

# Clackamas County Writes to Older Adults

Community connections through physical distancing



## Toolkit for Community Partners

Isolation negatively impacts the mental health and wellness of older adults and many others in our community. You can help! Invite your community, especially students and young people, to write letters and create artwork and mail to a participating organization who will distribute to isolated older adults.

## Getting Started Instructions

*For Aging Service Providers and Care Communities*

1. Read through guidelines for providers pages 2-5
2. Register your organization with [OABHI@clackamas.us](mailto:OABHI@clackamas.us)
3. Get ready to receive those letters!

*For Individuals, families and other letter writers*

1. Read through instructions on pages 6-8
2. Print "Clackamas County Writes" templates on pages 9-14
3. Begin writing and send to participating organizations!
4. Send finished letters by mail or email.

*Feeling lonely or isolated?*

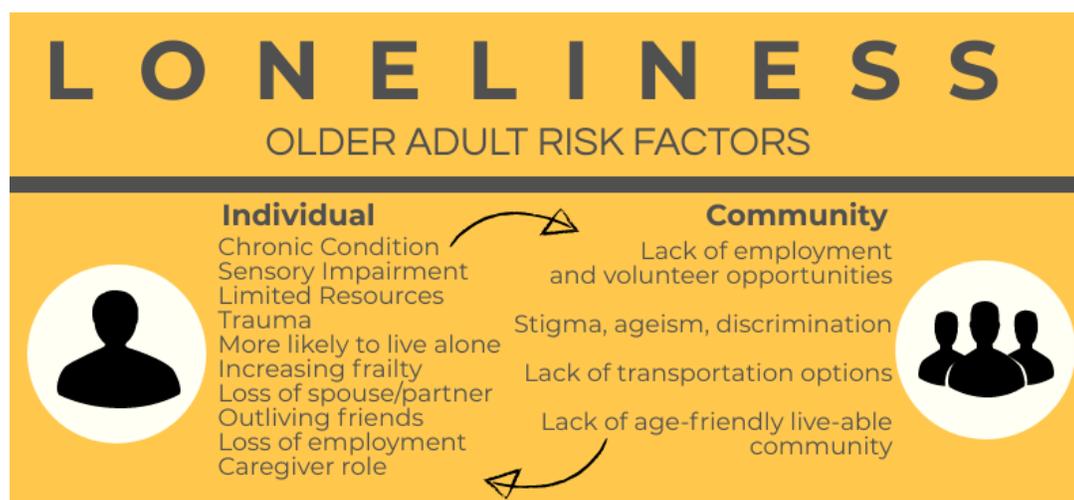
**Give us a call**

The Senior Loneliness Line: 503-200-1633  
Clackamas County Crisis and Support Line: 503-655-8585  
Aging and Disability Resource Connection: 503-650-5622

## Qualifications of participating community organizations:

1. Your organization must have an address that can accept mail from the community or accept electronic submissions which can be printed and distributed.
2. Have regular direct contact with older adults, especially those who may be isolated due to personal circumstances (limited family contacts), mobility challenges, or who have other physical, mental or cognitive challenges.

Review the risk factors for older adult loneliness and isolation below:



3. Have a designated "screener" who can help receive the letters, screen (see guidelines below) and distribute to older adults.
4. Comply with HIPAA practices, policies and procedures.

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## How do I register my organization to receive letters?

Contact the Clackamas County OABHI Team at [OABHI@clackamas.us](mailto:OABHI@clackamas.us) to list your organization as a participating partner.

## “Clackamas County Writes” sending and receiving guidelines for screeners:

1. Remove the letters and cards from the mailing envelope. Do not distribute a letter or card *in* its original mailing envelope.
2. Adults age 65 and older, children 18 years or younger, and persons with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to misuse of personally identifiable information\*. Neither the persons writing or receiving a letter should include any personally identifiable information that can be misused. Signing the letter or card with a first name and age (in years) is appropriate and encouraged!

## \*What is Personally Identifiable Information (PII)?

Personally identifiable information (PII) is information that, when used alone or with other relevant data, can identify an individual. Sensitive personally identifiable information can include your full name, Social Security Number, driver's license, financial information, and medical records.

3. Hand-written letters and hand-made artwork are both encouraged.
4. Screeners should read through content and use discretion if an item is questionable. A submission that is intentionally unkind, intrusive, distasteful, illegible, or that is inappropriate for an

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intergenerational conversation should be discouraged and removed.

5. Photographs and pictures may be included at the discretion of the screener.
6. Checks, cash or other items of value should not be sent or requested. If an individual would like to donate to a program, please refer them to the proper channels within your organization in order to do that.
7. Refer to the resources listed at the end of this document for more ideas and support.



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Revised 5-26-2020

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More resources here:

Information on Trauma Informed Care <https://traumainformedoregon.org/>

Age Café Toolkit for Intergenerational Conversations and in-person events:  
<https://radicalagemovement.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FINAL-Age-Cafe-Guide.pdf>

Timeslips Creative Engagement training and resources on intergenerational storytelling and the asking of “Beautiful Questions”: [www.timeslips.org](http://www.timeslips.org)

### **From Me to You**

Thirty-eight student designers collaborate to bring creativity and joy to the lives of elders through [this beautifully designed resource for engagement](#).

Connecting Generations Toolkit:

<https://www.gu.org/app/uploads/2019/05/Intergenerational-Toolkit-Senior-Housing.pdf>

### **Phone-based support for Oregon Seniors:**

The Senior Loneliness Line: 503-200-1633

<http://seniorlonelinessline.org>

### **Local resources, support and services:**

Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC): [503-650-5622](tel:503-650-5622)

[www.adrcforegon.org](http://www.adrcforegon.org)

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## Instructions for individuals, families, and groups:

Help a young person write a letter or draw a picture and send it to an isolated older adult in your community. Send your letter, card or artwork to:

"Clackamas County Writes"

Senior Loneliness Line c/o Bill Fitzpatrick

5100 SW Macadam Ave Ste 400

Portland, OR 97239

[BillF@Linesforlife.org](mailto:BillF@Linesforlife.org)

OR

"Clackamas County Writes"

Molalla Adult Center c/o Cecily Rose

315 Kennel Ave

Molalla, OR 97038

[cecily@foothillsonline.com](mailto:cecily@foothillsonline.com)

OR

*Feeling lonely or isolated?*

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The Senior Loneliness Line: 503-200-1633

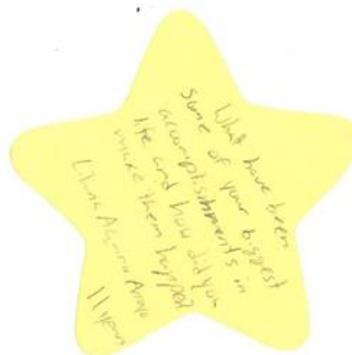
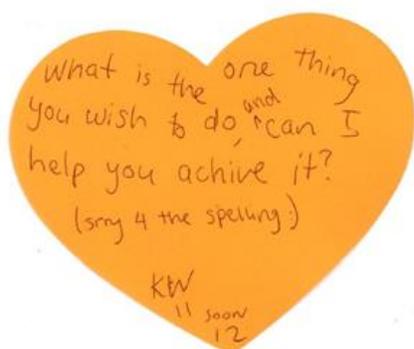
Clackamas County Crisis and Support Line: 503-655-8585

Aging and Disability Resource Connection: 503-650-5622

"Clackamas County Writes"  
 Milwaukie Center c/o Linda Whitmore  
 5440 SE Kellogg Creek Dr  
 Milwaukie, OR 97222  
[LindaWhi@ncprd.com](mailto:LindaWhi@ncprd.com)

Please follow these tips/guidelines:

1. Please use the templates provided to write a letter or draw a picture.
2. Please include your first name and age only. We don't need any other personal information.
3. Write about your favorite subjects, hobbies, and other interests.
4. Ask or answer a beautiful question. (See p. 8)
5. Draw a picture and give it a title or write a story about it.
6. Write BIG and legibly. Try to use the full space on lines below.
7. REMEMBER! Use a sponge or wet towel to seal envelopes. PLEASE DO NOT LICK.



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**Beautiful questions inspire imagination, creativity and invite a response that is valued by the asker. Make up your own questions or use a question below:**

What sorts of creatures bring you joy?

How do you like to celebrate your favorite holiday?

How do you know when you are “grown up”?

What do you think is the most beautiful sound in nature?

What do you treasure in your home and why?

How would you make someone feel welcome in your home?

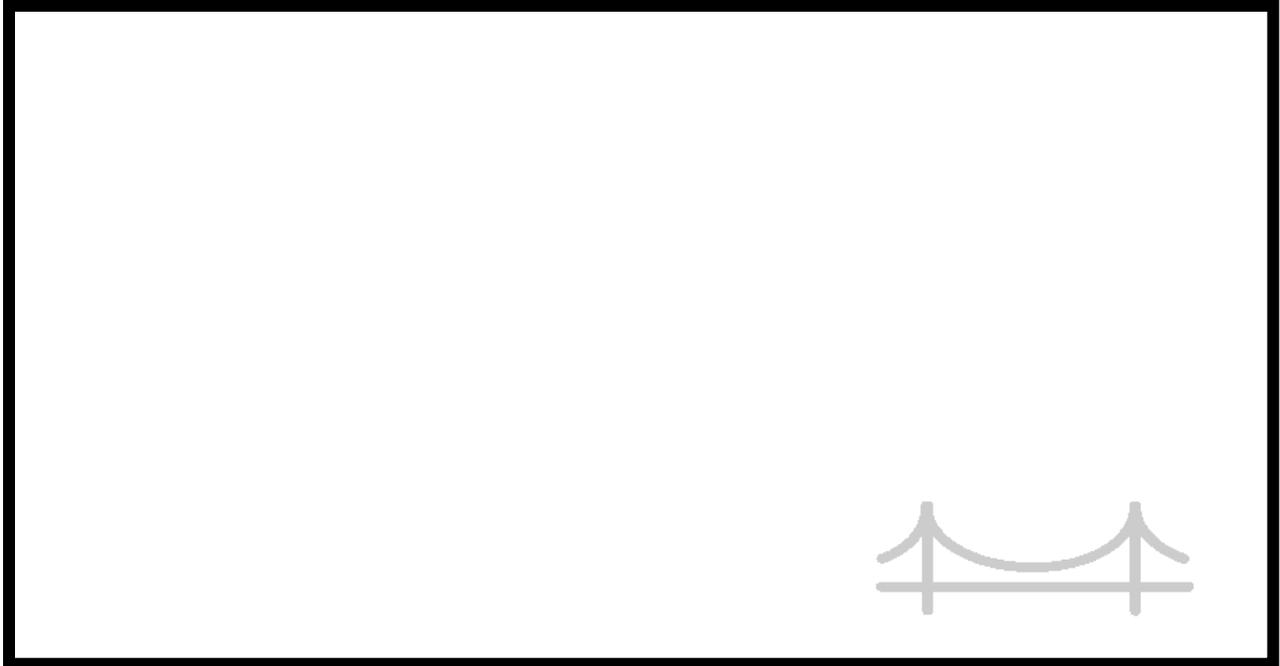
What colors make you happy?

If you had an imaginary pet, what would it be?

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Dear Neighbor,

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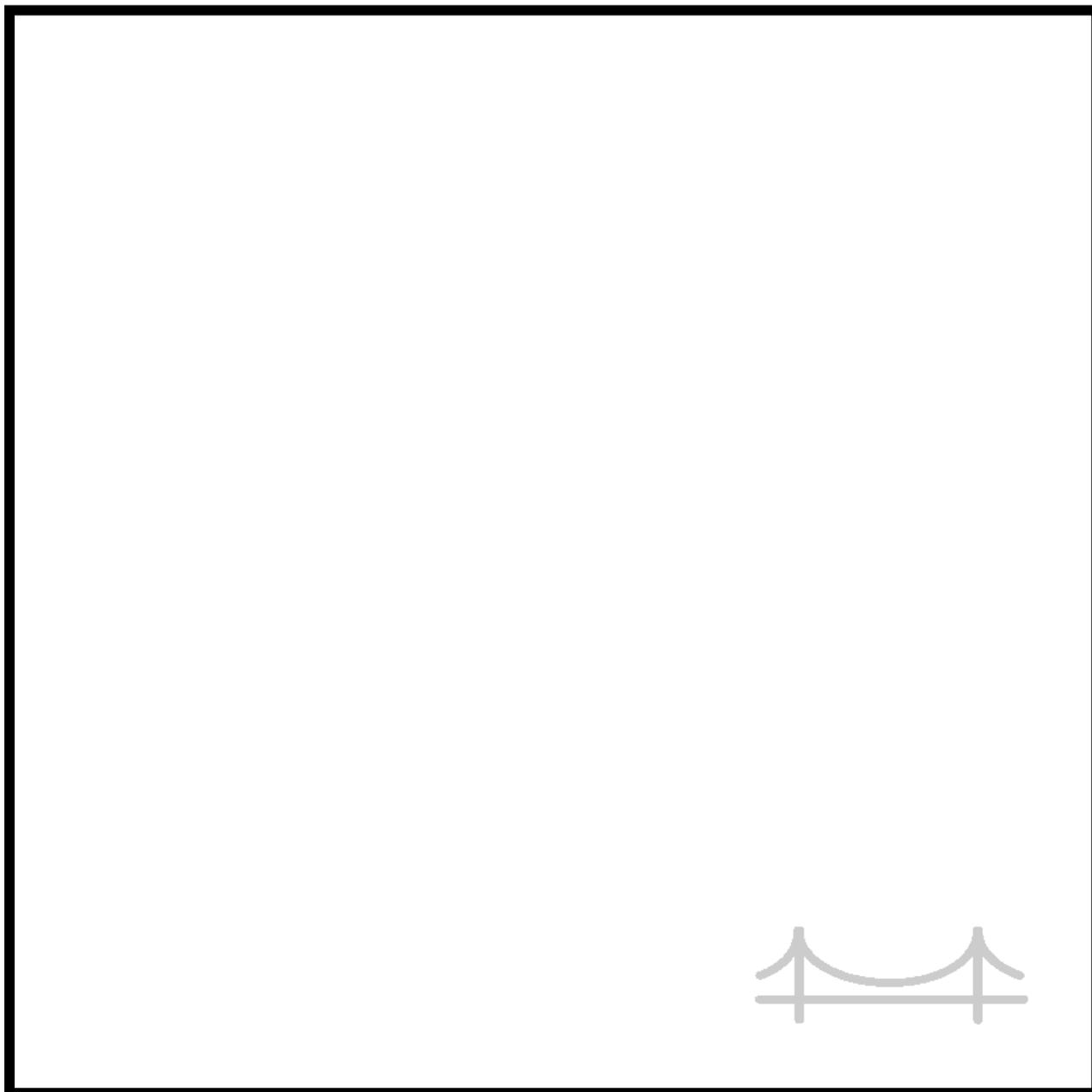
From: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dear Neighbor,



From: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

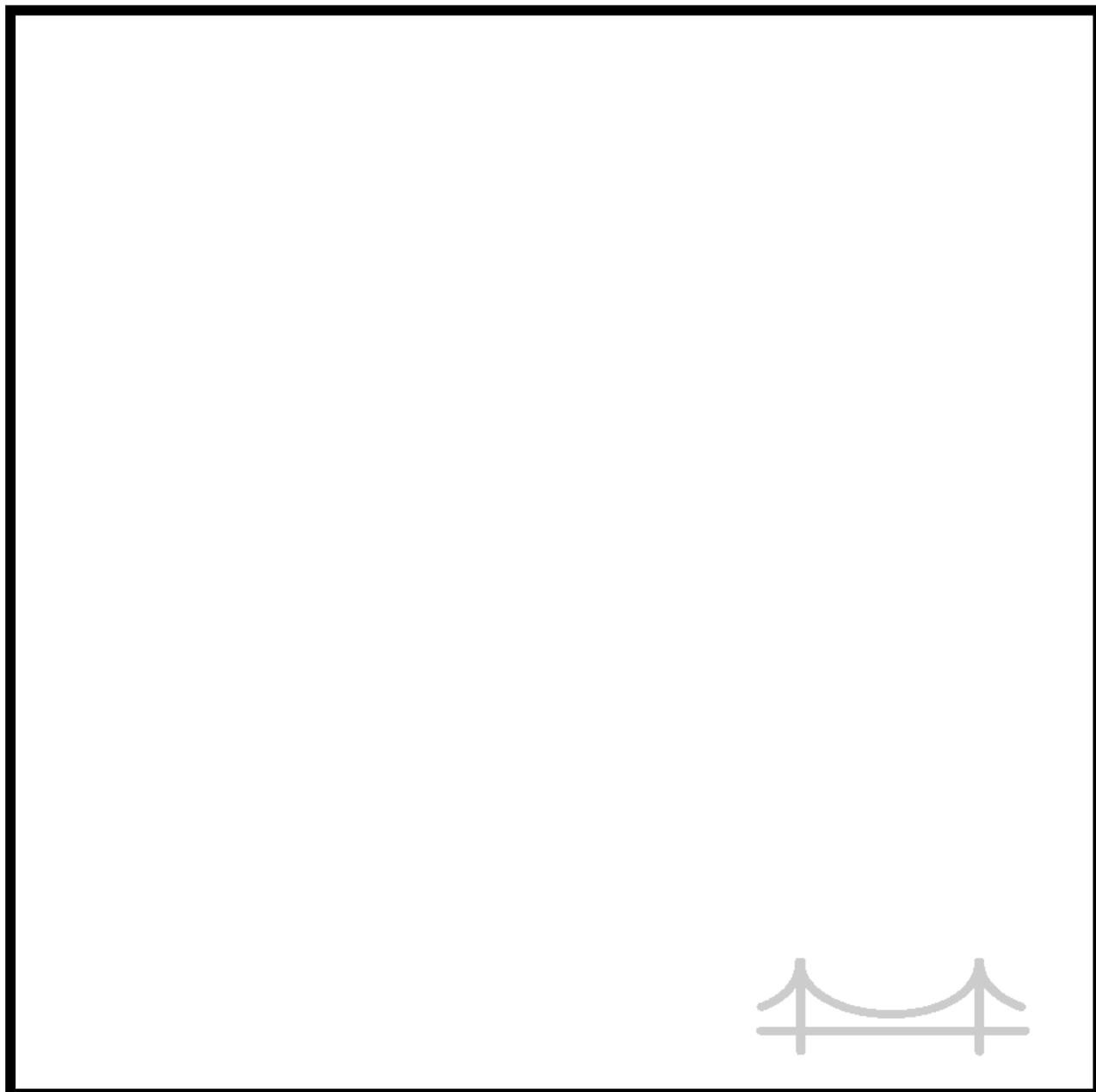
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Hola Vecino,



Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Edad: \_\_\_\_\_

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Hola Vecino,

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Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_ Edad: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Messaging and Resources for Family, Providers, and Older Adults**

### **LOCAL RESOURCES:**

#### **Senior Loneliness Line – 503-200-1633**

**The Senior Loneliness Line is a partnership between Lines for Life and Clackamas County.**

Our free call service is for adults older than 55 who live in Clackamas County. Our team of volunteers and staff are specially trained in working with older adults, and we can provide ongoing support, connect you with resources or just listen. Your information is completely confidential and no one will follow up with you unless you request a call.

Any aging adult who is experiencing loneliness, isolation, depression or anxiety can benefit from a confidential phone call with our Senior Loneliness specialists. Sometimes knowing there is someone who cares and wants to listen can be of great help.

We are here for you.

[SeniorLonelinessLine.org](http://SeniorLonelinessLine.org)

#### **Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) – 503-650-5622**

The Clackamas ADRC is designed to streamline access to information and resources about long-term supports and services in the community. ADRC has information about in-home care, long-term care planning, how to arrange for home delivered meals, how to apply for Medicaid, and much more.

If you have questions, or are seeking information about options for an older adult or person with disabilities, please contact the Clackamas County ADRC to speak with a certified Information and Referral Specialist at 503-650-5622. Please note, there is no charge for this service. Hours of Operation: Monday – Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

<https://www.clackamas.us/socialservices/crc.html>

#### **Clackamas County Urgent Mental Health Center - 503-655-8585 (24/7 Crisis and Support Line)**

MHC (formerly Riverstone) is staffed by trained clinicians who are able to respond to people in many types of crisis. Our response may include anything from telephone intervention to coordinating a same-day mental health assessment. Crisis services are available to anyone living in Clackamas County regardless of ability to pay or insurance plan and can include: 24-hour phone crisis intervention, phone screening and referral to appropriate provider(s), peer support

services, mental health assessment in clinic, crisis mobile outreach services when necessary (call for information), case management and crisis stabilization services, information and referral, including exploring transportation options. **Non-emergency: 503-742-5335.**

<https://www.clackamas.us/behavioralhealth/urgentmentalhealth>

### **Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) 503-650-5724**

The Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) provides support to unpaid family caregivers with the challenges of their caregiving role. FCSP services help promote healthy aging, aging in place and family caregiver self-care. This holistic approach to care can delay or avoid entry into the Medicaid system, provide an alternative to individuals at risk of institutionalization, and support the self-care needs of family caregivers.

<https://www.clackamas.us/socialservices/respit.html>

### **Friendly House Senior Program – 503-224-2640**

Staff may deliver food boxes, medicine, etc. without face-to-face contact. Case management and information and referrals for older adults. SAGE offers case management, information and referrals and advocacy.

<https://www.friendlyhouseinc.org/>

### **SAGEConnect Weekly Calls for LGBT Elders**

In response to the physical distancing currently in place, SAGE USA has developed SAGEConnect to match LGBT elders with volunteer community members and allies across the country for friendly, weekly conversations. [More information.](#)

### **MESSAGING & INFORMATION/SUPPORT:**

**American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** – “COVID-19: We Must Care for Older Adults’ Mental Health”

Awareness article outlining the factors of COVID-19 that impact mental health and well-being for older adults including: mental health conditions, physical health, pain, and disability, social isolation and loneliness, losses, and disruption to routine. Includes a list of suggestions of interventions for family, friends, and providers.

<https://afsp.org/covid-19-we-must-care-for-older-adults-mental-health/>

**WHO International** – “Mental health considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak”

Includes a section specific to messages for older adults, people with underlying health conditions and their caregivers as well as people in isolation.

[https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2)

**Interagency Standing Committee** – “Intervention 1: Helping Older Adults Cope with Stress during the COVID-19 Outbreak”

Website geared towards professionals/providers. Provides detailed, practical information on how and what to communicate to various sub-groups of older adults including those in residential care settings, low-income older adults, those with co-morbid physical and cognitive impairments such as people with dementia, and those with co-occurring mental health conditions.

[https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-03/IASC%20Interim%20Briefing%20Note%20on%20COVID-19%20Outbreak%20Readiness%20and%20Response%20Operations%20-%20MHPSS\\_0.pdf](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-03/IASC%20Interim%20Briefing%20Note%20on%20COVID-19%20Outbreak%20Readiness%20and%20Response%20Operations%20-%20MHPSS_0.pdf)

**American Psychological Association**—“COVID-19 Isn’t Just a Danger to Older Persons’ Physical Health”

Article geared towards mental health professionals. Outlines how COVID-19 is increasing social isolation and loneliness of the older adult population and gives specific ideas on how professionals can help mitigate the impact of social distancing and other factors that are putting older adults at risk.

[https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2)

**AARP NATIONAL** Tips for caregivers, CDC checklist for older adults, Tele-Town halls being held each Thursday at 10:00am PST. Participants can join via the website or by phone.

<https://www.aarp.org/>

**AARP OREGON**—“Community Connections section”

Mutual Aid groups in Milwaukie and greater Portland area: “Mutual aid groups are informal groups of volunteers that band together to find effective ways to support those people most in need who live in their local community. Mutual aid can include picking up groceries, providing financial assistance, or lending emotional support to your neighbors.”

Multiple Resources including:

- AARP Coronavirus news and guidance
- The Mighty—online community discussions and activities
- Phone support from an AARP Volunteer
- Savo—brings friends and family together with tools to support a loved one
- Meditations and sleep support
- Online word games and family trivia
- Free online courses
- <https://aarpcommunityconnections.org/>

### **Alzheimer’s Association Oregon and SW Washington Chapter**

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Tips for Caregivers
- 24/7 Support Line (800-272-3900)
- Educational webinars
- Telephone support groups
- Support for Spanish Speaking caregivers
- Friendly House LGBTQ+ caregiver support group
- Community Resource Finder

<https://www.alz.org/orswwa>

### **National Clearinghouse for Abuse in Later Life**

Support during COVID-19 Crisis: As a partner of the [National Resource Center for Reaching Victims \(NRC\)](#), NCALL continues to support the field in increasing access for older survivors, particularly those in the margins. During these changing times, please check the NRC website for updated resources and trainings on how to best support survivors using creativity and technology while maintaining social distancing. Learn more at: <http://reachingvictims.org>

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Retirement Connection is hosting its own Coronavirus specific resource page here: <https://retirementconnection.com/coronavirus>

-Store to Door: <https://storetodooroforegon.org/>

-OHSU is currently running a two-year study involving older adults, social engagement and mental health. It's a large project so take a look at their program, I think it's something seniors would get great benefit from: <https://www.i-conect.org/>

-Ride Connection (still offering services): <https://rideconnection.org/covid19updates>

-HOPE (Honoring Our Precious Elders), which does free landscaping and other maintenance for seniors: <https://hopeoregon.org/>

Reputable sources where community members can get COVID info beyond the traditional sources:

Kaiser Health News: <https://khn.org/>

WHO: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



# Social Connection Project



**The Social Connection Project**—a joint project of Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) and Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good (MACG)—is a conversation campaign to increase social connection within our community. The necessity of our current physical distancing mandate unfortunately worsens social isolation and loneliness, which are already at high levels in our society. This project addresses this by connecting community members in our MACG institutions and neighborhoods with community volunteers—via phone calls—to share stories, pressures, and concerns related to COVID-19 and beyond, to the benefit of both. The stories and needs that emerge in these conversations will guide MACG’s organizing efforts going forward.

**The project is open to any community member** who would like to connect with someone during this extraordinary time to build and deepen our community. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Essential workers, who face unique challenges
- Parents with children at home
- People not working and worried about paying bills
- People who live alone
- Students whose education has been interrupted or altered
- People who are houseless or at risk of becoming houseless
- Young adults concerned about work prospects
- People with health concerns
- People not currently eligible for any of the public benefits in the stimulus package

## Would you like to sign up to receive calls?

1. [Click here to fill out the recipient form.](#)
2. Call the MACG Social Connection Project phone line at 503-208-4391.

## Interested in volunteering to make calls?

We are looking for individuals with good listening skills, compassion, a genuine interest in others and in building relationships for the long-haul.

## What will volunteers do?

1. Commit to making regular calls to their community partner(s)
2. Attend a 90 -minute virtual training before getting started
3. Record a brief reflection in a shared document after each call
4. Attend optional virtual meetings for debriefing and peer support.

## Sign up to volunteer!

1. [Click here to fill out the volunteer form.](#)
2. Call the MACG Social Connection Project phone line at 503-208-4391.