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Contact: Shannon Vyvihal
Foundation for Social Connection
shannon@social-connection.org

Experts Sound the Alarm: National Coordination and Scientific Leadership Crucial to Address America’s Social Disconnection Crisis

New Call to Action Urges Cross-Sector Collaboration to Strengthen Social Connection Across the U.S.

Washington, D.C. [May 5, 2025] – This week, the Foundation for Social Connection’s interdisciplinary [Scientific Leadership Council](#), comprised of the nation’s leading experts on social connection, issued an urgent [call to action](#) in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* outlining the critical need for national coordination and cross-sector collaboration to confront the country’s escalating crisis of social isolation and loneliness.

Mounting evidence underscores the importance of advancing social connection for our individual and collective well-being. Research has linked social isolation and loneliness to serious health risks, including [heart disease](#), [depression](#), [substance abuse](#), and even [premature death](#). Additionally, the devastating impacts extend to our economy, public safety, resilience, and civic engagement – with consequences such as [reduced workforce productivity](#), [poorer disaster and crisis recovery](#), and [distrust of institutions](#). Fortunately, seminal work like the 2020 National Academy of Science and Medicine [Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults Consensus Report](#) and the Surgeon General’s [2023 Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community](#) catalyzed greater awareness and interest in promoting social connection. However, this enthusiasm has often outpaced coordination and evaluation, leading to fragmented efforts that may be misguided – or even unintentionally harmful.

“At a time marked by shifting national priorities and growing skepticism toward science, elevating both social connection and scientific integrity is more important than ever,” said Jillian Racoosin Kornmeier, Executive Director of the Foundation for Social Connection. **“When we work in silos, we miss critical opportunities to share knowledge, align efforts, and earn public trust. To effectively and efficiently address trends of disconnection, we must come together across sectors to advance evidence-based, scalable solutions that strengthen the fabric of our society.”**

The Need for Scientific Leadership and Collaboration to Enhance Social Connection: A Call to Action identifies the following priorities to guide future investment and collaboration:

1. Leverage Scientific Evidence to Drive Solutions
Prioritize evidence-based approaches that address the root causes of social disconnection and promote meaningful relationships.
2. Establish an Interdisciplinary Collaborative for Evidence-Based Leadership
Form a national leadership body comprising experts from academia, healthcare, industry, philanthropy, and government to ensure scientific findings are translated into scalable and effective strategies.
3. Bridge the Gap Between Research and Practice
Improve infrastructure and coordination to ensure that proven strategies are tailored to and sustainably implemented in communities across the country.

In alignment with the Healthy People 2030 framework, the paper also proposes setting measurable national goals to track progress and drive systemic change in social connection efforts. These goals are adapted from the broader Healthy People plan of action and reoriented to prioritize social connection as a core determinant of health and well-being. They include providing accessible, timely data; supporting scalable, evidence-based interventions; and offering tools to monitor progress, especially for communities most at risk for disconnection.

“Social connectedness is not just a research goal but the key to lasting societal change,” said Dr. Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Scientific Leadership Council Chair and Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Brigham Young University. **“We can no longer afford to work in silos. Leaders across academia, industry, government, and philanthropy must step forward to champion collaborative, cross-sector solutions that prioritize social connection as a national imperative.”**

“The time to act is now. Sound research and collaboration can systemically address the culture of social disconnection and build a stronger, healthier future for all,” added Dr. Carla Perissinotto, Scientific Leadership Council Vice Chair and Professor of Medicine at University of California, San Francisco.

The full position paper, including its 37 recommended strategies and activities, is available [here](#). Stay connected to the growing movement to advance social connection by subscribing to [our weekly newsletter](#) – where we feature the latest evidence, strategies, and actionable resources to bridge research and practice and drive meaningful change. For more information about the Foundation’s work or to connect with our team, contact Shannon Vyvjal at shannon@social-connection.org.

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The [Foundation for Social Connection](#) (F4SC) was founded in 2020 with the vision of a vibrant society where social connection is at the heart of how we live. As the leading US organization

focused on addressing our crisis of disconnection, our mission is to advance social connection nation-wide rooted in evidence for our collective well-being. Together with our [Scientific Leadership Council](#), [Action Network](#), and partners, we translate research into practice, create long-lasting partnerships and convening opportunities for field builders, and prioritize social connection as a national value powered by lived experiences.