



Improving Social Connectedness



For Everyone
MAY 15, 2024

HIGHLIGHTS

- Small acts to build social connections can make a difference.
- Improving social connections can be simple, but meaningful.
- Each of us can work to build valuable connections.
- There are ways to create new and stronger relationships to improve health and well-being.



Background

Building social connections matters

People with meaningful social connections experience benefits, such as:

- Less stress.
- Better sleep.
- Longer, healthier life.

Laying the groundwork

Making social connections can be hard, especially if you are in poor health, having problems with money, or living alone. But a few small acts of connection can build supportive, meaningful relationships.

We can do simple things like reaching out and checking on one another. There is power in a simple check-in with a friend to let them know you're thinking about them.

Even though no official guidelines exist, below are some suggestions for what you can do to improve social connections.

Making social connections

Establish and nurture different types of connections with people

- Make time in your routine to contact others who care about you.
- Reach out to different people to create a broad network of support.
- Join a group with shared interests to create a sense of belonging.



Joining a group activity can help with social connections.

Give and take

- Reach out for help, even when it's hard to ask for it.
- Provide support to others in need of help.
- Find ways to be responsive and grateful to others. [Gratitude Works!](#)

Strengthen the quality of social connections

- Focus on building high-quality, strong, meaningful social connections.
- Find ways to be responsive, supportive, and grateful to others.
- Take steps to address conflict or negative feelings when they arise.

Address barriers

- Take care of your health so you can readily connect socially and have fun.
- Don't let screen time distract you from connecting with people in person.
- Find ways to share the things you're already doing, such as exercising or cooking with others.

Seek help if feeling disconnected, lonely, or stressed

- Health issues, divorce, or the death of a loved one can be very challenging.
- Talk with a professional who can identify ways to help you.

Ideas for making social connections

- Spend more quality time with family and friends.
- Spend time with others in nature.
- Express gratitude to others.
- Volunteer with a group or organization.
- Get involved in your community.
- Get to know your neighbors.
- Join a community garden.

Things parents can do

Promote social connections for children or teens

- Model and encourage healthy social connections and relationships.
- Encourage healthy, diverse relationships with peers.
 - Create ways to help them meet people who are different from them.
- Help them develop safe and stable relationships with adults, such as:
 - Family members, friends, neighbors, and teachers.

- Talk with them about negative influences or stresses, such as:
 - Peer pressure.
 - Rejection or not belonging.
- Pay attention to warning signs, such as:
 - Changes in sleep patterns.
 - Changes in energy levels.
 - Withdrawing from friends and family.
- Talk to them about cyberbullying.

Reach out to your health care provider about any concerns or changes in your child's social behaviors or connections.

SOURCES

CONTENT SOURCE:

[National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion \(NCCDPHP\)](#)