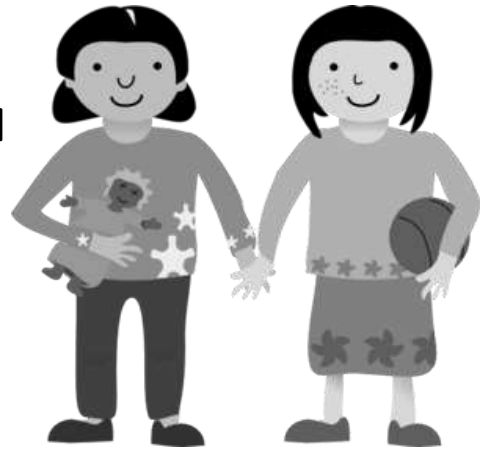


LIVEABILITY

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Social connection is the key to wellbeing, happiness and quality of life. Feeling lonely is associated with poor physical and mental health. Having and maintaining good social relationships with friends and family is vital for a happy, healthy life. Supportive social connections with neighbours and other people can make communities more dynamic and resilient.



Some groups of people may have fewer social connections, including one-person households, sole parents, older people or people living in remote areas. Social connections in very remote areas might be limited. People in these areas need access to good telecommunication services, to stay connected to family and friends. Being involved in organised community events and activities - like community gardens, free public entertainment and cultural initiatives such as reading groups at public libraries, can all help people feel better connected.

In bigger cities, liveability is achieved when people have access to well-designed, quality spaces for leisure and recreation - like parks, libraries, shops and meeting places. Being well connected to transport and services can also help people maintain social connections.

People walking in and around their neighbourhoods is one of the best markers of a healthy, vibrant community. A walkable neighbourhood includes good public transport, quality footpaths and places that people want to walk e.g. shops, school, sporting grounds. Walkable neighbourhoods should be safe, comfortable, and interesting. 'Walkability' has been shown to enhance the liveability of a place and improve the social connections of people and their identity within the community.



Draw four ways that you feel socially connected in your area:

1. Suggest some ways that people in remote areas may connect with friends and neighbours? _____

2. Do you think people in cities feel lonely? Explain your answer.

3. Why are social connections important? _____
