

# Social Connection

## What is Social Connection?

Social Connection is a feeling of closeness or belonging, either to other individuals or to a group of people.

## Why is it important?

Connecting with others impacts our emotional well-being and mental health. From birth, we need others to care for us, protect us, teach us, and help us to form our social identity. For adults, social connections have a positive impact on physical, emotional and mental health.

In 2020, 70 percent of people who were screened with moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety or depression reported that one of the top three concerns contributing to their mental health condition was loneliness or isolation.

## Relationships improve overall well-being and sense of life satisfaction as they:

- provide companionship
- help you to feel socially acceptable
- make you happier
- make you feel better about your life and yourself
- provide emotional support
- help you to get through tough times
- provide tangible support such as lending and borrowing, a ride, help with moving, etc.
- provide opportunities for growth as you learn from advice and knowledge that others share

## How do you form social relationships?

Realize that it takes time and effort to form positive connections. Finding time out of a busy schedule to catch up with a friend or attend a social gathering at least once in a while will allow for opportunities for social connections. Although most people live very busy lives, it is important to seek out activities to participate in that align with your interests and hobbies. Things you can do to increase opportunities for social connections include:

- become active in your community, volunteer, join a club
- practice skills such as active listening and sharing information about yourself
- take time to nurture existing relationships
- have an open mind

In a time where we need to stay physically distant from others, and we are experiencing higher levels of isolation as a result,



social connections can act as protective factors that can lower overall stress. Now more than ever, we must remember to reach out to others both when we feel that we need help and support, and to offer help and support to others.

## Readings

- [Shape Your Happiness – The Importance of Social Connections and Why You Need it in Your Life](#)
- [15 Ways to Stay Socially Connected for Better Personal Well-being](#)
- [How To Mitigate Loneliness And Its Consequences](#)
- [We Need to Understand the Difference Between Isolation and Loneliness](#)

## ABOUT HOWARD CENTER

Howard Center has a long and rich history as a trusted provider in the community. With a legacy spanning more than 150 years, we have been providing progressive, compassionate, high-quality care and supports to those in need. Today, we offer an array of exemplary mental health, substance use, and developmental services across the lifespan. As Vermont's largest social service organization, our 1,600 staff help more than 16,000 people each year in over 60 locations throughout Vermont in collaboration with hundreds of community partners.

**For a full list of resources, see next page.**

With support from



**Access & Intake • 802-488-6000**

hcinfo@howardcenter.org

Mon.–Fri., 8am–6pm

**First Call for Chittenden County**

**802-488-7777**

24/7 Crisis Services



**HOWARD  
CENTER**  
Help is here.



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## Resources and Information

LOCAL	NATIONAL	ARTICLES & PUBLICATIONS
First Call For Chittenden County	National Council for Behavioral Health	Facts about Depression
National Suicide Helpline	Howard Center Programs	Wellness Tips
Vermont Care Partners	National Council for Behavioral Health	Suicide Prevention Guide
Partners for Access	SAMHSA National Helpline	Facts about Depression
Vermont 2-1-1	Refugee Health	Daily Routines and Family Life
NAMI	Mental Health Literacy	Coping with COVID-19
COVID Support VT	Child Mind Institute	Wellness Tips
Pathways Vermont	Refugee Mental Health	Tips for Parents of Teens
VT Helplink	National Institute of Mental Health	Keeping your home safe
Vermont Department of Mental Health	Mental Health America	Suddenly You Are Nobody: Vermont Refugees Tell Their Story
AALV	Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance	Column: Easing Stress
Society for Adolescent Mental Health and Medicine	LGBT National Help Center	
Vermont Suicide Prevention Center	LGBT National Youth Talkline	
Vermont Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health	Crisis Text Line	
Vermont Family Network	HELP Poster	
UMatter Vermont Youth Suicide Prevention		
Pride Center of Vermont		
Invest EAP		

Please visit our website at [www.howardcenter.org](http://www.howardcenter.org) for links to the above resources.

