



A presentation by...



Kayleigh



Cody



Feelings of Loneliness

Introduction

- Loneliness is a feeling of sadness you have when you do not feel connected to anything
- You might feel lonely because you don't feel connected to people, places or activities
- A lot of people felt lonely when we had lockdowns during COVID



- Mencap found out that people with a learning disability had bad mental health because of the pandemic.
- 88% felt sad most of the time or all the time
- 82% felt lonely because they couldn't leave their homes
- 32% had bad mental health, including a low mood and low self-esteem
- 27% of people with bad mental health don't know where they can go for support



Loneliness can affect people in different ways. You don't have to be on your own to feel lonely.

Loneliness can really affect your health. It can put you at a higher risk of heart disease, stroke, dementia, dying early and having bad mental health.

Things that can help:

- ✓ Having pets
- ✓ Listening to the radio
- ✓ Getting out and about
- ✓ Having a project to do or
- ✓ Joining a club



A warning about ways of coping with loneliness

Things that distract you can help however you need to be careful because distraction can also be unhealthy and get in the way of you realizing that you are lonely.

Sometimes people replace people with things like teddy friends or watching talk shows. They can make us feel a bit more connected but actually we are still at home totally by ourselves.

A pet can provide great comfort but we can't have a conversation with them.

People can be hard work and sometimes there can be barriers particularly for people with learning a disability or mental health problems.

Sometimes we can lack the social skills to keep up relationships or we are not able to visit people due to transport barriers or anxiety.



Things that can make it hard to have friends

Sometimes peers move on and people get used to doing things without you.

They might choose not to include you sometimes. Their intentions might be good as they might think what they are doing is too hard for you to join in with. That may be true, but then they forget to include you next time or forget to make an adjustment this can make you feel really lonely.

We might also choose to sit out as things are hard or we don't want to be a burden but then we isolate ourselves in the process.

We may be able to keep up with one friend but when they are busy, we can feel lonely.



Who gets lonely?

When we think of lonely people we often think of older people on their own.

- Grandparents can be very important to you however, they can be lonely.
- They can have a learning disability and also, they can be looking after someone who has learning disability and might not have much time for a social life
- Grandparents without a learning disability might be lonely too if they have no family

Sometimes grandparents can be 'adopted' by a younger person who can be their friend.

Some older grandparents might go to church so they are not totally on their own.

You can be lonely when you are younger too but sometimes people don't recognise this.



- Being in hospital can be lonely. You are away from your family, you miss your work.
- You might not be able to do things you used to do because you are in pain or you are not able to.
- If you are in hospital because your mental health is bad you might not be able to see as many visitors which can make you feel worse.
- People might not visit you in hospital. Family might be busy or they might not have time for you
- You might miss your pet around you and you miss your home and your own bed



Questions

- Have you ever felt lonely?
- If so, could you tell anyone about it?
- Any ideas who can help you?
- Do you feel loneliness at Christmas?
- Would you invite a stranger for Christmas ?

