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# Expanding Opportunity Framework Racial Disparities Analysis

*Understanding Different Approaches for Addressing  
Racial Disparities*

## Section 7 Social Capital & Community Leadership

A tool developed by:  
The Community Advancement Network (CAN) - Austin, TX  
Updated September 2025

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# Expanding Opportunity Framework Racial Disparities Analysis

*A tool developed by the Community Advancement Network*

Addressing  
Concentrated  
Wealth & Power

Safety &  
Justice

State/National  
Legislation &  
Policy

Housing,  
Health &  
Human  
Services

Social Capital  
& Community  
Leadership

Educational  
& Economic  
Opportunity

Workforce  
Development

Expand  
Opportunity  
for Youth &  
Adults

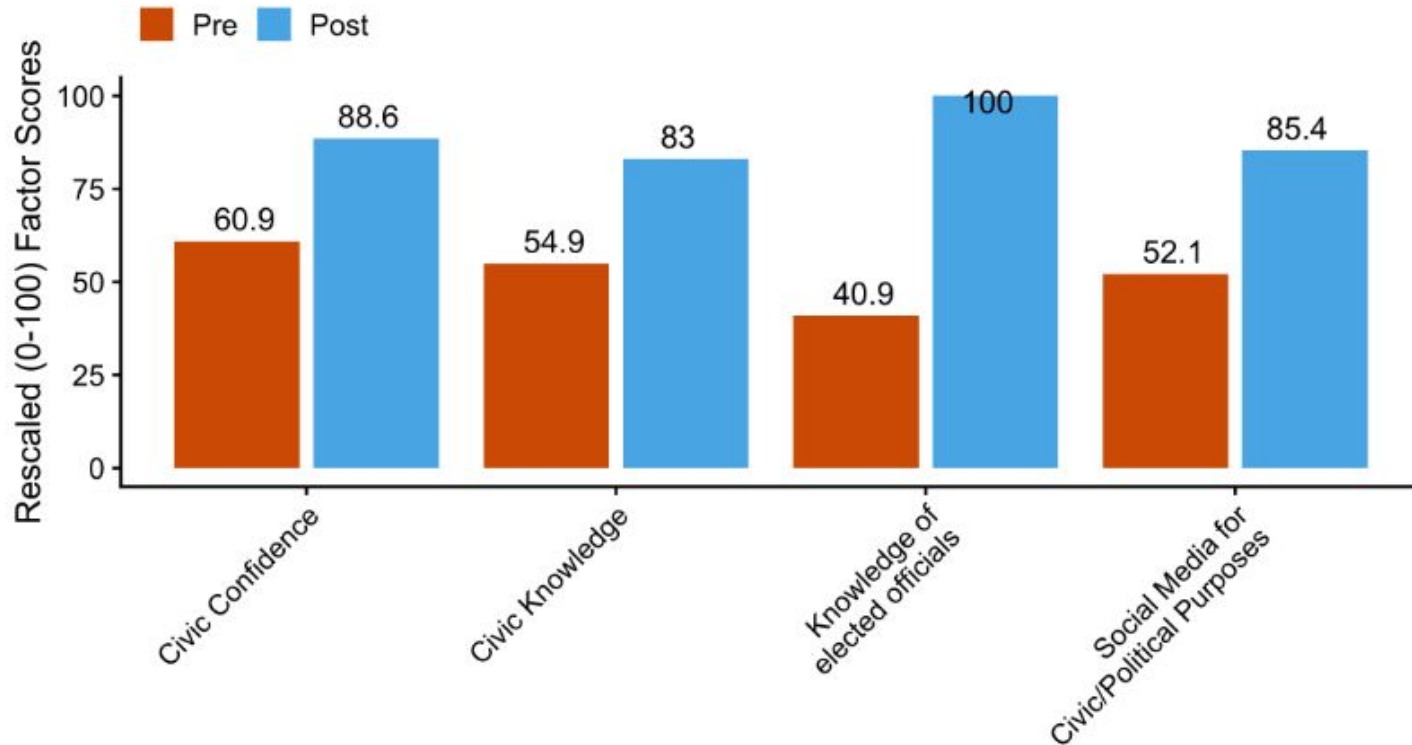
# Section 7

## Introduction

This section pertains to helping individuals and families build social networks and/or other forms of social capital; and develop and utilize skills that they possess to take leadership in their personal lives as well as the lives of their family and the well-being of their community.

# National Parent Leadership Initiative

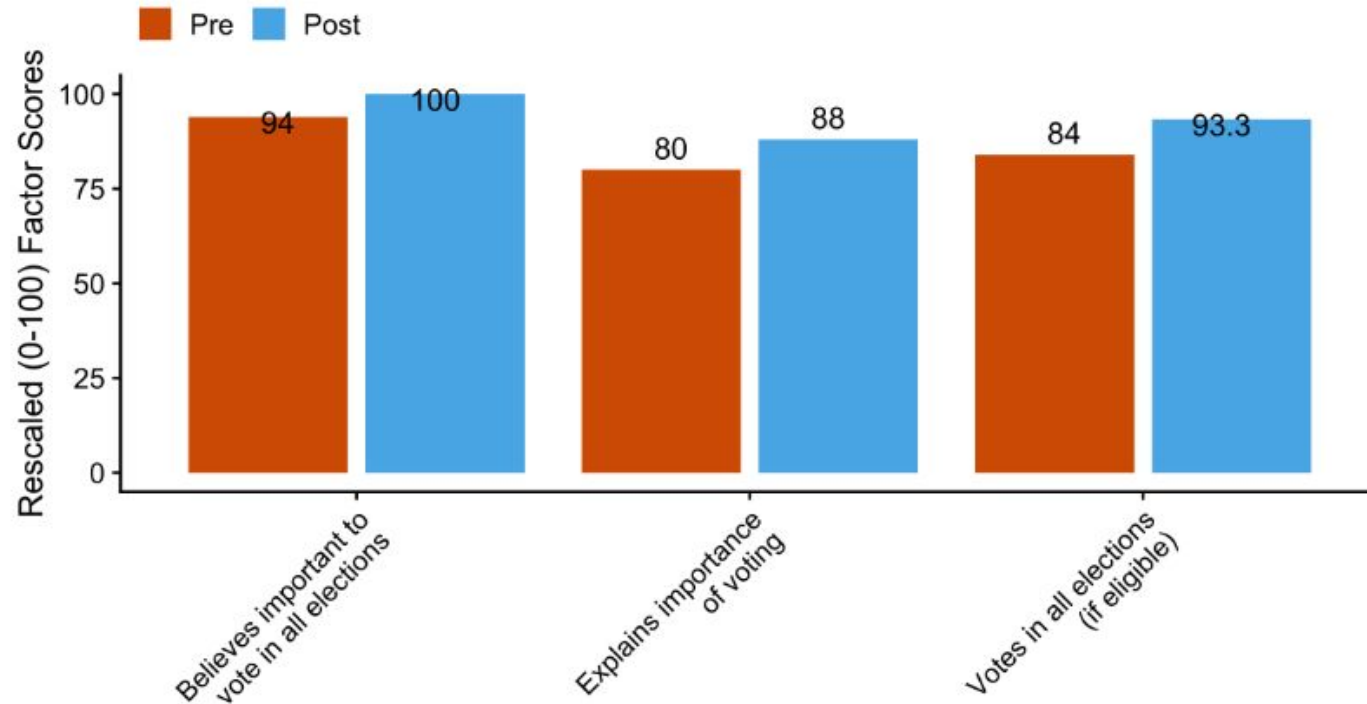
## Parent Leader Survey 2023-24: Results for Civic Outcomes



Source: Prepared for NPLI by Metropolitan for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools

# National Parent Leadership Initiative

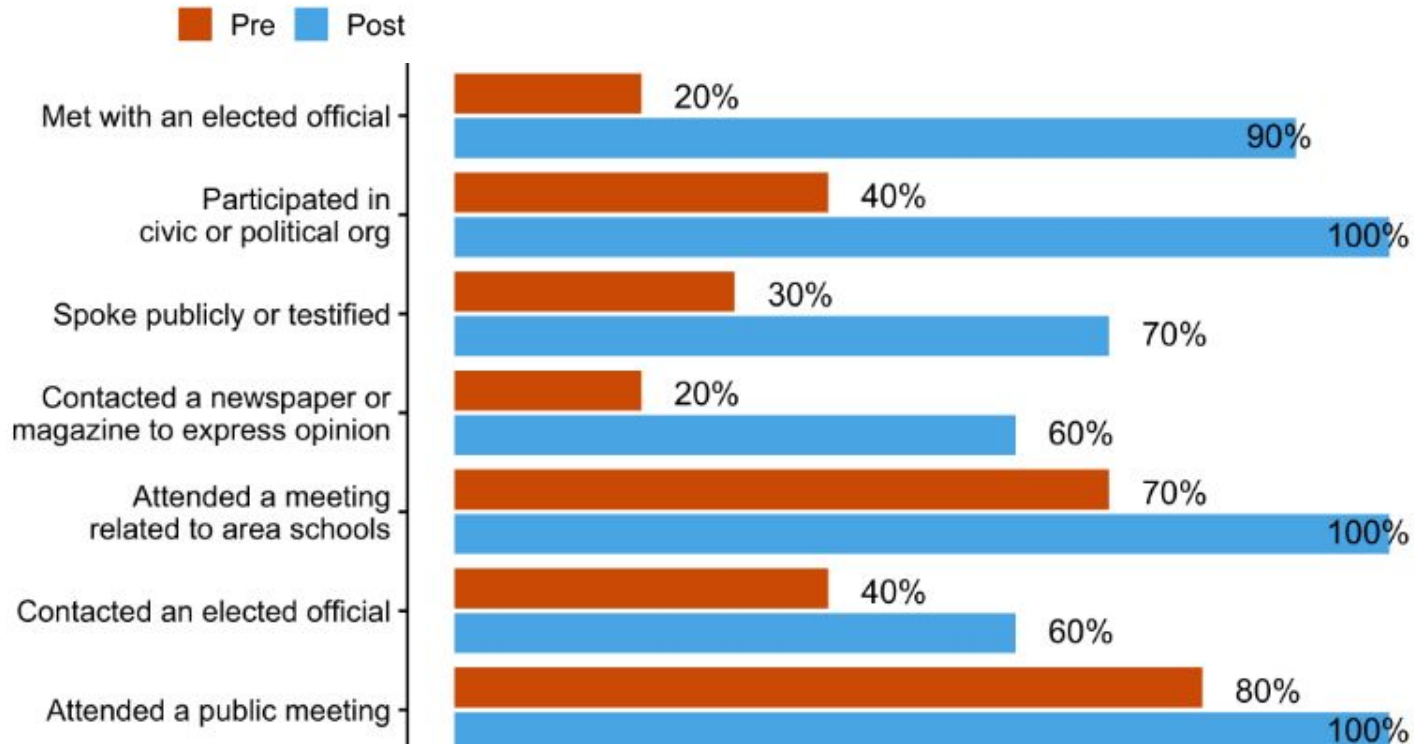
## Parent Leader Survey 2023-24: Results for Voting Attitudes & Behavior



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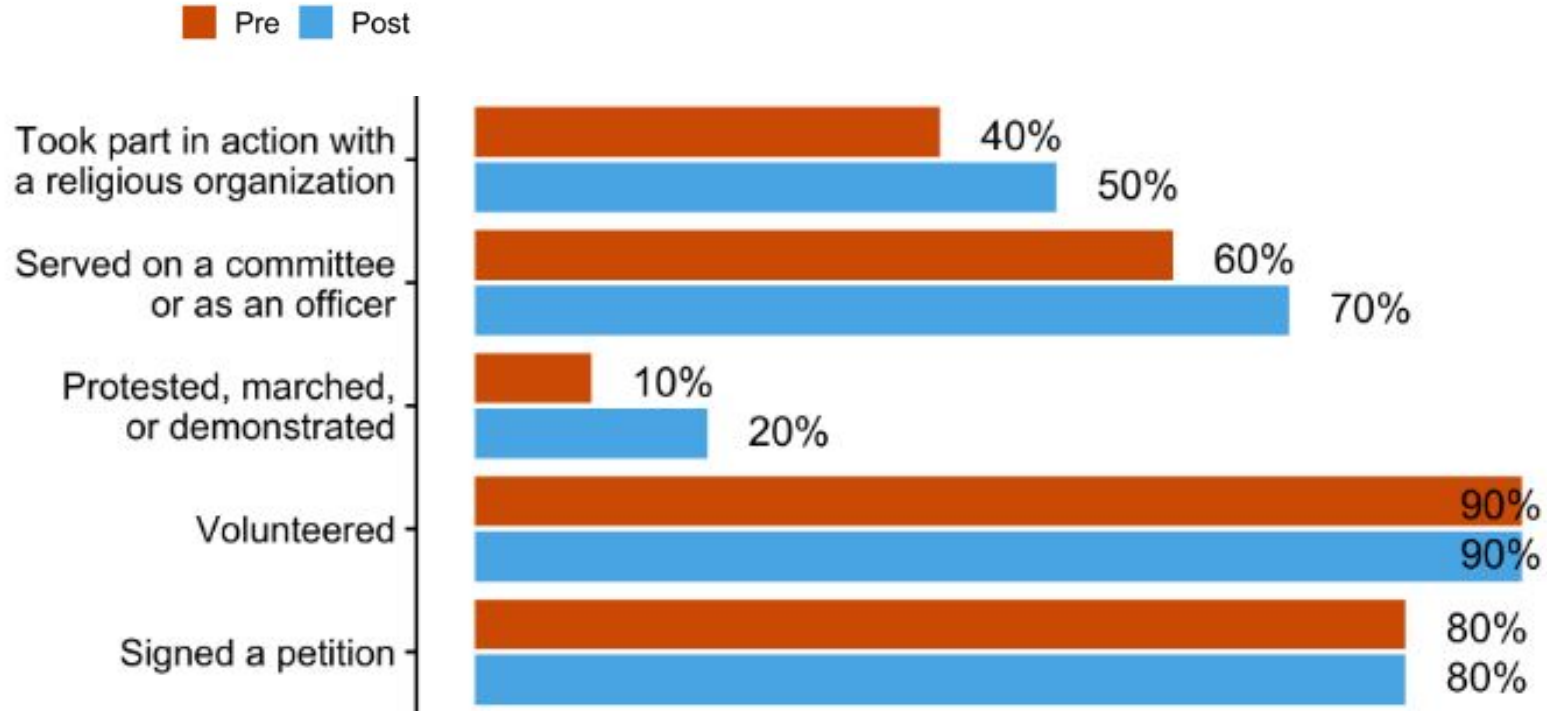
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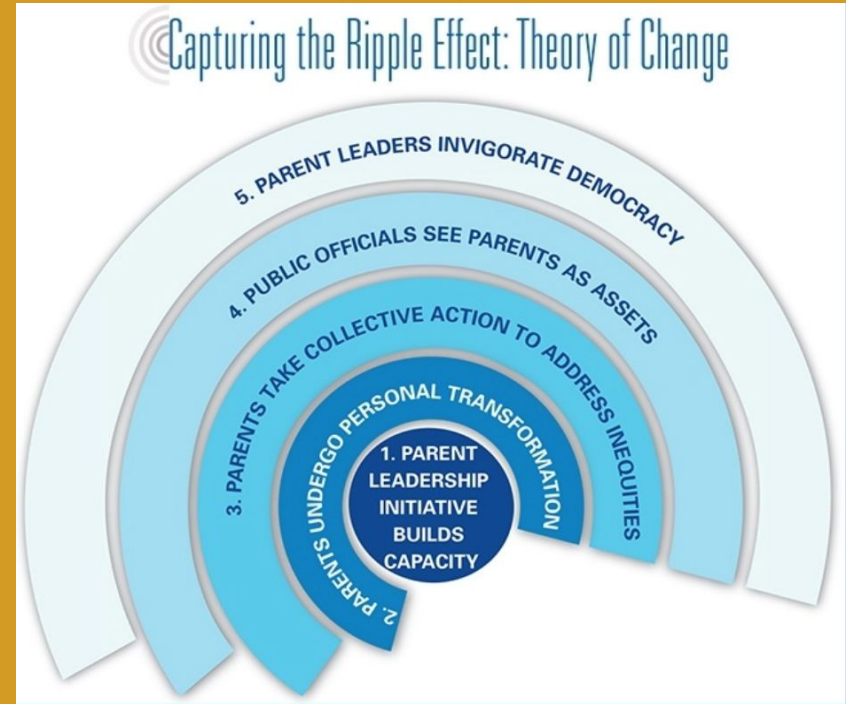
## Parent Leader Survey 2023-24: Results for Civic Action



Source: Prepared for NPLI by Metropolitan for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools

# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

When evaluating the benefits of parent leadership initiatives, one must not only view benefits to participants in terms of personal transformation. If structured appropriately, such initiatives can also facilitate collective action, enhance appreciation for community voice among leaders, and invigorate democracy. These factors must be incorporated into program design and evaluation.



Annenberg Institute for School Reform (2016), *Capturing the Ripple Effect: Developing a Theory of Change for Evaluating Parent Leadership Initiatives*, pg 4.

# ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES THROUGH:

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Austin Justice Coalition\*  
<https://austinjustice.org/>

Hispanic Austin Leadership\*  
<https://www.gahcc.org/about-hispanic-austin-leadership/>

Black Leaders Collective ATX\*  
<https://www.blackleaderscollectiveatx.com/>

African-American Leadership Institute\*  
<https://www.aaliaustin.org/>

Leadership Austin  
<http://leadershipaustin.org/>

Asian Chamber of Commerce Leadership  
Accelerator  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLSD55UmTCvorFT9VMncrM016UqWGjvinSE8cnS8nnlbV7\\_g\\_vQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLSD55UmTCvorFT9VMncrM016UqWGjvinSE8cnS8nnlbV7_g_vQ/viewform)

\*Denotes people of color-led organizations.

# SOCIAL CAPITAL

**The Connections to Success Program supports participants in building social capital through bonding (growing connections with people like me), bridging (growing connections with people different from me) and linking (growing connections with people in positions of power).**

**After a year in the program, the program documented high levels of employment, increased earnings and stronger relationships for program participants.**

## Example #2

### Connections to Success Outcomes

Monthly surveys of 375 participants served over the past 12 months indicate the following:

- 70% of participants retained their jobs 9 months after getting them;
- 82% increased their earnings within 6 months of employment;
- 84% reported reduced conflict in co-parenting relationships;
- 82% reported increased involvement with their children; and
- a 14% recidivism rate for participants 12 months after release from incarceration, compared with 44% nationally.

Strengthening Rural and Urban Communities through Social Capital - "Connections to Success" St. Louis & Kansas City Case Study (2019)

# SOCIAL CAPITAL

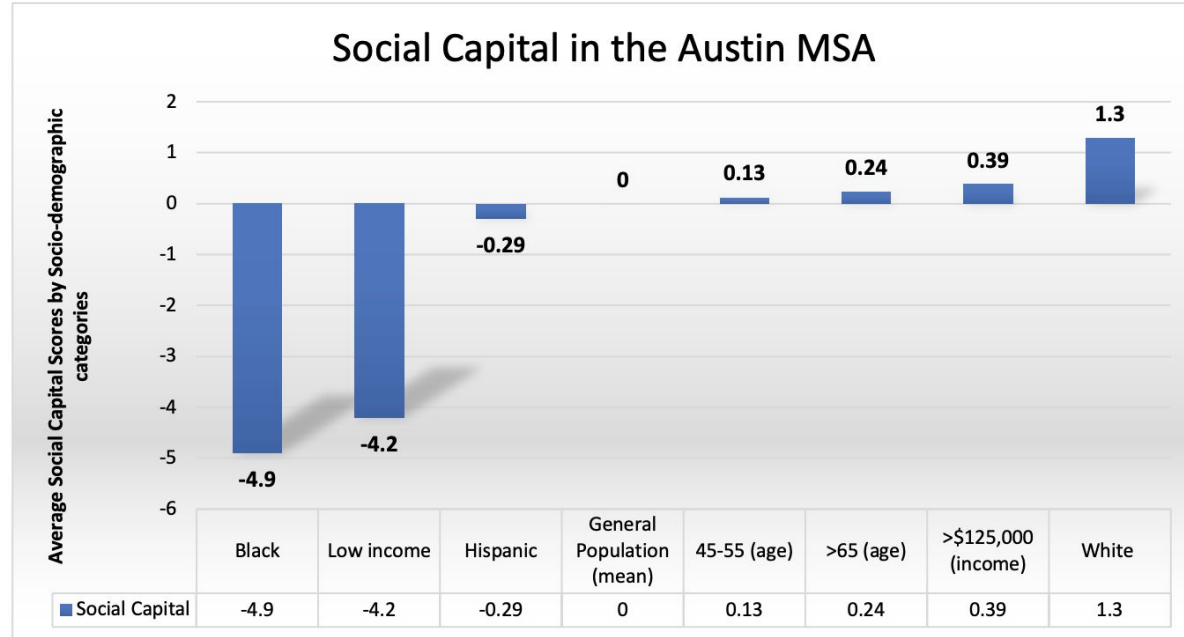


Figure 5- Social Capital in the Austin MSA

Social capital – including features such as interpersonal trust, norms of reciprocity, social connectedness, and social networks – foster community and social participation and can be used to impact a number of beneficial outcomes, including health.

The amount of social capital in a community has implications for a multitude of beneficial outcomes for the community.

Austin Area Sustainability Indicators - "The Relationship between Health and Social Capital in the Austin Area: Evidence, Disparities, and Recommendations " (2018)

# Social Capital & Economic Mobility

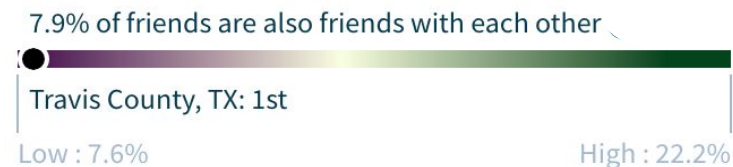
## Economic Connectedness

Based on Current Income



## Cohesiveness

Clustering



## Civic Engagement

Volunteering Rates



Social capital – the strength of our relationships and communities – has been shown to play an important role in outcomes ranging from income to health. Opportunity Insights collected data to measure 3 types of social capital:

Economic Connectedness: The degree to which low-income and high-income people are friends with each other

Cohesiveness: The degree to which social networks are fragmented into cliques

Civic Engagement: Rates of volunteering and participation in community organizations

Opportunity Insights "Social Capital Atlas" (2022)

# Social Capital & Economic Mobility

**Social networks are highly segregate by income.**

**Children who grow up in communities with more cross-class interaction are much more likely to rise out of poverty.**

**Economic connectedness is strongly associated with upward mobility, but other measures of social capital are not.**

**Difference in economic connectedness can explain why racially segregated communities and areas with high poverty rates have lower rates of upward mobility.**

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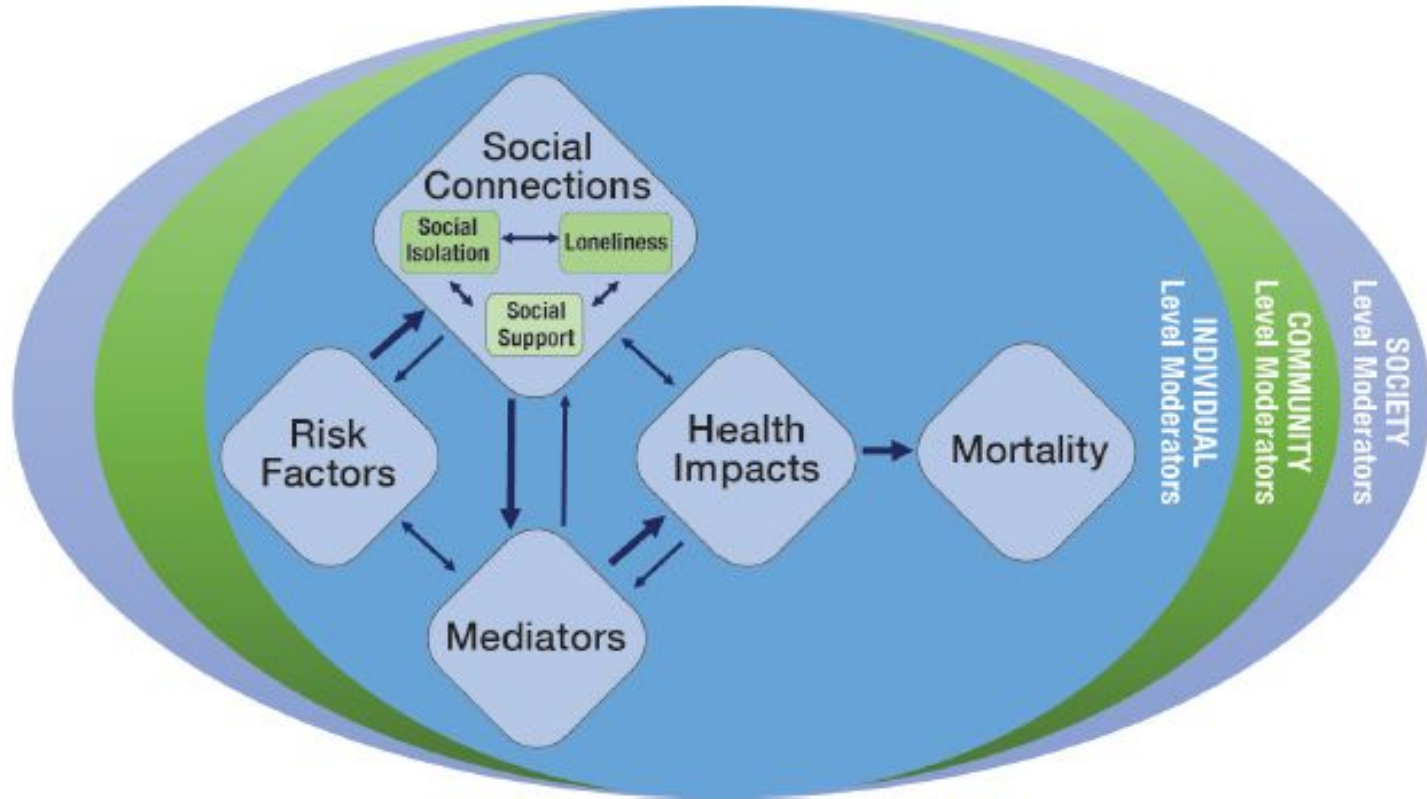
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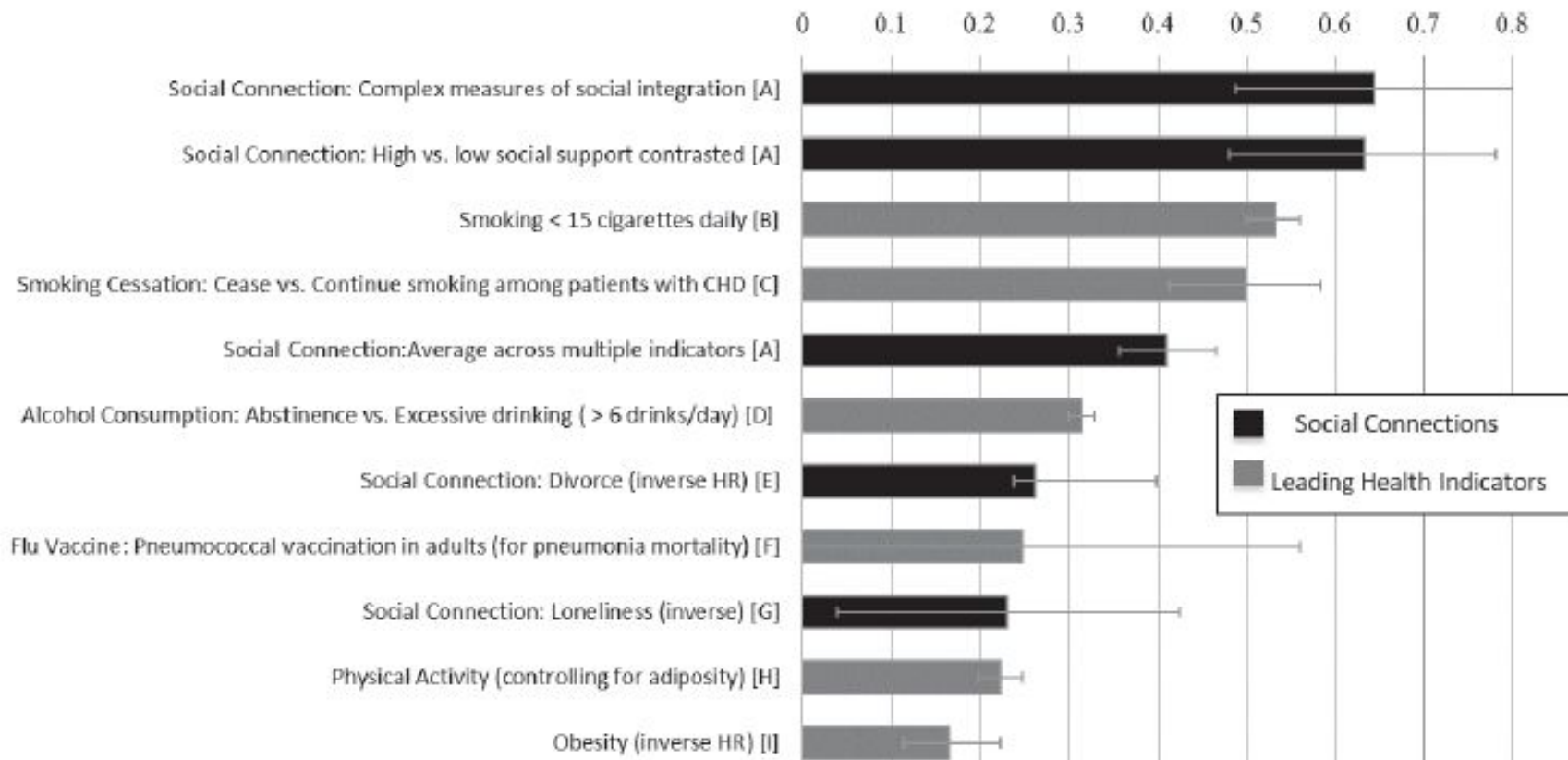
# Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults (2020) Guiding Framework



Source: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Medicine- Social Isolation & Loneliness in Older Adults

# Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults (2020)

## Factors That Could Decrease Mortality - Social Connection vs Leading Health Ind.



Source: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Medicine- Social Isolation & Loneliness in Older Adults

## ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES THROUGH:

## SOCIAL CAPITAL

United Way 2-Gen Coalition for Economic  
Advancement

<https://www.unitedwayaustin.org/?s=2-gen>

Austin Area Urban League\*

<https://aaul.org/>

African-American Youth Harvest Foundation\*

<https://aayhf.org/>

Up Together\*

<https://uptogether.org/>

\*Denotes people of color-led organizations.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

## State / National Organizations Working In This Arena

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
Strengthening Human Services Through  
Social Capital (research; podcast; case  
studies)

<https://aspe.hhs.gov/strengthening-human-services-through-social-capital>

Search Institute

<https://www.search-institute.org/>

Center for Disease Control - Social  
Connection

<https://www.cdc.gov/social-connectedness/about/index.html>

# COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Undoing Racism

<https://undoingracismaustin.org/activites/register-for-future-undoing-racism-workshops-in-austin/>

Community Healing Circles

<https://students.austincc.edu/truth-racial-healing-and-transformation-center/racial-healing-circles/>

## RESOURCE TO LEARN ABOUT ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

CAN "Get Engaged" Podcast

<https://canatx.org/podcasts/>

## COALITIONS WORKING TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES

Black Austin Coalition

<https://blackaustincoalition.com/>

Austin Justice Coalition

<https://austinjustice.org/>

Brave Communities

<https://bravecommunities.org/>

Communities of Color United

<https://www.atxccu.org/>

Community Resilience Trust

<https://communityresiliencetrust.org/>