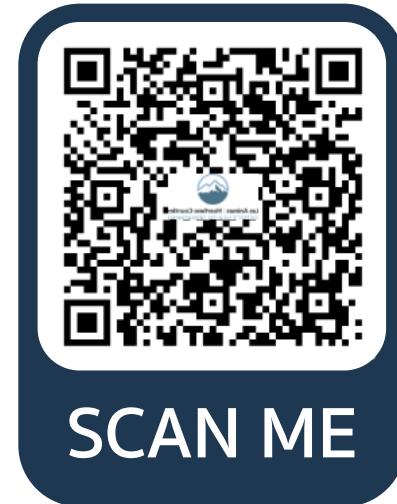


# Change the Narrative: A Community Campaign

The “Change the Narrative” campaign, led by the University of Colorado College of Nursing, the Las Animas-Huerfano District Health Department, and community partners, aims to raise awareness of shared experiences with substance use and mental health.

By addressing barriers to local resources, the campaign empowers and educates individuals to foster positive change in Las Animas and Huerfano counties.



Las Animas | Huerfano Counties  
DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT



College of Nursing  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



## Community & Connection: Why It Matters

CONNECTION AND KEEPING  
OUR MINDS AND BODIES  
HEALTHY



Learn more about Change the Narrative and related resources



## Community as a Protective Factor

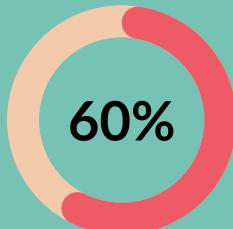
Social connection can help people live longer, healthier lives.

How?

- By protecting against chronic disease and serious illness

Health benefits:

- Enhanced ability to manage stress, anxiety, and depression
- Better healthy habits (i.e., eating and exercising)
- Improved quality of sleep



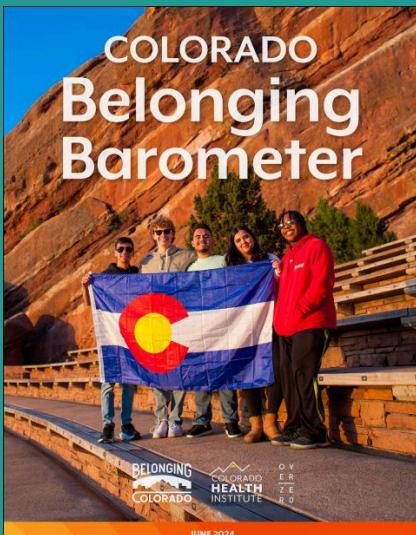
60%

60% of Americans are feeling lonely – **older adults** and **young adults** experience the highest levels

## Defining “Social Connection”

Everyone from your closest friends and family; to the people you surround yourself in the places you live, work, and recreate – all of these individuals contribute to your sense of *social connectedness*.

- Social connection: the number and variety of a person's community, the roles these relationships play, and the positive/negative impact they can have.



## US Statistics: Loneliness

Loneliness vs. Isolation

- Loneliness is the personal, distressing feeling of lacking meaningful social connections, leading to feelings of isolation and disconnectedness
- Individuals with disabilities are **1.5-1.9 times more likely** to experience loneliness than people without disability
- Loneliness leads to a **26% increased risk** of early death

## Belonging Colorado – the Denver Foundation bringing CO residents together

Coloradans connect with each other naturally in their neighborhoods, workplaces, and children's schools. These are important environments for supporting social connection and belonging.

Colorado survey responses show that parks, libraries, and places of worship are the most common places that inspire a sense of belonging.