teens. Teenage girls are especially at risk.

- Loneliness among young adults is **13 percentage** points higher than other age groups.
- Recent reports show that nearly **80%** of young adults experience serious loneliness.
- Evidence shows that young adults with **3-4 social connections** have significantly lower odds of attempting suicide.
- Research suggests that examining work-family balance and unemployment issues among young adults is critical for their well-being.

## The Impact of Social Isolation and Loneliness

The impact of social isolation and loneliness among young adults is detrimental in terms of physical, mental, and emotional health.

Social isolation significantly increases a person's risk of **premature death** from all causes.



Loneliness is associated with higher rates of **depression, anxiety, and suicide**.



Scan to learn more about SIL and our Young Adult Workgroup

Poor social relationships are associated with a 29% increased risk of **heart disease** and a 32% increased risk of **stroke**.





*In-person interaction is a great way to foster meaningful social connection. Consider attending or hosting a briefing, hearing, or live event where your constituents can interact, create networks, and build relationships.*



## Key Recommendations: Elevate social isolation and loneliness among young adults as a public health priority.

- **Insert specific language to include SIL as a priority in legislation** that speaks to either mental health priorities or young adults more broadly.
- Encourage congressional committees and caucuses with jurisdiction over mental health or young adults to **hold hearings and briefings to showcase SIL among young adults.**
- **Fund research** on the drivers of social disconnection among young adults to inform the development, evaluation, and implementation of evidence-based interventions.
- **Enhance collaboration** between young adults, researchers, public health professionals, and stakeholders **to develop effective interventions.**

## Key Recommendations: Education

Access to quality education and vocational opportunities can provide young adults with in-demand skills for their careers and lead to more opportunities for connection in the workplace.

- **Amend 45 CFR 261.2** to remove the 12-month time limit and participation cap on vocational educational training, enabling young adults to participate in community college and university education programs as a part of their Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefit work requirements.
- **Increase the federal grants** available to students pursuing a career in the behavioral health workforce to cover tuition and related expenses.
- Direct the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) to **advise public schools and institutes of higher education** on incorporating evidence-based instructional practices that can promote **positive teacher-student and peer relations** (e.g., cooperative or peer learning).

## Key Recommendations: Workforce

Connecting young adults to rewarding careers can provide a path to financial security and establish professional networks that foster lifelong purpose, belonging, and well-being.

- **Expand eligibility for the TANF program** and funding to support young adults without children.
- Provide states with technical assistance and authority to braid federal funding to **support youth workforce development and training**, including government programs addressing financial strain, unemployment, and unmet literacy skills.
- Amend TANF requirements to **explicitly list technology and internet supports as eligible costs** for current-year state funding to promote job preparation and work.
- Establish **federal incentives and initiatives to address SIL in the public sector workplace.**
- Support the **collaborative improvement methodology to address SIL in the workplace.**