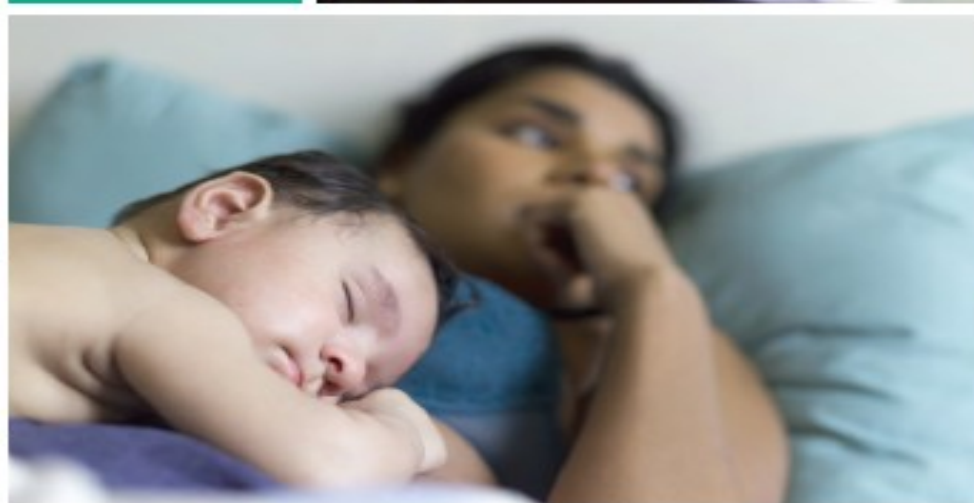
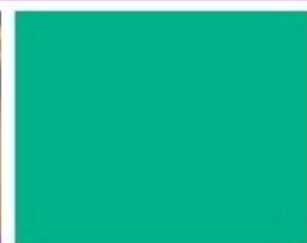


Social Isolation

and Loneliness



**Just
BE**
CROYDON



Annual
report of the
director of
public health
2016



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Who is at risk?

Risk factors for loneliness and social isolation can be categorised into four distinct areas:

Personal factors



Sexuality




Ethnicity




Age


Health, wellbeing and disability



Cognitive or sensory
Impairment




Substance misuse
problems




Physical or mental
impairment or
disability


Life changes




New, young or lone
parenthood




Becoming a carer
(both young and old)



Retirement



Unemployment



Separation/
Bereavement

Wider or social determinants of health



Domestic abuse
and violence



Long term
unemployed



Recent
migration



Poverty and
deprivation



Homelessness



Stigma and
discrimination

Together Taking Responsibility...

General Tips:

- **Maintain frequent contact.** If someone you know has hit a milestone birthday, lost a spouse or other important person, or is ill or immobile, they need more contact so make a note to call or visit often
- Socially isolated older people may be vulnerable to a variety of unexpected problems and may have underlying issues such as dementia. **Loved ones should consider informing trusted neighbours that there is a vulnerable adult in the neighbourhood so they can keep a friendly eye out and check in on them regularly**
- If you know **a carer, or a loved one in your family shoulders the burden of caring for an elderly family member, take whatever steps you can to make that person's life easier** and to allow enable them to have a social life of their own
- **Everyone has a role to play in making an effort to recognise and understand caring, ageing and disability better** so they can recognise and support people in their communities who might need it



Together Taking Responsibility...

Tips for Carers:

- If you are a carer, **remember to take care of yourself**. It is not just the person you are caring for who is at risk of social isolation, it is you
- **Try asking for a small amount of help from family or friends** – help with shopping or sitting with the person you look after for a short time to allow you to pop out. Telling them what a difference it has made might result in them offering to help out again
- **Focusing on the positives in your situation can help you feel that you have a deeper relationship and understanding of the person you care for**, and appreciate that they may feel this way about you too
- **It is important to be realistic about what you can do**. Having a clear idea about what you can do, and accepting parts the things that you cannot change or do alone, helps to reduce stress and can make you feel more able to cope



Together Taking Responsibility...

Tips for Children and Young People:

- **Find something you like doing and do more of it.** Sometimes it's hard to find the motivation, especially if you don't feel confident or you worry about what other people think. Making small goals can help you to feel more positive about yourself. You don't have to be perfect at it to enjoy yourself
- **Be careful when comparing yourself to others and remember that things are not always what they seem from the outside.** Social media, and the fact that we very often only see what other people want to share about their lives, can make you feel like you are the only one feeling lonely
- **Focus on your positives.** You may think that you are not good at something and this may stop you from doing things you enjoy or trying new things.
- **Try to celebrate your successes** – no matter how small they may seem to you.
- **Accept compliments** - keep a note of them and look at them when you feel low.



Together Taking Responsibility...

Tips for Older Adults:

- **Share a meal with others whenever possible**
- **Have your hearing checked and hearing problems treated as needed.** Undiagnosed or untreated hearing problems may lead to avoidance of social situations because of difficulty communicating or embarrassment.
- **Have regular eye checks** so that you can read generally and captions more easily
- **Try and get out as much as possible** - go shopping/window shopping, on bus rides, swimming, for walks in the park and to museums whenever you can
- **Be open to learning how to use technology to maintain connections.** A computer with a camera is a bridge to anyone in the family
- **Consider taking up a hobby** like tending a garden or caring for an older animal



Final Thoughts...

There is so much we can all do as individuals and as a community to address loneliness and social isolation, it's not always grand gestures that are required; a smile, a meal shared, asking or offering help can make a real difference.

So it's over to us ...

