



Education Sector: Recommendations to Advance Social Connection



Coalition to End
Social Isolation
& Loneliness

We envision a society where every individual will one day have the opportunities and supports necessary to be socially engaged.

The Challenge

Social isolation and loneliness take a toll on individuals, leading to poorer health outcomes, higher rates of mortality, and higher healthcare costs. Social connection, or lack of social connection, is a social determinant of health that influences physical, mental, and emotional health outcomes. A lack of social connection has been compared to the health impact of smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Our Recommendations

The Coalition believes that developing young adults' social skills and the quality of their social connections deserve increased attention given the opportunities for social interaction, and experiences in educational settings. Additionally, expanded access to high-quality higher education and vocational opportunities will provide young adults with the skills and experience they need to enter and establish careers in high-demand job fields.



To address social isolation and loneliness and to encourage social connection in the education sector, policymakers should:

1. Amend [45 CFR 261.2](#) to remove the 12-month time limit and participation cap on vocational educational training, to allow young adults to participate in community college and university education programs as a part of their Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefit work requirement.



2. Increase the amount of federal grants available to students pursuing a career in the behavioral health workforce to use towards tuition and related expenses.



3. Direct the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) to provide recommendations to public schools and institutes of higher education on how to incorporate evidence-based and developmentally appropriate instructional practices that can promote positive, supportive teacher-student and peer relations (e.g., cooperative or peer learning).



4. Continue current DOE funding that offers opportunities for research on preventative interventions for school-aged kids, such as the effects of social and emotional learning.



Join us in advocating for solutions that encourage greater social connection. Read our full 2023-2024 Policy Priorities [here](#).

About Us

The Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness, founded in 2018, advocates for policy change that combats the adverse effects of social isolation and loneliness. The Coalition represents some of the most influential consumer groups, patient advocates, health plans, community-based organizations, behavioral health groups, and private sector innovators in the United States. Visit our website at www.endsocialisolation.org