



Thank you for joining us for today's webinar with Becky Preve from the Association on AgingNY & Erin Purcell from NYSOFA!

- Housekeeping Reminders:
 - **Audio Information:** Please use the webex tab to connect via Audio, each individual has a personalized pin number.
 - Please direct all questions to the chatbox and we will address them at the end of the webinar
 - All phones are muted at this time – please use the chatbox to communicate any issues or concerns

Social Isolation and Loneliness

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What is Social Isolation?

- Social isolation is a state of complete or near complete lack of contact between an individual and society
- Staying home for lengthy periods of time, limited communication with family, acquaintances or friends, and/or willfully avoiding any contact with other humans when those opportunities arise

What is loneliness?



Complex and usually unpleasant emotional response to isolation



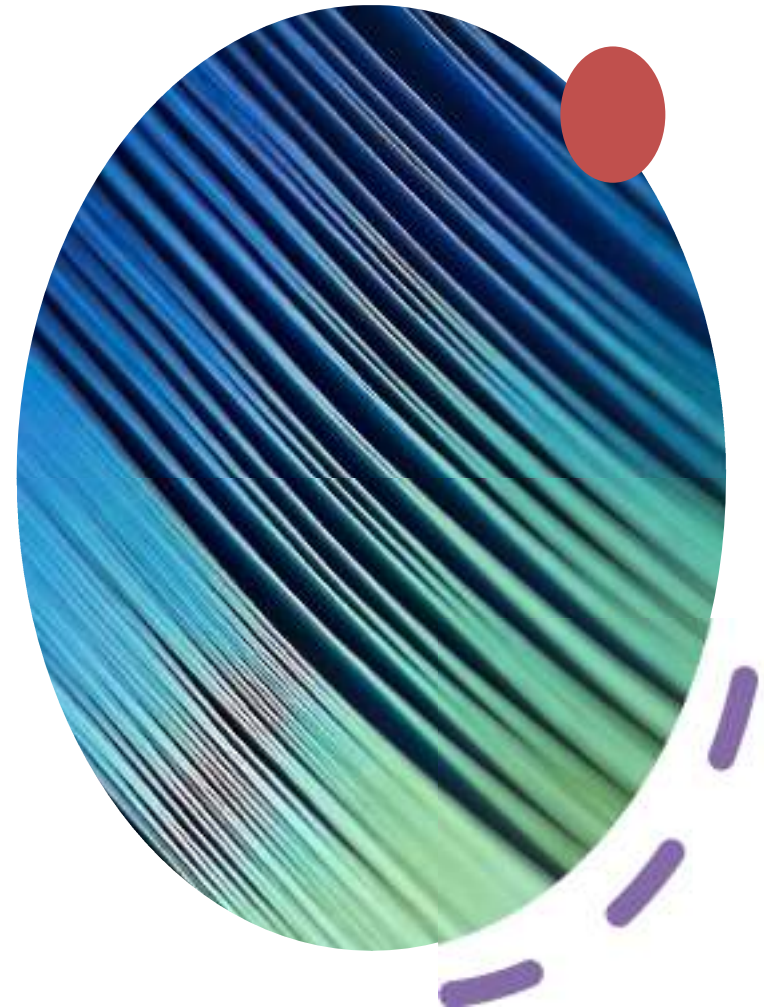
Includes anxious feelings regarding lack of connection or communication




Loneliness can be felt even when one is surrounded by other people



Causes are varied and include social, mental, emotional, and physical factors





Social Isolation and Loneliness in Aging

- As individuals age, the risk of isolation and loneliness increase
- Currently a major public health concern
- New York Times (2016)
 - 43% of individuals over the age of 60 reported feeling lonely
 - Social isolation linked to cognitive decline, increased stress, high blood pressure, and an inability to fight infection
 - social isolation is linked to declines in mobility, bathing, dressing, and other activities of daily living

Integration of Medical and Social Determinates of Health


- The US Department of Health and Human Services should establish and fund a nation resource center to centralize evidence, resources, training and best practices on social isolation and loneliness, including for those older adults and for diverse and at risk populations
- Health care providers, organizations, and systems should partner with social service providers, including those serving vulnerable communities in order to create effective team based care



Animatronic pet project

- Pilot project started via New York State Office for the Aging in 2018
 - Fully interactive dogs and cats that respond to touch
 - Animals include sensory stimulation via heartbeats and purring for hearing impaired individuals
 - 60 pets were adopted in community settings
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How was progress measured?



- Each client identified received a 6 question scale to measure social isolation and loneliness
- Scale was completed at 3 months, 6 months, and one year post adoption
- 70% reduction in feelings of loneliness and isolation after 1 year



[Robotic pets could be solution to social isolation, depression in older adults](#)

Why is this so important?



Data provides information to insurance plans on the impact of reducing social isolation and loneliness



Isolation and loneliness are public health epidemic, with huge health care costs



It is the right thing to do for our communities

Resources

- www.joyforall.com