



Dr. Dennis Embry



# HOW DOES PAX PREVENT LONELINESS?

Updated: Jan 3

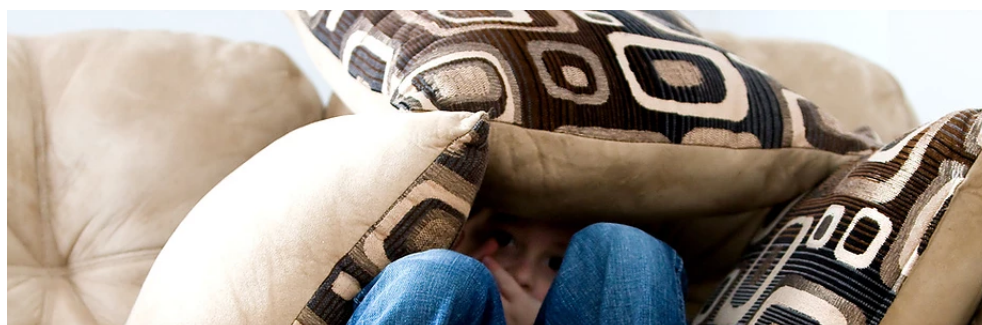
A recent study in the Journal of Aging and Mental Health found that young adults (age 21-30) feel lonely about twice as much as older adults (age 50-70). This is contrary to what many may believe. It may also be surprising, since the younger cohort still feels lonelier even though also reporting larger networks. That means that even though young adults may be less at risk for “social isolation” by having more people around them than older people, it doesn’t necessarily protect young people from loneliness.

The UK has recognized loneliness in young people as such a problem that they have incorporated relationship lessons into school curriculum. In addition to promoting greater happiness, reducing loneliness also comes with health benefits such as improved immunity and cardiovascular health.

PAX plays an important role in preventing and reducing children’s feelings of loneliness. Strategies such as Tootle Notes not only increase the size of children’s peer networks preventing social isolation, but also teach students social skills for appropriate interaction within that peer network by teaching children to both give and receive gratitude.

The co-operative tasks and interdependent nature of the PAX Game builds strong relationships among children that promote engagement and inclusion of all children. Frequent PAX Games actually reduce bickering and other anti-social behavior since individual successes elevate the success of the team and all its members. This becomes a very self-reinforcing mechanism for increased pro-social behavior.

Stephanie T. Child & Leora Lawton (2017) Loneliness and social isolation among young and late middle-age adults: Associations with personal networks and social participation, Aging & Mental Health, DOI: 10.1080/13607863.2017.1399345



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