Social connection is a critical component of good health and resilience building. Social connection improves physical health, mental and emotional well-being while decreasing anxiety and stress. The following resources are tools to help older adults and adults with disabilities create, maintain, and expand their social connectedness and sense of belonging.

**RESOURCES**

\*If you or someone you know is in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988 Hours: Available 24 hrs/day. Languages: English, Spanish.

Veterans Crisis Line 988 then Press 1 or text 838255

**Alzheimer’s and Dementia Resources.**

* [Memory Cafes in WI](https://www.memorycafedirectory.com/memory-cafes-in-wisconsin/) - social gathering, which allows for individuals with memory loss and someone important in their life to socialize and connect.

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| Insert local resource |

**Be Active.**  Not only is physical activity important to prevent falls, it is an amazing way to increase your confidence and meet new friends.

* [Get Fit for Life](https://order.nia.nih.gov/publication/get-fit-for-life-exercise-physical-activity-for-healthy-aging) - (English and Spanish) this guide can help you learn about the many health benefits of exercise and physical activity.
* [StrongBodies](https://healthyliving.extension.wisc.edu/programs/strongbodies/find-a-program/) - 11-12 week strength, balance and flexiblity program for older adults. Virtual, or find a class in-person near you.
* [Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging.](https://wihealthyaging.org/programs/find-a-workshop/)  Virtual and in-person evidence-based health promotion programs.

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**Caregiver.** When you are caring for others, it is more important than ever to have meaningful social support.

* [Wisconsin’s Family Caregiver Support Programs](https://wisconsincaregiver.org/)
* [Wisconsin Kinship Navigator](https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/kinship/navigator) - resources for relative caregivers.
* [Online Caregiving Community](https://community.aarp.org/t5/Caregiving/ct-p/Caregiving?intcmp=AE-CAR-BAS-IL-OC-SUPPORT) - AARP

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**LGBTQ+.** Find welcoming connection and community near you!

* [SAGEConnect](https://www.sageusa.org/x2-sageconnect/) - is a phone buddy program that matches LGBTQ+ elders and accepts volunteers.
* [SAGE’s National LGBT Elder Hotline](https://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resource.cfm?r=969) in English or Spanish….877-360-LGBT

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**Online Game Platforms.** Nothing beats a game night with family and friends. Below are a variety of games, some are online adaptations of classics and others are only suited to online venues. Try something new!

* Virtual Board Games
  + [Playing Cards](https://playingcards.io/)
* Word Games with Friends
  + [Codewords](http://codewordsgame.com/)
  + [Scrabble](https://www.pogo.com/games/scrabble)
* Online Group Games
  + [Drawize](https://www.drawize.com/)

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**People with Disabilities.** People with disabilities need to be healthy, safe, and connected.

* [Healthy, Safe and Connected Resource Toolkit](https://wi-bpdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Healthy_Safe_Connected_V08.22.pdf) (English, Spanish & Hmong) Information and tools for people with disabilities to stay healthy, safe and connected throughout their lifetime and not just during an emergency. You can find the most uptodate information on their [website](https://wi-bpdd.org/)

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**Recovery.** Links to support groups, recovery coaches and other resources.

* [National 24/7 AA Meetings](https://aahomegroup.org/index.html)
* [SAMHSA - Virtual Recovery Resources and Support](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/virtual-recovery-resources.pdf)
* [Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Helpline call 211](https://211wisconsin.communityos.org/addiction-helpline)

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**Take a Class.** Learn a new skill. Keed an active mind, and who knows - you may find a new friend in class!

* The [Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging](https://wihealthyaging.org/programs/find-a-workshop/) offers a variety of evidence-based programs to help you live well. Proven classes to help you self-manage your health.
* [Senior Planet Classes](https://seniorplanet.org/classes/) live online classes for older adults 60 or older. Learn about finance, wellness, fitness, technology, and so much more.

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**Talk to Someone.**

* [Well Connected.](https://covia.org/programs/well-connected/)  (English and Spanish) Virtual community that offers phone and online activities that build community through group conversation, games, and education.
* [Meals Together.](https://mealstogether.org/) Creating companionship through intergenerational dinner parties over video calls.
* [AARP Friendly Voice.](https://www.aarp.org/home-family/friends-family/friendly-voice/)  (English and Spanish)Trained Friendly Voice volunteers will provide a call to say hello.

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**Use Technology.** Sometimes it’s not possible to have in-person contact. Get up to speed on technology so you can stay in touch with family and friends.

* [Senior Planet.](https://seniorplanet.org/videos/) Tech Tips Video Tutorials
* [Generations on Line.](https://www.gol4apple.org/family/indexfamily.html) Helps elders with using the internet, email, apps, zoom, using telehealth, using QR codes, etc.

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**Volunteer.** Not only will volunteering help your community, but it is also a great way to meet new people.

* [Virtual Volunteer Match](https://www.volunteermatch.org/virtual-volunteering) in your community
* [Create the Good](https://createthegood.aarp.org/?CMP=KNC-DSO-Adobe-Google-CTG-Brand-CTG-Volunteer-Exact-CTG&gclid=CjwKCAiAirb_BRBNEiwALHlnD-pNlJ9ncWXy0W1CJ7ZYoER6ZYbXYrm5JMvA4_mgpBsYS-5uqY18MBoClDgQAvD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds) - AARP
* [Retired and Senior Volunteer Program](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aging/volunteer/rsvp.htm) - Wisconsin

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**Further Connection Resources and Ideas** find resources, ideas and tips for staying connected.

* [Aging and Disability Resource Centers](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc/index.htm) (ADRC) for older people and adults with disabilities. Find your local ADRC.
* [Connect2Tools](https://connect2affect.org/) to Overcome Social Isolation and Loneliness. Take a three-minute assessment to help you understand your risk level and receive helpful information and local recommendations based on your results.
* BetterUp: [How to Overcome Social Isolation](https://www.betterup.com/blog/how-to-overcome-social-isolation)

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