

# **Social Connections Matter**



“Did you know”

Social connections have  
a greater effect on health  
than obesity, smoking and  
high blood pressure.

(Yes, really)



Social Connections Matter

# Social Connections

## What do we mean?

- Feeling close to (and valued by) others is a fundamental human need
- We don't function well in the world without social connection... this goes for our work lives too
- No matter your age, gender, background or role, social relationships are crucial for promoting physical and mental wellbeing
- Social support acts to help maintain good physical and mental health, it appears to buffer against the full impact of mental and physical illness.



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Positive social connections, or meaningful relationships, are built on these fundamental qualities:

- **Trust**
- **Integrity**
- **Good communication**
- **Appreciation**
- **Empathy/Care**
- **Fun**
- **Authenticity**
- **Support**

(All good stuff)



## Social connections

# When you're at work

- When people are connected, they feel they belong. They have more tolerance and more capacity to accept differences in thought, culture and ethnicity
- 'Belonging' can make work feel like a community
- Socially connected individuals have increased capacity to celebrate diversity
- People become more aware of the needs of others – more considerate
- Fostering social connections at work is about focusing on the positive impact that social support at work can have on us all.



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# Social connections and Work performance

- Positive social connections encourage us to collaborate with colleagues more
- Increase focus and desire to do well
- People become more involved in the planning of work
- Social connections encourage engagement within the workplace, promote overall wellbeing and ultimately help build work environments where people reach their potential.



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# Benefits of workplace Social connections for everyone

## Individual Benefits:

- Higher self-esteem and empathy
- Lower rates of depression and anxiety
- Better emotional regulation
- Less likelihood of being injured.

## Business Benefits:

- Higher productivity
- Lower absenteeism
- Higher engagement
- Greater loyalty
- Less likelihood of workplace injury
- Quicker return to work rates for the injured.



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## “Did you know”

A Harvard study of adult development found that close relationships, more than money and fame, are what keep people happy throughout their lives.

(Are we sure? Yes, it's true...)



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# Social factors and Returning to work

- After an illness, trauma, accident or workplace injury, social factors play a big role in returning to work.
- In fact, did you know that social isolation and low levels of social support is associated with the worsening of a host of medical conditions?
- For this reason, the idea of “all work and no play” is being challenged.



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# Can you help with Returning to work?

- Contact your colleague in the first two days they are away. Find out how they are and wish them a safe and speedy recovery - this small gesture can help their wellbeing and speed up recovery times.
- Make regular times to catch up for a phone call or coffee – connected colleagues have increased wellbeing and it hastens recovery.
- Encourage recovering colleagues to attend social events at work (birthdays etc) – feeling part of the team aids recovery.



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# Social Connections Toolkit

## Resources we have

This Social Connections Toolkit aims to:

- help employers create workplace environments that promote positive social connections
- show how social connections support better return to work outcomes.

Social Connections Toolkit resources include:

Educational Poster



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Social Connections Toolkit resources include:

Event Invite  
Poster



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**Social Connections Toolkit**  
resources include:

Social Connections  
Calendar



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Wellbeing Poster



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Social Connections Toolkit resources include:

Injury Prevention  
A4 Fact Sheet



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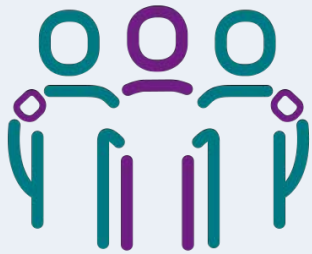
Social Connections Toolkit resources include:

Employers and Managers Guide



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