

# INCREASING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

## AMONG SENIORS IN TIMISKAMING



The 'loneliness epidemic' can be a risk to health as we age. Social connections are a fundamental human need for wellbeing. Without them, people are at risk of depression, cognitive decline, decreased mobility and even death. An increased sense of social support can improve quality of life and reduce health service usage.

### CONNECT ADULTS WHO CANNOT GET OUT OF THEIR HOME

**Seniors' Centre Without Walls (SCWW)** is a free phone based activity program. The goal is to connect adults who would like to be more social. SCWW allows participants to learn new information and make social connections through conversations with peers and professionals from the community. The program facilitates later in life learning opportunities, participation in brain-stimulating activities, and most importantly, it allows seniors to feel part of a community and to create new and meaningful friendships.



**98** participants have **registered** with the program since it began in January 2019.

**31** program participants surveyed provided **feedback** on the program to date.

**100%** of those who have been participating **plan to continue** to be involved with the program.

### IN GENERAL PARTICIPANTS:

Enjoyed participating in the calls.



Found the activities **mentally stimulating**.



Would tell **other people** about the program.



### BECAUSE OF THE PROGRAM, PARTICIPANTS FELT...



- As though they **belonged** to a community.
- They had something to **look forward** to.
- **Better** about themselves.

Of the seniors who reported feeling lonely before the program began, **none were still feeling lonely** after being a part of the program.



**38%** participants indicated that they had **learned about new programs** and services that they did not know about.

Over **1/3** have since used these services.

"I feel like I've made new friends because of the program. It's a happy time. It gives me something to look forward to."

"I like the challenge of learning new things. I also like the exercise group - it keeps me motivated."

### WHEN ASKED HOW THE SCWW PROGRAM HAS CHANGED THEIR LIVES, PARTICIPANTS AGREED:

- ✓ They had **something to look forward** to as a result of the program.
- ✓ SCWW provides them with **something they don't get anywhere else**.
- ✓ The program gave them a **social outlet to meet more people** and feel connected to others.

### WHAT DID PARTICIPANTS LIKE MOST ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

- The social aspect—the **camaraderie**, being able to **chat with someone, being with people** and **sharing**.
- The **flexibility/convenience** of the program.



Services de santé du  
**TIMISKAMING**  
Health Unit

For a copy of the full evaluation report contact :

1-800-361-5820  
homesupportservices.ca

1-866-747-4305  
timiskaminghu.com