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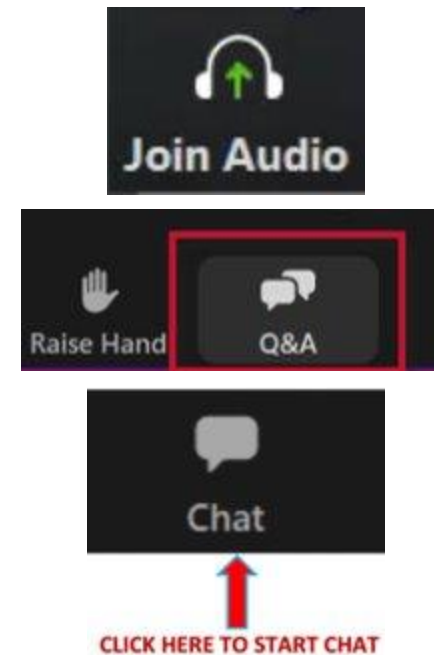
Evaluating the Impact of Chronic Disease Self- Management Education Programs on Social Connection

Information Session

February 11, 2026

Housekeeping

- **Audio Options**
 - Use your computer speakers, OR dial in using the phone number in your registration email.
 - All participants are muted.
- **Questions and Answers (Q&A)**
 - On the Zoom module on the bottom of your screen, click the I&A icon, type your question in the box and submit.
- **Chat Feature**
 - The Chat feature allows webinar attendees, the host, and panelists to communicate for the duration of the webinar.



Accessibility and Support

- **Screen Reader Users: Reduce unwanted chatter**
 - Request speech on demand: Insert, Spacebar, “S”
- **Webinar participants can view closed caption subtitles, watch a live transcript of the meeting or adjust the size of subtitle text**
 - To control closed captions, click on the CC button in the control bar at the bottom of the Zoom window
- **To get our attention if you need tech assistance:**
 - Raise or Lower Hand: Alt + Y



Speakers



Katie Clark Wheeler
U.S. Administration for Community Living



Matthew Lee Smith
Professor, School of Public Health, Indiana University



Meredith Hanley
Program Director, USAging



Agenda

- Commit to Connect Overview
- Community of Practice (COP) Overview
- Instruments and Data Collection Process
- Application and Review Process Information
- Q&A





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COMBATting SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN ALL COMMUNITIES

www.committtoconnect.org





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www.committotconnect.org

- **Technical Assistance**
 - *Annual National Summit to Increase Social Connections (September 2025)*
 - Professional and consumer resources
 - Webinars and Office Hours
- **Communities of Practices on outcome evaluation**
 - Impact of Chronic Disease Self-Management Education programs on social connection
- **“Innovations Hub” to encourage replication**
 - Clearinghouse of 100+ model programs, interventions, and solutions
- **Engage an online Nationwide Network of Champions**
 - 650+ leaders at local, state, and national levels

Overview

- **Goal:** measure the social connection impact of Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) programs through pre- and post-test measures.
- **Objectives:**
 - Work with COP members to collaboratively implement a flexible, yet standardized evaluation process for their CDSME program
 - Build capacity of members by providing training and technical assistance to COP members
 - Use findings to build the social connection evidence-base for CDSME programs
- **Audience:** Aging and disability network organizations



Benefits of the COP

While there is no funding associated with participation, COP benefits include:

- Access to the U-SIRS-13 and RACI tools
- Technical assistance and support with implementation
- Technical assistance on outcome evaluation and promoting social connection
- Receive secure data reports
- Grow your professional network with others interested in CDSME and addressing social isolation and/or loneliness



Who Should Apply?

- Organization criteria: Businesses, LLCs, and for-profit organizations are not eligible for this opportunity. To be eligible to apply, your organization must be one of the following.
 - City or township government
 - County government
 - U.S. territory
 - Indian/Native American tribal government or tribally designated organization
 - Nonprofit organization
 - Private or public institution of higher education
 - Special district government
 - Regional organization
 - State government
 - Other (will be required to describe)
- Organization must be based in the U.S. or be a U.S. Territory

Implementation Overview

- Collect matched pre- and post-test data from participants enrolled in CDSME program workshops using the [Upstream Social Interaction Risk Scale \(U-SIRS-13\)](#) and Retrospective Assessment of Connection Impact (RACI).
 - The U-SIRS-13 will be collected as a pre and post-test. The RACI will be collected only as a post-test.
 - The U-SIRS-13 and RACI each take about two to three minutes to complete.
 - When combined with the IRB script, participating sites can expect the data collection encounter to take approximately 10 minutes.
- Participating sites will collect the information through a Qualtrics link.
- All data and data reports would be shared back with participating community-based organizations. Technical assistance will be provided to help sites use their data to identify benefits and make value propositions.



Expectations

- Attend five meetings held between March and September 2026. Meetings will be held on Zoom and last 60-90 minutes each.
 - Dates and times for the meetings will be determined by polls conducted amongst the selected COP members.
- In addition to collecting matched pre and post-test surveys, participating organizations will:
 - Identify and report the exact number of workshop sessions that each client attended (e.g., 2 or 6 sessions, 4 of 6 sessions, 6 of 6 sessions)?
 - Document the CDSME workshop start date for each participant.
- [Register as a Nationwide Network of Champions](#) member by the application deadline.

What to expect in the COP Sessions

Session 1: Orientation

- COP overview; overview of data collection instruments and protocols

Session 2: Technical Support

- Brainstorming of any early challenges and peer support

Session 3 and 4: Mid-Way Point Check-In

- Touch base on implementation status; continue to meet with SME and engage in peer support.

Session 5: Interpreting Initial Results and Next Steps

- Overview about how to interpret initial results; discuss data trends and highlights.

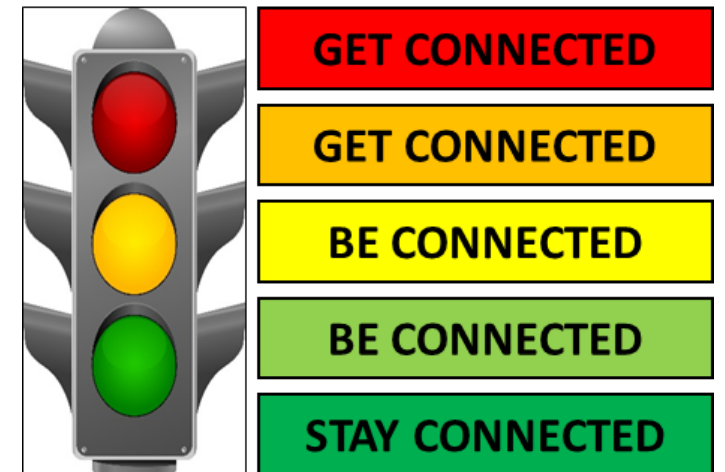


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Dr. Matthew Lee Smith

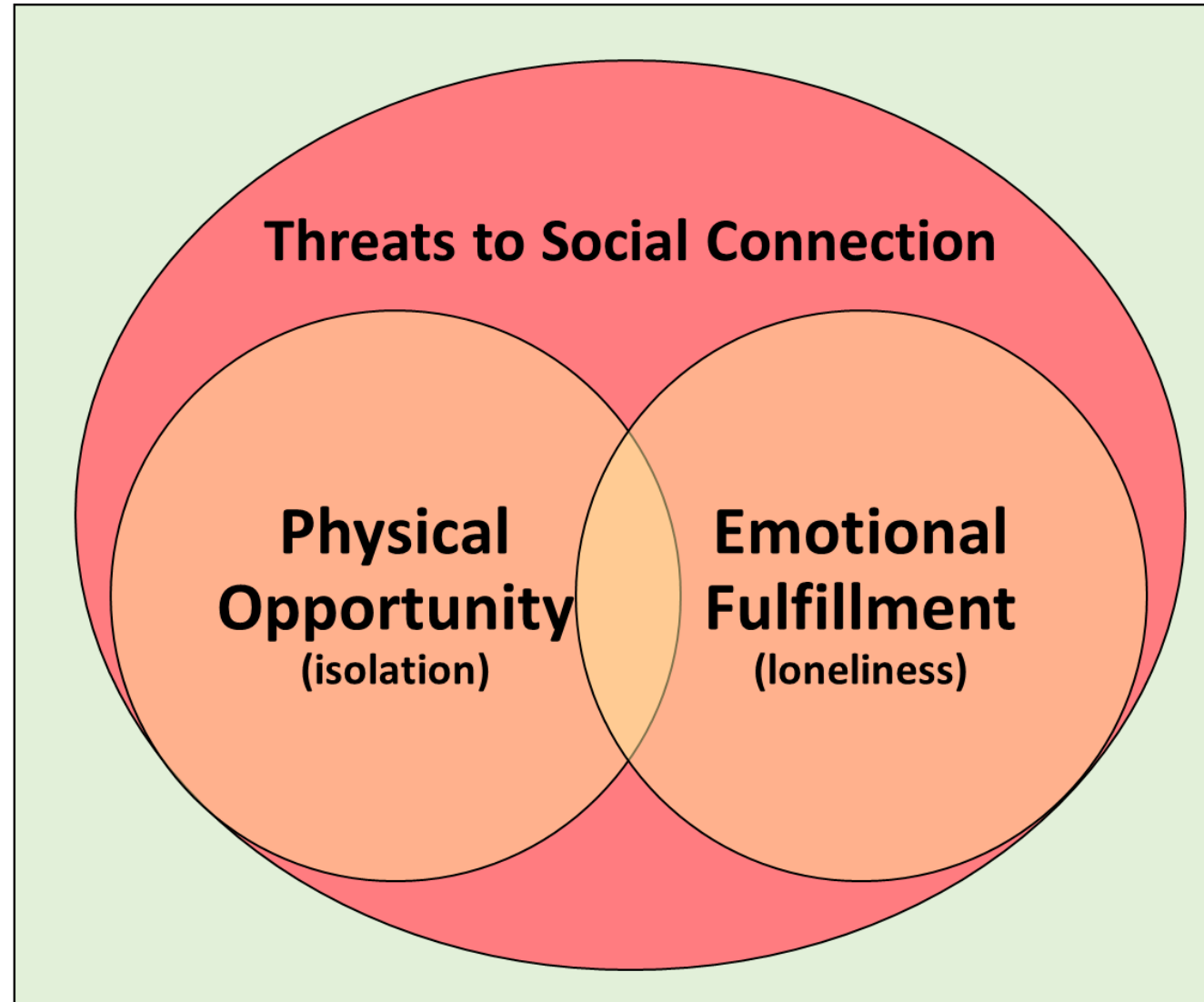
Identifying “Upstream” Risk

- ***Upstream Social Interaction Risk Scale (U-SIRS) (pronounced “users”)***
 - 13-item, easy-to-use scale to identify upstream risk of social disconnectedness among older adults
- Developed with input from diverse professionals and practitioners
 - For example: physicians, geriatricians, nurses, social workers, academics, community health workers, Area Agencies on Aging, health educators, caregivers, older adults
- Goal of practical use across settings
 - Clinical organizations and healthcare providers
 - Community-based organizations
 - Community health workers
- Conservative to capture maximum risk level



U-SIRS-13

- I feel isolated from others
- I lack companionship
- I feel no one really knows me well
- I can find companionship when I want it
- Attend social clubs, residents' groups, or committees
- Attend religious groups
- I avoid socializing because it is hard to understand conversations, especially when there is background noise
- I am satisfied with the relationships I have with my family
- I am satisfied with the relationships I have with my friends
- I have as much contact as I would like with people I feel close to and who I can trust and confide
- There are enough people I feel close to and could call for help
- I am content with my friendships and relationships
- I miss having people around me



RACI: A Retrospective Measure

- Developed to retrospectively assess participants' perceptions
- Responses are directly related to program/service, not general feelings of connection
- **Retrospective Assessment of Connection Impact (RACI)**
 - 13 items
 - Assesses aspects of structure, function, and quality
 - Easy to administer (one-time administration; takes ~2 minutes)
 - Appropriate across sectors
 - Appropriate for participants of age groups
- Additional benefit when coupled with other connection measures (repeated)
- Helpful to identify 'indirect benefits' of programs/services not specifically created to address connection
- Opportunity to show collective impact in communities and across geography

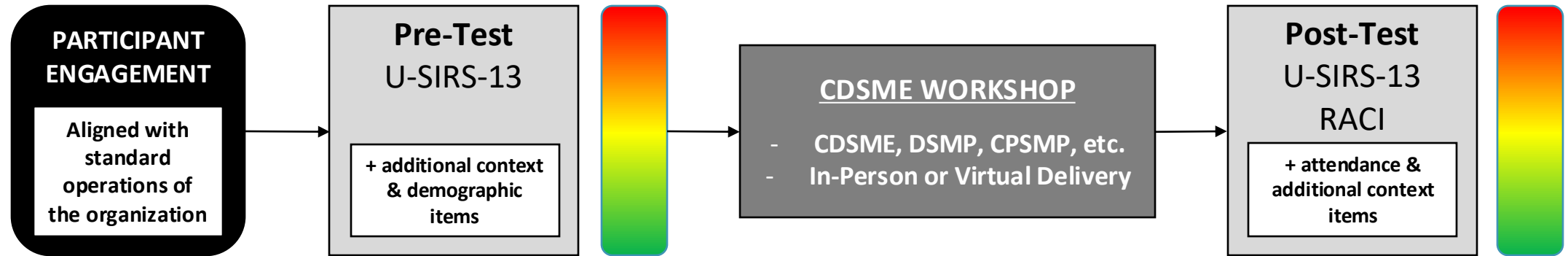


Retrospective Assessment of Connection Impact (RACI)

How much has **XXX** given you opportunity to...?

13-ITEM RACI	
Structure	Meet new people
	Make friends
	Interact with people I know
	Interact with people who are different from me
Function	Create a sense of group belonging
	Maintain my relationships
	Feel less lonely or isolated
	Give emotional support to others
	Get emotional support from others
Quality	Feel satisfied with my relationships
	Meet my desired level of socializing
	Feel less excluded
	Create less conflict, adversity, or strain in my interactions with others

Data Collection Overview



- Collect data online
 - Stand-alone survey system (i.e., Qualtrics)
 - Pre-test: Session 0 or before Session 1
 - Post-test: After Session 6
- Use a Unique ID for each client to track clients over time
- Document client attendance and collect testimonials (optional)

Data Collection Items

Demographics (4 items)



- Year Born
- Sex
- Ethnicity
- Race

Health Indicators (6 items)



- Because of physical, mental, or emotional condition, difficulty:
 - Doing errands
 - Concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Impairments
 - Vision
 - Hearing
 - Mobility
 - Dressing/Bathing

Connection Context (4 Items)



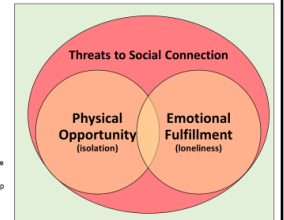
- Live alone
- Transportation
- Technology
- Financial worry about meeting needs

Social Disconnectedness (13 items)



U-SIRS-13

- I feel isolated from others
- I lack companionship
- I feel no one really knows me well
- I can find companionship when I want it
- Attend social clubs, residents' groups, or committees
- Attend religious groups
- I avoid socializing because it is hard to understand conversations, especially when there is background noise
- I am satisfied with the relationships I have with my family
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- There are enough people I feel close to and could call for help
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Retrospective Assessment of Impact about CDSME (13 items)



RACI

- S** Meet new people
- Make friends
- Interact with people I know
- Interact with people who are different from me
- Create a sense of group belonging
- F** Maintain my relationships
- Feel less lonely or isolated
- Give emotional support to others
- Get emotional support from others
- Feel satisfied with my relationships
- Q** Meet my desired level of socializing
- Feel less excluded
- Create less conflict, adversity, or strain in my inter



Collected only at pre-test

Collected at pre- & post-test

Collected only at post-test



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Meredith Hanley
USAging

Application Steps

- Review COP information and the application form:
<https://committoconnect.org/communities-of-practice/>
- Submit your application in survey monkey by 11:59 pm ET on **February 27, 2026**: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PYWBM7V>
 - Do not “submit” the application until it is entirely complete.
- Join the [Nationwide Network of Champions](#).
 - Registration information is available here:
<https://committoconnect.org/become-champion/>
- For assistance when submitting application, contact us:
info@committoconnect.org



Review Process Details

- Each application will be reviewed by two or more reviewers for factors including:
 - General eligibility (U.S.-based, eligible organization)
 - Number of participants you anticipate beginning and completing a CDSME workshop between April and September 2026
 - Ability to identify and report the exact number of workshop sessions that each client attended (e.g., 2 or 6 sessions, 4 of 6 sessions, 6 of 6 sessions)?
 - Ability to document the CDSME workshop start date
 - Experience/comfort with tracking the progress of individual participants by collecting matched pre-tests and post-tests
- Notifications will occur in March. Accepted members will be asked to confirm their participation within 5 business days.



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Questions?

Thank you!

For further questions,
contact us at:

info@committoconnect.org



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