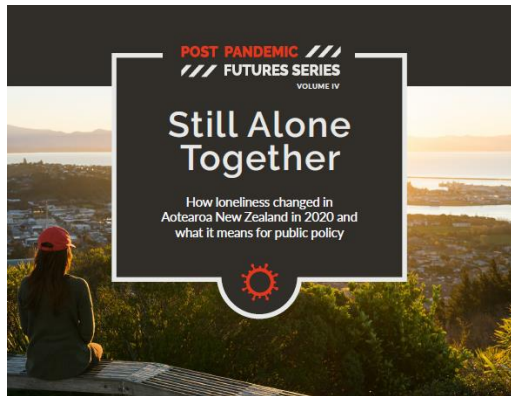


Still Alone Together

Easy Read Summary



Still Alone Together is a report about loneliness in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2020.



It was done by The Helen Clark Foundation and WSP New Zealand.



The Helen Clark Foundation does research about how to solve problems and make people's lives better. WSP is a company that works on design, engineering, and planning for the future.



Loneliness is when you need to connect with other people, but you can't. It feels painful and upsetting, and if you feel lonely for a long time it can make you sick or depressed.



We wanted to find out how often people in New Zealand felt lonely in 2020.



We learned that most people don't often feel lonely.



We also learned that some people are almost always lonely. This can be dangerous for their health.



Some people are more likely to feel lonely than others. Some of the people who feel the most lonely are:



Young people (aged 18-24)



Disabled people (people who have a disability or impairment)



Unemployed people (people who don't have a job)



Sole parents (people bringing up children on their own)



People on low incomes (people with not much money)



Recent migrants (people who have not lived in New Zealand for long)

Unite against COVID-19

We wanted to find out if the Covid-19 lockdown made more people feel lonely last year. We learned that more people did feel lonely after the lockdown, even months later.



We think this is because during the lockdown we couldn't see or touch other people, and it was hard to connect. After the lockdown, most people went back to normal, but some people were left feeling even more lonely.



We came up with six ideas for how the government can help people to feel less lonely.



1. Make sure people have enough money.

This means making sure that benefits and wages are enough to live on.



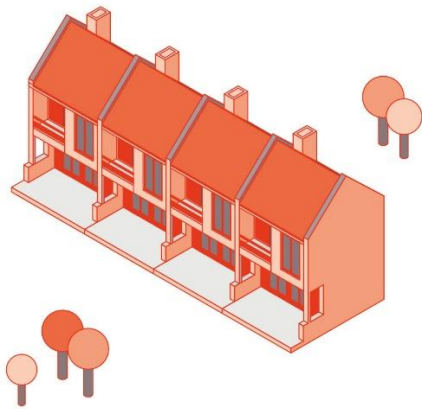
2. Close the digital divide.

This means making sure that everyone can use a phone, tablet, or computer to access the internet.



3. Help communities do their magic.

This means giving money to community groups who take care of each other and work together.



4. Create friendly streets and neighbourhoods.

This means making sure that people can walk, ride bikes, or use their wheelchairs safely in their neighbourhoods, and making spaces where they can stop and talk to each other.



5. Prioritise those already lonely.

This means giving extra help to people who might be at risk of feeling lonely, like disabled people or sole parents.



6. Invest in frontline mental health

This means making sure people can get free help quickly if they are feeling depressed, worried, or unwell.