



 Foundation for
Social Connection

The Arts, Culture, and Leisure Sectors: Key Terms, Definitions, and Acronyms

SOCIAL Framework Companion Resource

Spring 2026

SOCIAL Framework & Arts, Culture, and Leisure

Key Terms, Definitions, and Acronyms

Social Connection Terms

Belonging	A fundamental human need – the feeling of deep connection with social groups, physical places, and individual and collective experiences.
HiAP	An acronym referring to <u>Health in All Policies</u> .
Loneliness	A subjective unpleasant or distressing feeling of isolation. A perceived discrepancy between one’s actual and desired level of social connection.
SIL	An acronym referring to both Social Isolation and Loneliness.
SILC	An acronym referring to Social Isolation, Loneliness, and Connection.
Social Capital	The resources to which individuals and groups have access through their social connections – often used as an umbrella for both social support and social cohesion.
Social Cohesion	The sense of solidarity within groups, marked by strong social connections and high levels of social participation, that generates trust, norms of reciprocity, and a sense of belonging.
Social Connection	The (i) structure, (ii) function, and (iii) quality of relationships with others. Social connection includes not only the size and diversity of one’s social network and roles, but the functions these relationships serve, and their positive or negative qualities.
Social Connectedness	The degree to which an individual or population falls on the continuum of social connection.
SOCIAL Framework	An acronym referring to Systems Of Cross-sector Integration and Action across the Lifespan.
Social Isolation	Having objectively few social relationships, social roles, group memberships, and infrequent social interaction.
Social Support	The perceived or actual availability of informational, tangible, and emotional resources from others, commonly one’s social network.
Socio-Ecological Model	A framework used in public health to understand the individual behavior as influenced by multiple levels of interaction, including individual, interpersonal, institutional/organizational, community, and societal factors.

[Learn more of the language of social connection in the Action Guide for Socially Connected Communities](#)

SOCIAL Framework & Arts, Culture, and Leisure

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Arts, Culture, and Leisure Terms

Arts	Expression and shared connection through creative engagement, meaning-making, and participation
Culture	Shared meaning, identity, and ways of relating shaped by beliefs, traditions, and everyday practices
Leisure	Freely chosen experiences that foster restoration, joy, and opportunities for connection
Applied Arts	Hands-on creative practices that apply design and artistic expression to functional, everyday uses such as cooking, crafting, or building
Arts Education	Learning experiences across formal and informal settings that support creative expression, skill-building, and understanding of the arts
Collective Impact	A collaborative strategy designed to address complex issues by bringing together diverse stakeholders through a structured approach to seek change
Community Listening Session	A strategy in the Action Guide for Building Socially Connected Communities for a collaborative discussion involving residents, changemakers, and leaders to gain a deeper understanding of community strengths and challenges, amplify historically underrepresented voices, focus on socially connected initiatives with community input, brainstorm local solutions, and foster a network of changemakers committed to enhancing social connections
Creative Arts Therapies (CATs)	Evidence-based therapeutic approaches (e.g., art, music, drama, dance/movement therapy) delivered by trained professionals to support emotional, psychological, and social well-being
Creative Expression	The process of using creative practices to communicate and apply meaning to thoughts, feelings, and experiences
Creative Placemaking	A collaborative approach that uses arts and culture to shape and activate public spaces in ways that reflect community identity and support connection
Cultural Expression	The diverse ways people communicate and celebrate identity, values, history, and experiences through art, language, and shared practices such as traditional music, dance, and food
Experiential Learning	Personalized guidance to individuals who are at nutritional risk because of their health or nutritional history, dietary intake, chronic illness, or medication use (ACL).

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Arts, Culture, and Leisure Terms

Hubs, Havens, Hangouts	A social infrastructure framework, developed by Gehl, that categorizes types of community spaces that support social life: hubs as spaces to connect across differences, havens as spaces of comfort and belonging, often around shared identity, and hangouts for informal gathering
Literary Arts	Creative expression through written and spoken language, such as poetry, storytelling, and other forms of writing
Multisolving	An approach to addressing multiple issues or achieving various objectives at once with a single solution
Participatory Arts	Art experiences that actively involve people in creating, performing, or contributing, rather than only observing
Performing Arts	Art forms that are performed in front of an audience, such as music, dance, or theater
Recreation	Organized or informal activities such as sports, games, or outdoor activities that support enjoyment, health, and social interaction
Social Infrastructure	The crucial organizations, spaces, and groups that facilitate social connection and enable communities to form and sustain relationships that help them thrive
Social Prescribing	A method for supporting patients' social needs through community-based interventions and tailored social connections
Stakeholder	Individual or group of individuals with an interest in any decision or activity of an organization or topic area
Third Places	Social spaces separate from an individual's typical social environments (e.g., the home and workplace)
Visual Arts	Creative expression through visual experience, such as painting, sculpture, photography, or design