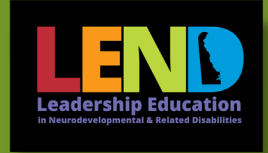




Using Technology to Decrease Social Isolation for People with Disabilities



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Background

The decision to focus on this topic, decreasing loneliness for adults with disabilities through the use of technology, is one that is near and dear to my heart. As someone who loves others who have disabilities, I know how devastating it can be when people are lonely. Loneliness affects not just one's mental health, but also their physical and emotional health! As a person with a disability myself, I know how isolating life can be when one is a person without the ability to connect to others. It is through connections that we are able to request support. But more importantly, it is by the use of technology, integrated and equal with the rest of the world, that we can connect with others when we are limited in terms of mobility or transportation or tolerance for stimuli.

Methods

- For this documentary I interviewed 4 individuals. To discuss using technology to decrease social isolation for people with disabilities.
- I did extensive research about social isolation for people with disabilities

Supporting Data

- Studies have shown that loneliness contributes to poorer health and economic outcomes for all people. For people with disabilities, who may have trouble getting together with others for a variety of reasons, loneliness can be profound and can affect their mental and physical health in numerous ways. "Loneliness has serious consequences for cognition, emotion, behavior, and health."
- "Loneliness has been associated with personality disorders and psychoses, suicide, impaired cognitive performance and cognitive decline over time, increased risk of Alzheimer's Disease, diminished executive control, and increases in depressive symptoms."

People Interviewed



Susannah Eaton-Ryan



Terri & Brigitte Hancharick



Davon Rollins

The "Silver Lining" of the Covid-19 Pandemic

- in all this, there has emerged a "silver lining" for people with disabilities, connection through technology
- The pandemic brought solutions for everyone to be able to participate Virtually
- No longer were they excluded from participation because they could not get a ride, or because they didn't have the support they needed to show up in person

Recommendation

- For all agencies to continue to offer a virtual component for their service delivery
- To continue to become innovative when working with people with disabilities
- Remember that technology allows individuals with disabilities to be more involved