

# State of Idaho

## IDAHO COMMISSION ON AGING

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### NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Loneliness Awareness Month

Boise ID (January 31, 2023)

### February is Loneliness Awareness Month in Idaho

Did you know?

*52% of American's report feeling some level of loneliness ([CIGNA](#)), and one in three Americans feel serious loneliness ([Harvard](#))*

*Although we typically think of loneliness as an emotional issue it is much more.*

*Social isolation and loneliness are associated with a 50% increased risk of dementia, an increased risk of premature death similar to the impact of smoking, obesity and a sedentary lifestyle; 29% increased risk of heart disease and 32% increased risk of stroke. What is not as surprising is that loneliness is associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide. ([NAESM](#))*

*In dollar amounts [AARP](#) research has shown social isolation and loneliness costs Medicare 6.7 billion dollars per year.*

*Young adults are twice as likely to be lonely than seniors. 79% of adults aged 18 to 24 report feeling lonely compared to 41% of seniors aged 66 and older. ([CIGNA](#))*

The Idaho Commission on Aging is working to decrease these numbers in our state by bringing awareness to this epidemic.

Looking for a way to help others, or yourself alleviate loneliness? Visit:

<https://aging.idaho.gov/stay-healthy/lonelinessreduction/>

These efforts can be as simple as visiting your neighbor, calling a friend, or writing a letter. Other efforts may offer a longer-term solution. Adopting a pet or volunteering are both known to decrease the feelings of loneliness. No matter your choice whether to alleviate your own loneliness, or that of someone else your life will be forever changed.

Idaho Commission on Aging is available to provide media interviews, and presentations surrounding loneliness.



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## **About the Idaho Commission on Aging**

The Idaho Commission on Aging (ICOA) serves Idaho's seniors, people with disabilities, and their caregivers by safeguarding their rights, fostering self-sufficiency, and advocating on their behalf. The ICOA provides opportunities for individuals to access a comprehensive array of private and public pay, long term care, and support services through "Single Access Points" operated by the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs).

The Older Americans Act (OAA) authorizes the state to designate a State Unit on Aging (SUA) to administer federal programs in Idaho. ICOA has the authority to develop and manage budgets and programs to address the needs of older Idahoans, people with disabilities and their caregivers.

The ICOA administers state and federally funded programs under the OAA and the State Senior Services Act by contracting with six geographically located Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). The AAAs provide OAA services as well as Idaho's Ombudsman and Adult Protective programs.