



**SENDING SMILES: A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH
TO HELP ALLEVIATE LONELINESS AMONG OLDER ADULTS**

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OVERVIEW

- Intervention:
 - Website with volunteer program: “Sending Smiles”
 - Highschool or University Students
 - Card, Letters, and Phone Calls
- Study:
 - 50 participants from the City of Vancouver
 - 6 month study



INTRODUCTION

- A few factors affecting social isolation
- Can be linked to poor health outcomes
- Focusing on those living in long-term care facilities or independently in the City of Vancouver over the age of 65
- Recruitment and Consenting Process



THE RESEARCH STUDY

- **Qualitatively** assessed using interviews before and after the intervention
- **Quantitatively** assessed using the Campaign to End Loneliness (CEL) measurement survey tool
- During the intervention, seniors will be communicating with student volunteers over a 6 month period

We would like to ask you a few questions to enable us to measure how helpful our services are. You can choose to answer all or none of the questions, and choosing not to answer will not affect your access to any of our services in any way. When answering the questions, you could take account of the following:

- There are no right or wrong answers
- We would like you to be completely honest
- In answering the questions it is best to think of your life as it generally is now (we all have some good or bad days)

Questions

1. I am content with my friendships and relationships

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

2. I have enough people I feel comfortable asking for help at any time

| | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

3. My relationships are as satisfying as I would want them to be

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |



THE RESEARCH STUDY

- Statistical Analysis
- Ethics
Considerations

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS



- Strengths
 - No use of technology
 - Allow for wide recruitment
 - Can be generalized to other areas as well
- Limitations
 - Implicit bias by assuming loneliness
 - Recall bias during interviews



CONCLUSION

- Connecting older adults with students to decrease the burdens of social isolation
- A type of reminiscence therapy
- Influence the implementation of public policies
- Can help plan subsequent studies

THANK YOU
LISTENING!

ANY
QUESTIONS?

