

# MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL ISOLATION

Jessica Barnes, MS

Program Manager

SCDMH Office of Suicide Prevention

## WHAT RESEARCH TELLS US

- According to the CDC loneliness is associated with higher rates of:
  - Depression, anxiety, and suicide<sup>1</sup>
- One study found that depressive symptoms are higher in people who feel lonely or isolated even when adjusted for socio-demographic variables<sup>2</sup>
- 1 in 5 people will say they often feel lonely
  - 1 in 3 when talking about the elderly population
- “People who are socially isolated are more likely to die prematurely, regardless of underlying health issues”<sup>3</sup>
- Over 70% of adults 55 and older reported feelings of loneliness on the [hope.connectsyou.org](https://hope.connectsyou.org) Mental Health Screener

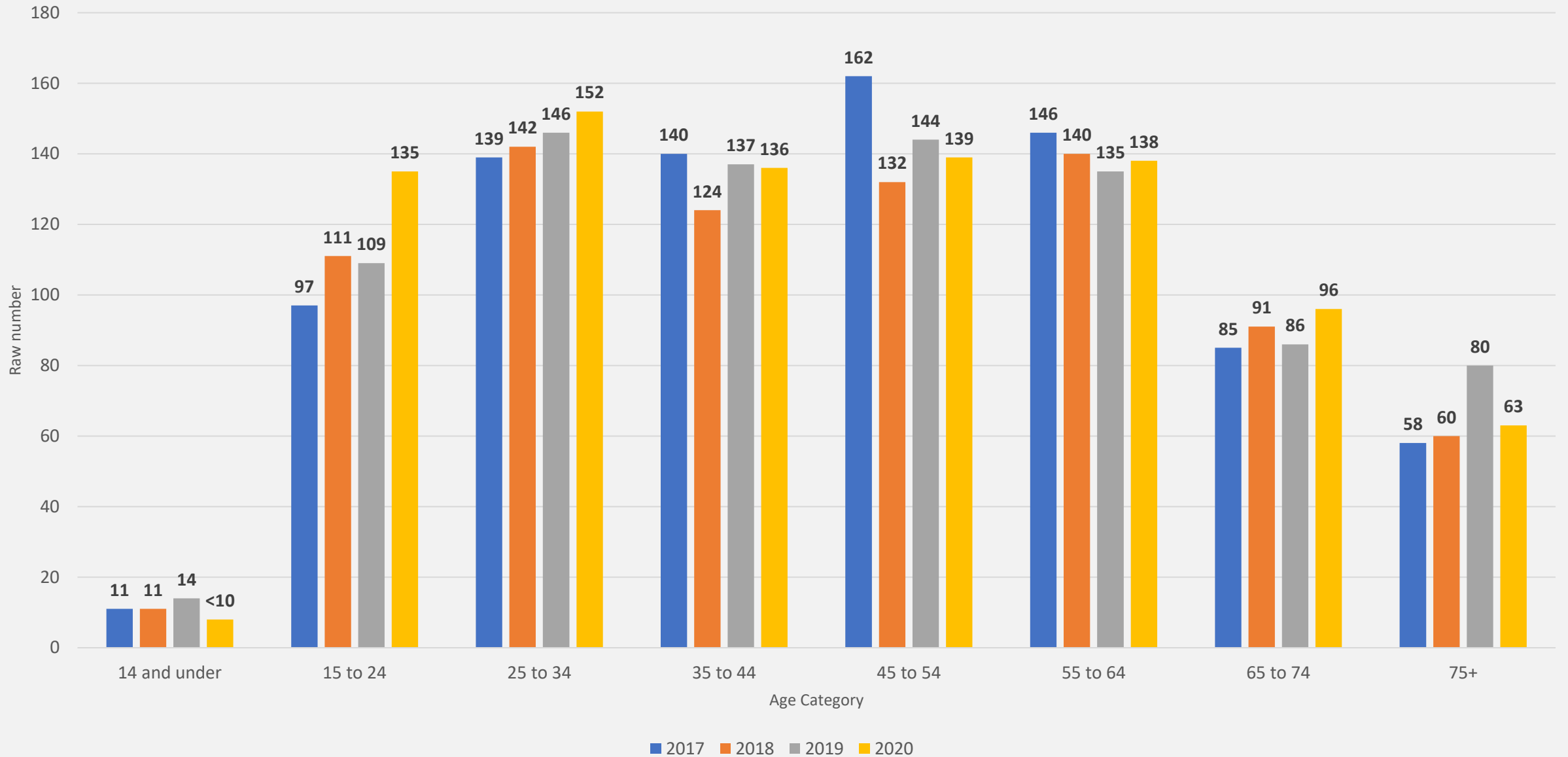
# POPULATIONS AT RISK

- Older adults tend to be at risk for isolation because of the following:
  - retirement
  - widowhood
  - children leaving home
  - age-related health problems<sup>4</sup>
- People with disabilities or health concerns that limit their physical activity<sup>4</sup>

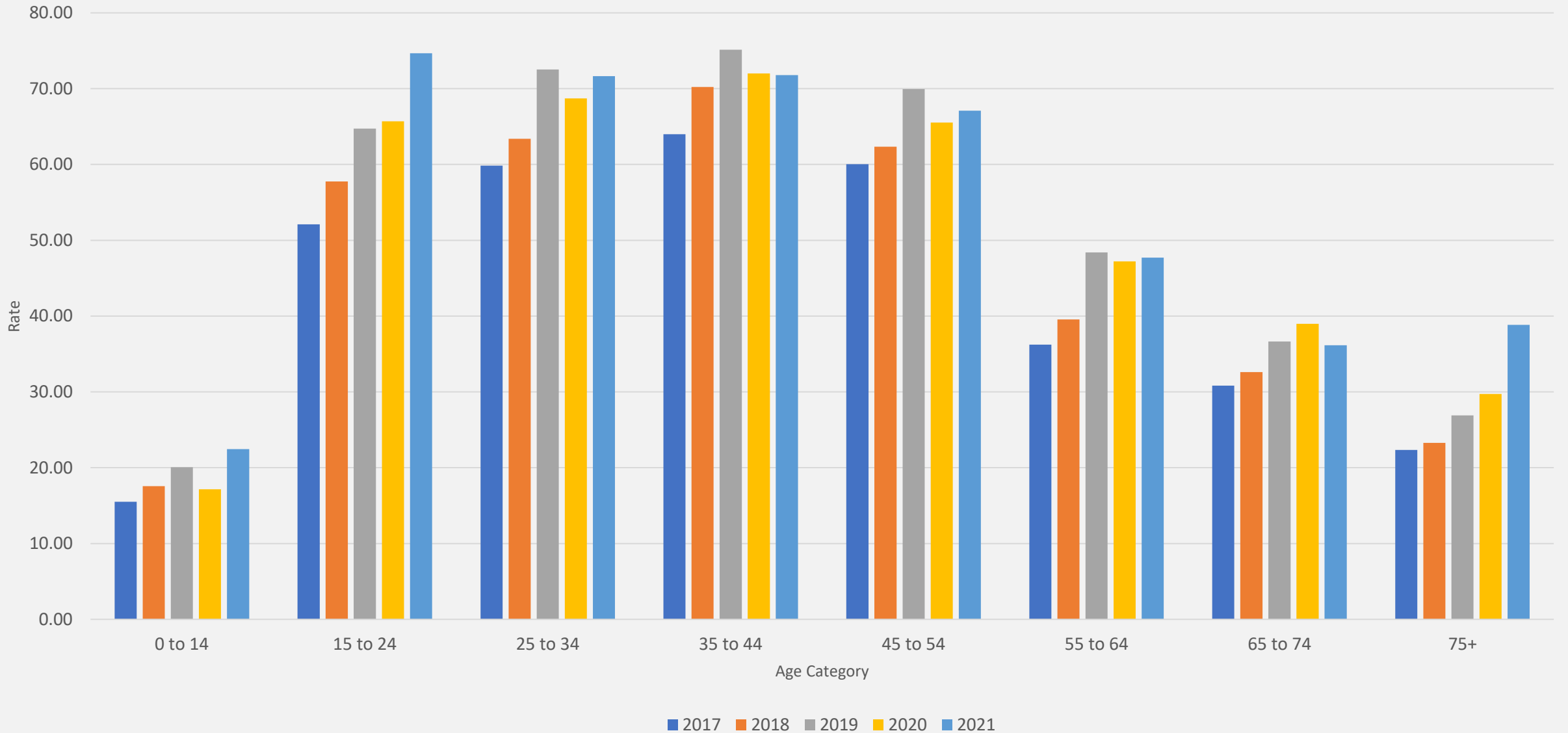
## WHAT CAN HELP?

- Re-socializing can reverse some of the effects of isolation when it comes to feelings of depression
- Make socializing a priority
- Engage the community
- Move/exercise
- Ask for help<sup>3</sup>

# Suicide Death Raw Numbers 2017-2020



# Mental Health Trauma 2017-2021



## RESOURCES

1. [Loneliness and Social Isolation Linked to Serious Health Conditions \(cdc.gov\)](#)
2. MITH, K., & VICTOR, C. (2019). Typologies of loneliness, living alone and social isolation, and their associations with physical and mental health. *Ageing and Society*, 39(8), 1709-1730.  
doi:10.1017/S0144686X18000132
3. [Social isolation and your mental health | Livi UK](#)
4. [Isolation and mental health: Signs, impact, and how to cope \(medicalnewstoday.com\)](#)
5. Childers, CD & Harrington, JD. SC Suicide Data 2022 Annual Report. (November 2022). SCDMH Office of Suicide Prevention, Zero Suicide Initiative.