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Project Title

Relationships between Online Social Networking, In Real Life Social Isolation, Loneliness and Health and Well-Being

Project Summary

Research shows that when people are socially isolated or lonely, their physical and mental health is negatively affected. Although we know that personal contact with others is important, we know less about whether virtual contact, such as through social network sites, is also beneficial. Using Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging data, this study will explore the relationship between Online Social Networking (OSN), In Real Life (IRL)-social isolation, loneliness, and health and well-being. Questions addressed include: How do OSN, IRL-social isolation and loneliness relate to each other, and what factors are associated with them? For example, do people with frequent in-person contact with social network members also have many online contacts, or is OSN high when in-person contact is lacking? And, can OSN compensate for the lack of in-person contacts, and so be a buffer against the negative health and well-being consequences of IRL-social isolation and loneliness?

Keywords

Social Isolation, Loneliness, Online Social Networking