Corporate Working Group on Social Connection

THE CASE FOR CORPORATE LEADERSHIP ON SOCIAL CONNECTION

Why Business Should Act

Loneliness and social isolation are not only public health issues — they are bottom-line business issues, with measurable impacts on productivity, innovation, employee health and well-being, and long-term economic performance. Proactively addressing these challenges can unlock substantial value through improved employee engagement, reduced turnover, stronger brand reputation, deeper customer relationships, and lower health care costs.

We Are in a National Crisis of Disconnection

- **1 in 2 U.S. adults** report feeling lonely on a regular basis (U.S. Surgeon General, 2023).
  - **Gen Z is the loneliest generation** (79%), followed by Millennials (71%)
- Social isolation increases the risk of premature death by **over 50%**, on par with smoking and obesity.
- The economic cost of disconnection is **$406 billion annually.**

Recent Headlines

"Loneliness poses health risks as deadly as smoking."
Surgeon General Advisory, 2023

"WHO Calls Loneliness A 'Pressing Health Threat' With Commission Launch"
Forbes Nov. 2023

"The Loneliness of the American Worker."
Wall Street Journal, May 2024

Why the Private Sector Working to Advance Social Connection is Smart Business

1. Productivity and Performance

Employee Well-Being Affects Output: Lonely and socially isolated employees are less engaged, take more sick days, are at greater risk of burnout, and have higher health care costs. Social isolation undermines collaboration, creativity, and trust — key elements for high-performance teams.

- Cigna estimates that loneliness costs U.S. employers **$154B/year in lost productivity** — roughly $4,200 per lonely employee.
- Lonely employees miss an **average of 6 more days of work** per year.
- Certain health plans found a correlation between social isolation or loneliness and increased emergency department (ED) usage.

ROI POTENTIAL

- For every 10,000 employees, Better Help estimates that fostering connection can yield **$52M in productivity gains.**
- Non-lonely employees are **36% more likely** to report performing efficiently or at their best.

2. Talent Attraction and Retention

Loneliness Drives Turnover.

- Lonely employees were **nearly twice as likely** to say they plan to quit within the next 12 months compared to their non-lonely counterparts.
- Replacing a salaried employee typically **costs 6–9 months** of their salary.

Workplace Culture is a Magnet: A culture that fosters inclusion, connection, and belonging appeals strongly to Gen Z and Millennials, who often prioritize psychological safety and purpose-driven workplaces.

ROI POTENTIAL

- Reduced turnover means significant cost savings, especially in highly-skilled or leadership roles. For every 10,000 employees, Better Help estimates that fostering connection can yield **$10M in turnover savings.**
- Gallup research found having a best friend at work is strongly linked to business profitability and retention.

3. Brand & Customer Loyalty and Reputation

Customers Expect More: Consumers increasingly expect brands to be socially responsible and to contribute to community well-being. Companies addressing loneliness and social isolation build emotional equity and brand loyalty. For service-based or community-oriented businesses (e.g., banks, retailers, healthcare providers), creating meaningful human connections leads to higher customer satisfaction and retention.

ROI POTENTIAL

- **36%** of consumers prefer buying from brands that prioritize social causes, diversity, and corporate social responsibility initiatives.
- Companies and products are now being ranked for their impact on health behaviors, including social engagement (2024 Building H Index).

OPPORTUNITY FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Corporate Working Group on Social Connection

Companies that act now can lead the way, not only mitigating risk and costs, but creating a competitive advantage in the form of happier teams, loyal customers, and new market opportunities.

F4SC's Corporate Working Group on Social Connection unites forward-thinking companies to advance social connection as a public health and business priority. Specifically, it enables companies to:

- Be part of a national movement for meaningful, measurable impact.
- Learn from top researchers and innovators.
- Benchmark with peers tackling the same challenges and share best practices.
- Access tools to measure and improve connection, internally and externally.

Contact us at **info@social-connection.org** to learn more about joining our Corporate Working Group and advancing social connection together.

CURRENT MEMBERS

Cigna, NIVEA, NFL, SIGNET JEWELERS, workday., Match Group, Spotify, macy's