

LONELINESS IN YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

SNAPSHOT

KEY FINDINGS 2025



WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

18 - 25 YEAR OLDS

are more likely to be persistently lonely compared with 15-17 year olds

HEALTH STATUS

Young people experiencing poor mental health are 3x more likely to be persistently lonely

Young people experiencing poor physical health are 2x more likely to be persistently lonely

UNEMPLOYED YOUNG PEOPLE

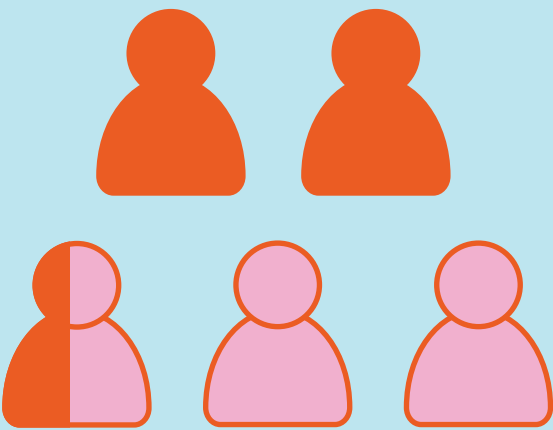
Unemployed young people and students not working experience higher levels of loneliness

FINANCIAL STRAIN

Financially insecure young people are 2x more likely to be persistently lonely

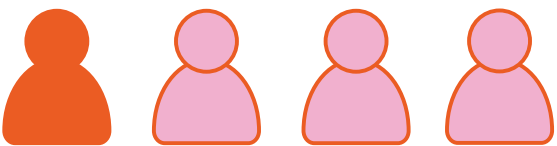
WHAT MAKES LONELINESS WORSE?

- Infrequent time with friends/family
- Low satisfaction with parent relationships
- Low community participation (sporting, hobby, or other community-based clubs)
- Low neighborhood trust and cohesion
- Smoking (daily use linked to episodic loneliness)
- Lack of physical activity
- Major life events (e.g. parenthood, grief, job loss)

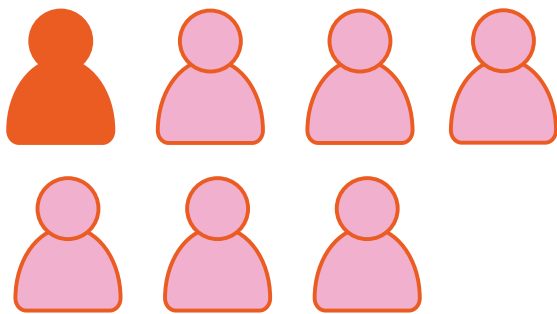


More than **2 in 5** young
Australians feel lonely

That's **43%** of
young people



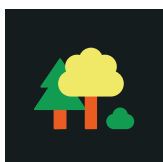
1 in 4 experience episodic loneliness



1 in 7 experience persistent
loneliness lasting at least two years

Young people who are
persistently lonely are **7x**
more likely to experience
psychological distress.

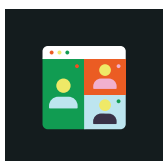
WHAT HELPS YOUNG PEOPLE CONNECT?



Accessible and inclusive community spaces



Free or low-cost connection opportunities



A mix of online and face-to-face connection



Support during life transitions

The solution isn't as simple as 'putting yourself out there' or placing the onus on young people. It's a collective effort where we can all take steps to create moments and build on those - across home, work, education and community settings.



Belonging matters - and so does being able to be yourself

"I experienced [loneliness] a lot when I was a teenager growing up being like I'm neurodivergent and queer and that's very different to like a lot of my peers. Even though I had a lot of people around I still felt like I couldn't really relate to a lot of people or connect with people on like a deep, genuine level."

IN THEIR WORDS

How young people explain loneliness and social

Loneliness is emotional disconnection, not just physical isolation

"Sometimes I feel most lonely when I'm surrounded by people."

School cliques, life transitions, cost of living and online bullying can deepen the experience

"All the cafes will close at 2 and by the time everyone gets out of their jobs, you're having to go to a restaurant and [you're] spending 50 dollars. Like all the sort of basics are much more expensive."

"I think because it's so easy to just directly message someone, a lot of maybe mean stuff or like bullying and stuff happens over the Internet."

"I dropped out of high school and I'm currently not going to TAFE. I would say that that's a bit challenging since I don't have a set place to go to and talk to people. Schools are a very social environment and not having that takes away a really big [part of your life]."