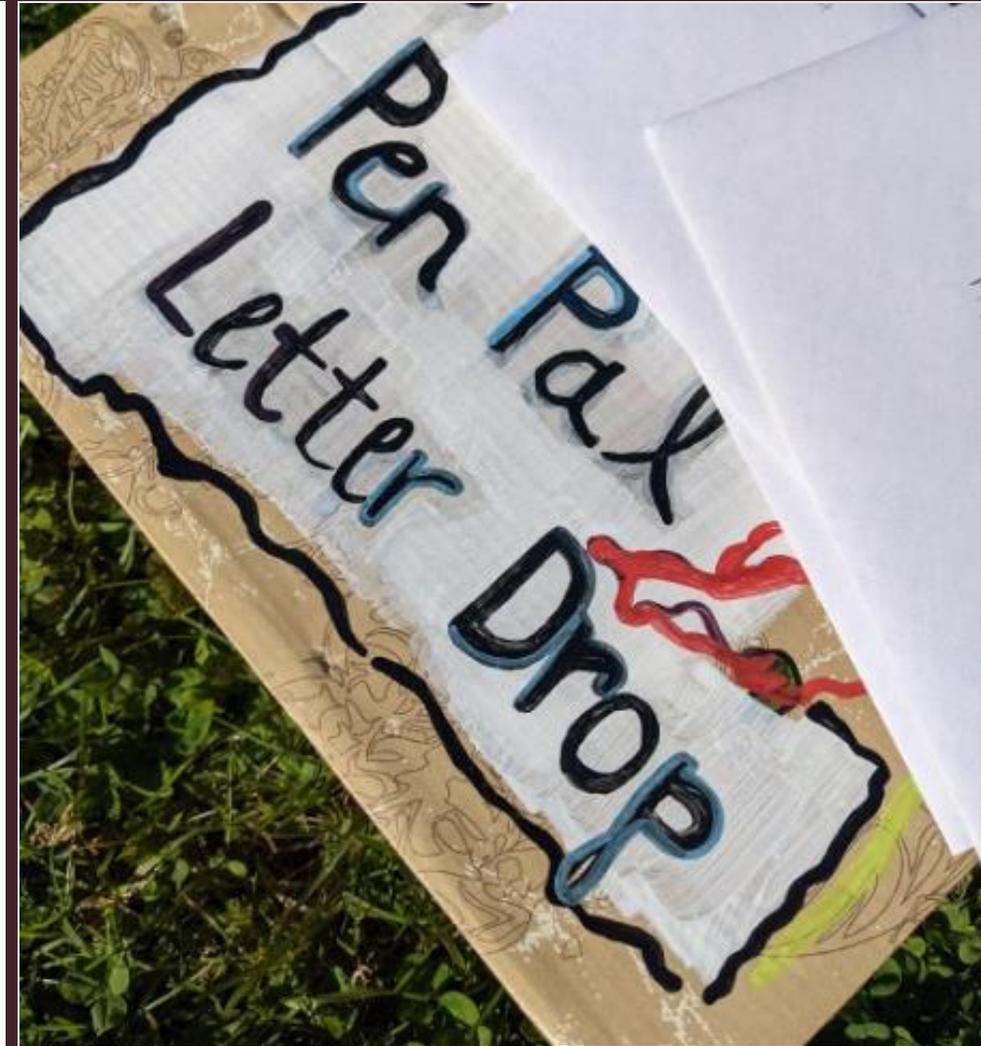


IMPROVING SOCIAL- EMOTIONAL HEALTH AMONG THE SENIORS OF BRIGHTON CENTER IN A REMOTE MANNER

The Brighton Center and UC-COM LC #1





Northern Kentucky

-since start of COVID there has been an increased need for food and financial support as well as increased missed health care appointments in the community

-however, the surrounding community has been great in providing monetary, food, and hygiene donations

-the community, and more specifically the older community, in Northern Kentucky find the Brighton Center to be an "unparalleled social hub"

-one member of the community commented that the Brighton Center has 'played a large role in keeping them connected to the local community'

-however with the recent pandemic, the Brighton Center has limited socialization greatly



BRIGHTON CENTER
A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT



The Brighton Center

- serves NKY and greater Cincinnati area
- impacted 46,445 lives last year through 41 programs
- wide range of programs
- 207 units for Seniors (Austinburg, Saratoga Place, and Two Rivers Apartments)
- Club Care Program
- meeting physical support needs but wanted assistance with assessing social support needs

Service Learning Objectives

Service: increase social support among the elderly population at the Brighton Center

Learning: gain a better understanding of how to increase social support in a pandemic in both remote and non-digital ways as well as understand what social support the elderly population at the Brighton Center lacked



Determinant of Health

Determinant of health: social support

-Social support positively influences health outcomes through behavioral and psychological pathways

-Social isolation is detrimental to health and increases mortality

-Seniors are at the highest risk for the effects of isolation and lack of social support

-The Brighton Center's senior housing is constantly looking for ways to improve the social environment for its residents and build social support

-COVID-19 greatly impacted these efforts

Best Practices

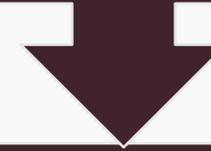
-prior to developing and planning the project we were going to implement, we wanted to make sure that we engaged the senior residents so that they had the opportunity to share their needs and concerns

-we also kept constant communication with our contact at the Brighton Center and the staff at each of the senior housing locations because we wanted their input as well

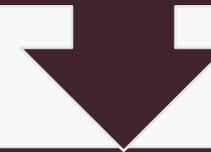
-we performed a review of literature on surveying social support and utilized this and our interviews of community members and staff to create a survey that could be implemented in a safe and effective manner

Project Design and Outcomes

-our service objective was to improve social support for the elderly Brighton Center clients



-initial surveys to assess need and what social support the clients wanted/would like to see implemented



-based on the feedback we were able to suggest the continuation of Bingo that the Brighton Center had begun to implement and created a Pen Pal program to supplement social support

University of Cincinnati College of Medicine Brighton Center Survey

We are a group of medical students from the University of Cincinnati collaborating with Brighton Center to develop a project to improve mental health and loneliness during times of social distancing. We are seeking your input and/or opinion on potential project ideas that will best improve mental health in the community. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, we really appreciate it! If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Nora Bell (medical student) belln4@mail.uc.edu or Cheyenne (Brighton Center) cwinter@brightoncenter.com or 859-491-8303x2321. All responses will be kept confidential.

Put an X in the appropriate column for each statement

In what way has COVID-19 impacted the following:	Decreased	Somewhat Decreased	Somewhat Increased	Increased
Fear regarding my own safety				
Fear for the safety of my friends and family.				
Feelings of loneliness.				
Feelings of isolation.				
Access to emotional support.				
Ability to run errands.				
Ability to access health care.				
Access to positive social interaction.				

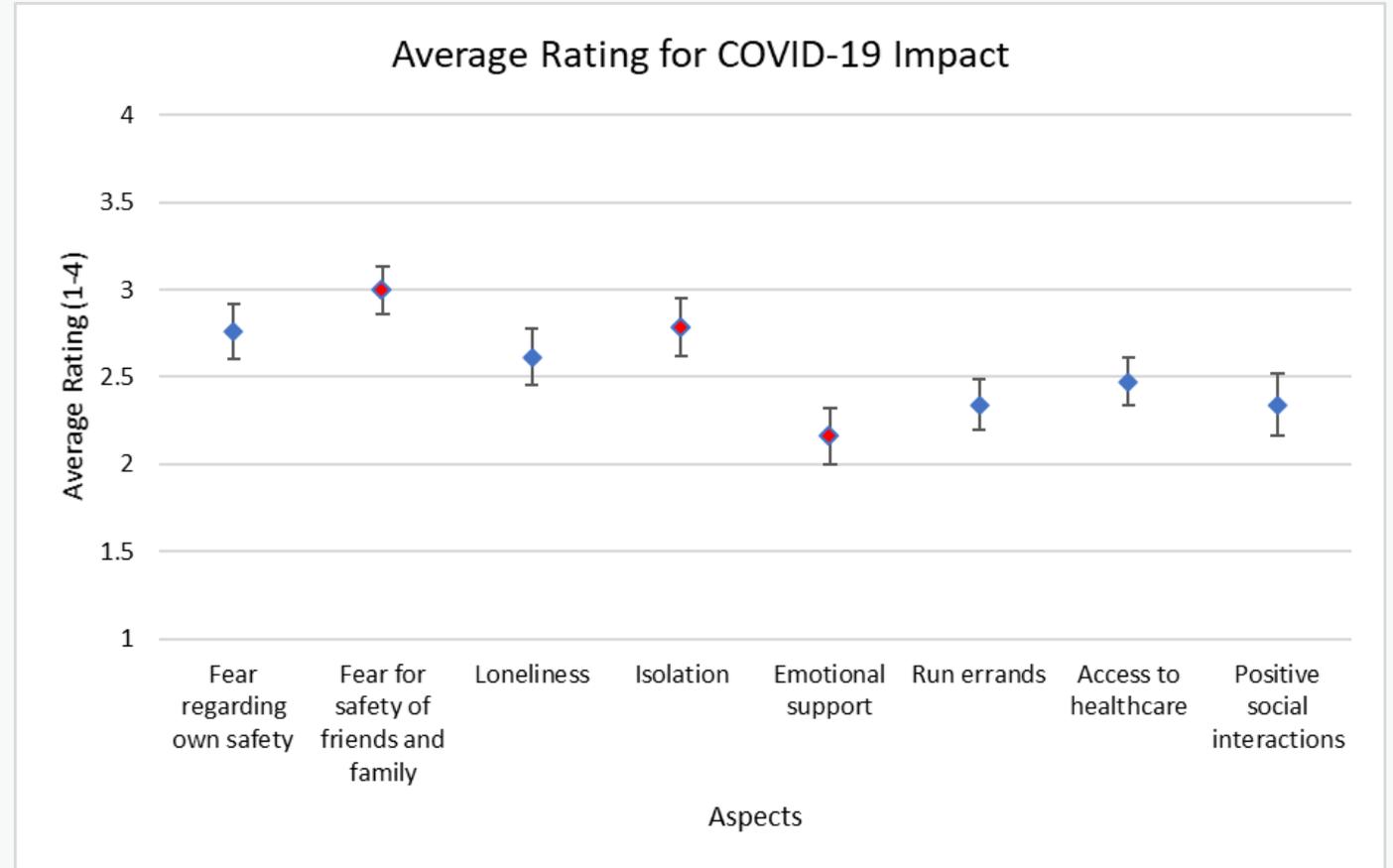
I feel like I have...	Never	Rarely	Often	Always
Someone to count on to listen to me when I need to talk about something (personal problems or just to chat).				
Someone to give me information to help me understand a situation and/or advice.				
Someone who understands my problems/someone whose advice I really want.				
Loved ones who emotionally support me.				

I can complete or have someone to help with...	Myself	Someone else	Don't Have	N/A
Going to doctor or other health appointments.				
Completing household chores when I am sick.				
Preparing meals on a regular basis.				
Accessing healthy food of my choice.				

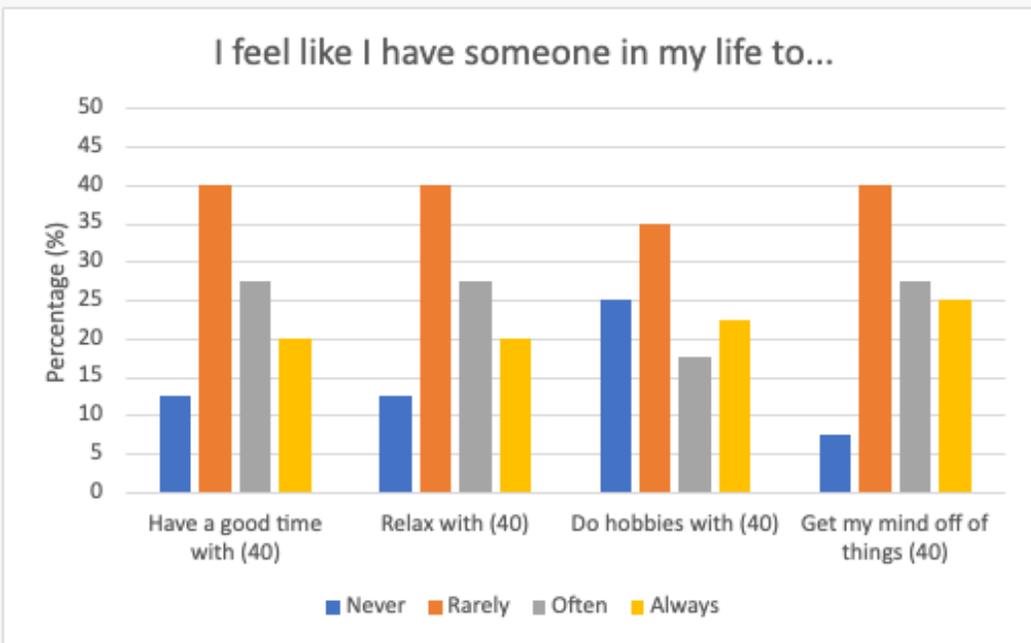
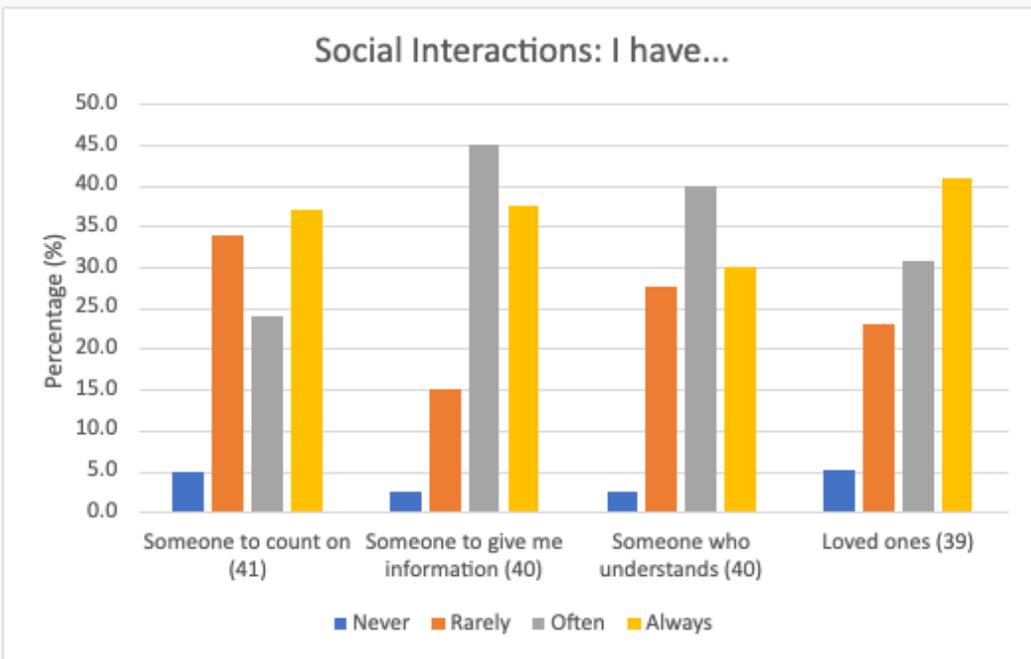
I feel like I have someone in my life to...	Never	Rarely	Often	Always
Have a good time with.				
Get together with for relaxation.				
Do something enjoyable/hobbies with.				
Do things with to help to get my mind off things.				

Survey

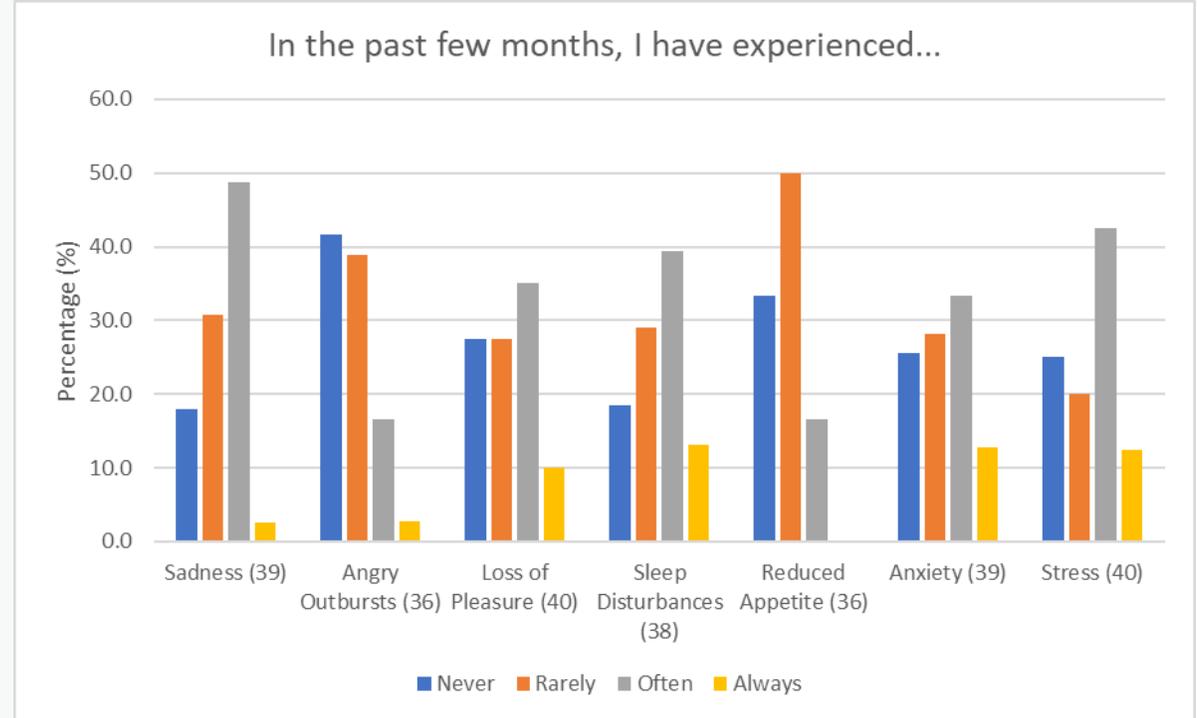
Impact of COVID-19



Social Support

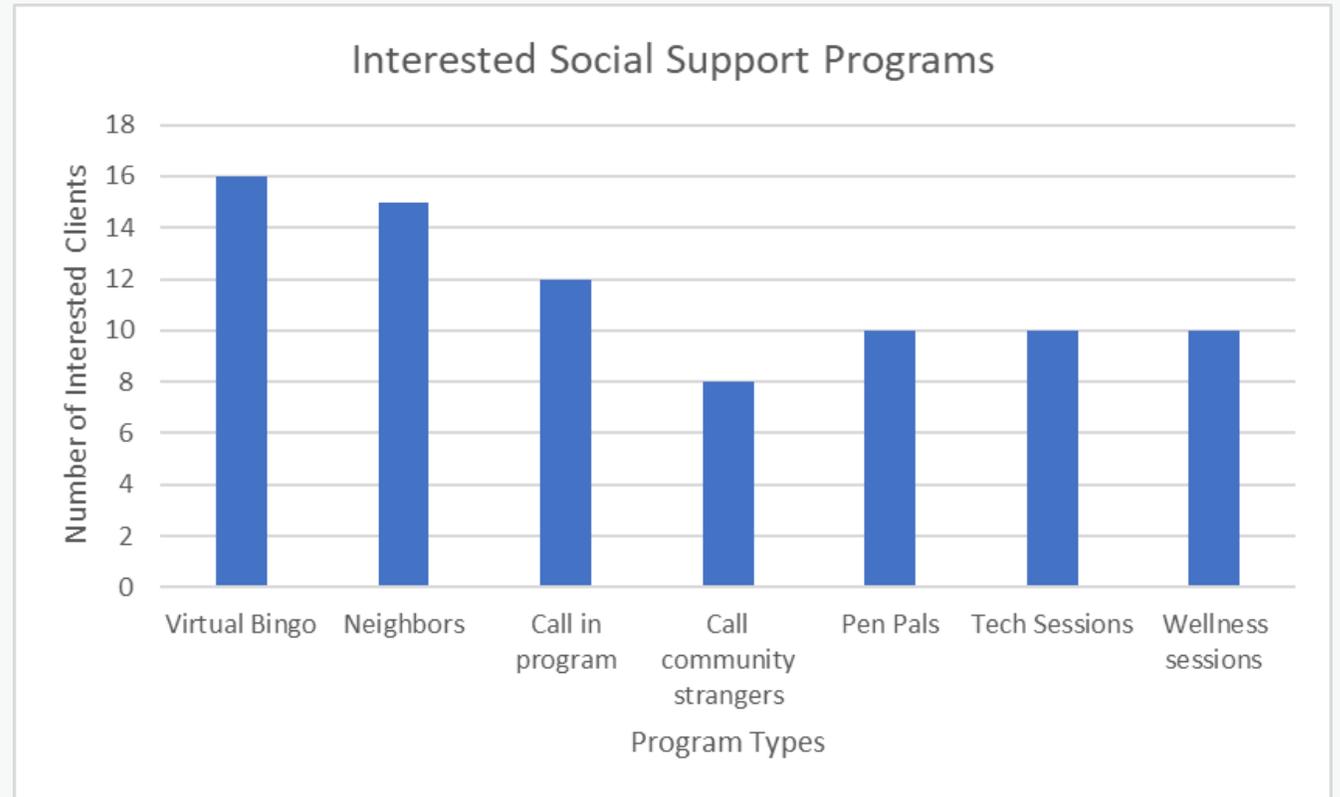


Depression Risk Factors



Number of depression risk factors	Percent (%)
1 or less	39.0
2 or less	48.8
2 or more	61.0
3 or more	51.2

Interested Social Support Programs



**"...It seems like something so small and simple but is a great step in building social capital. This can become a volunteer opportunity that we open to the community and can expand throughout the community."
- Madison Smith, Brighton Center**

Feedback

**"It [the pen pal program] gives me something to look forward to, and it keeps me connected. Plus, it's always nice to have someone checking in on you."
- Ron C., 88, Pen Pal**

Community Partner Feedback:

- Brighton Center's Family Support Coordinator Madison Smith is very excited for the program moving forward.
- Senior support staff are also very eager for the program to continue and grow to support the wellbeing of the seniors
- The survey results provided useful data on the residents' mental and emotional health throughout the pandemic to the Brighton Center
- This data can be useful in addressing other needs of the senior residents by the staff going forward

Community Member Feedback:

- The senior residents appreciated the surveys as a way to give feedback to the Brighton Center
- The seniors also enjoyed the pen pal program and noted that it helped them feel connected.

Our Reflection

Learned about the unique needs of the elderly population in Northern Kentucky

Understood common concerns of elderly populations overall

Learned to effectively communicate with elderly people, specifically in a written format

Learned about the value of social connection

We came in wanting to "solve" the problem but what was truly necessary was providing a safe space for connection

Rewarding experience that we hope to foster long term to build social capital and improve health overall

Next Steps

Barriers:

- Communicating quickly with the Brighton Center staff
-> gaps in communication
- Finding a way to distribute and collect surveys with in-person restrictions and without technology
- The barriers led us to work together more strongly and think creatively to solve these roadblocks

Next Steps:

- Continue to run and participate in the pen pal program
- Further develop our interaction with our pen pals by having in-person social events when it is safe to do so
- Expand the program to more of the senior residents and more of the community (such as through a UCCOM club or in the Brighton Center database)
- Communicate our survey results to the Brighton Center staff to guide future programming
- Give our survey template to the Brighton Center so they can continue to monitor these important factors

Acknowledgements

LC 1 would like to thank **the Brighton Center** for partnering and working with us on this important project. We would like to specifically thank **Madison Smith** who has been our main liaison and has always answered our questions and worked with us to make this project a success. We would also like to thank **Lynne Leinart, Cheyenne Winter, Katie Luning, Ronnie Brewer, and Candy Scott** for letting us interview them and contact some of them for additional questions. Finally, we would like to thank **Dr. Kiesler and the whole P&S team** for giving us this opportunity and helping us learn and grow through this valuable experience.

References & Works Cited

Berkman LF, Glass T. Social integration, social networks, social support and health. In: Berkman LF, Kawachi I, editors. *Social Epidemiology*. New York: Oxford University Press; 2000.

Knox SS, Adelman A, Ellison CR, Arnett DK, Siegmund KD, Weidner G, et al. Hostility, social support, and carotid artery atherosclerosis in the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Family Heart Study. *Am J Cardiol*. 2000;86:1086-89.

Nicholson NR. A review of social isolation: an important but underassessed condition in older adults. *J Prim Prev*. 2012;6;33(2-3):137-52. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22766606/>.

Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (n.d.). *Social Cohesion*. Healthy People 2020. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-health/interventions-resources/social-cohesion#:~:text=High%20levels%20of%20social%20support,through%20behavioral%20and%20psychological%20pathways.&text=For%20example%2C%20social%20support%20may,23%20and%20reduce%20emotional%20stress.>

Ozbay F, Johnson DC, Dimoulas E, Morgan CA, Charney D, Southwick S. Social support and resilience to stress: from neurobiology to clinical practice. *Psychiatry (Edgmont)*. 2007;4(5):35-40. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2921311/>

RAND Corporation. Social Support Survey Instrument. Accessed April 25, 2021. https://www.rand.org/health-care/surveys_tools/mos/social-support/survey-instrument.html

Images:

The Brighton Center

<https://www.lanereport.com/110415/2019/02/northern-kentucky-market-review-2019-high-rankings-big-results/>

Questions?
