

Study reveals everyday technology helps fight loneliness

June 14 2019, by Shelley Hughes



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A [new report](#) suggests that people feel less lonely when they have access to everyday technology such as a radio, television or tablet. The research, co-produced by the University of York and the loneliness charity

WaveLength, looked at data collected from 445 people over two years and found that they rated their health more positively after being given new technology.

The [study participants](#) had an average age of 44 and over 50% had been homeless and experienced [poor mental health](#).

Positive influence

Lead author of the study, Professor Marin Webber, from the Department of Social Work and Social Policy at the University of York, said: "The research shows that [technology](#) can have a [positive influence](#) on the life of someone who is lonely.

"The benefits of everyday technology are heightened for people who are at the greatest risk of suffering from loneliness. This includes people who are in a bad financial situation and experiencing poor physical and mental health."

Clare, who is living in Kilburn, recently received a television from WaveLength after she left prison. Experiencing several health issues and disabilities means that she is now often housebound. Commenting on the difference her television has made, she explained: "I have found the TV to be invaluable as it is a real companion to me when I am bedbound and stops me from feeling lonely. I really enjoy tuning into my favourite programmes for entertainment and learning. The TV has made such a positive difference to my life."

Connect

The report calls on [policy makers](#) to make funding available so that vulnerable people can purchase everyday technology and for free access

to a minimum standard of broadband in order to connect greater numbers of people via smart televisions and tablet computers.

CEO of Wavelength, Tim Leech, said: "Our latest report shows that everyday media technology has a real role to play in helping people to feel less lonely. The research shows a statistically significant relationship between technology usage, a reduction in loneliness, and an increase in self-rated health. The results of this study should lead to a greater recognition of the valuable role technology can play in fighting loneliness, alongside other forms of support."

Provided by University of York

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