



# Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation

“ Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation has been an underappreciated public health crisis that has harmed individual and societal health. Our relationships are a source of healing and well-being hiding in plain sight – one that can help us live healthier, more fulfilled, and more productive lives. ”

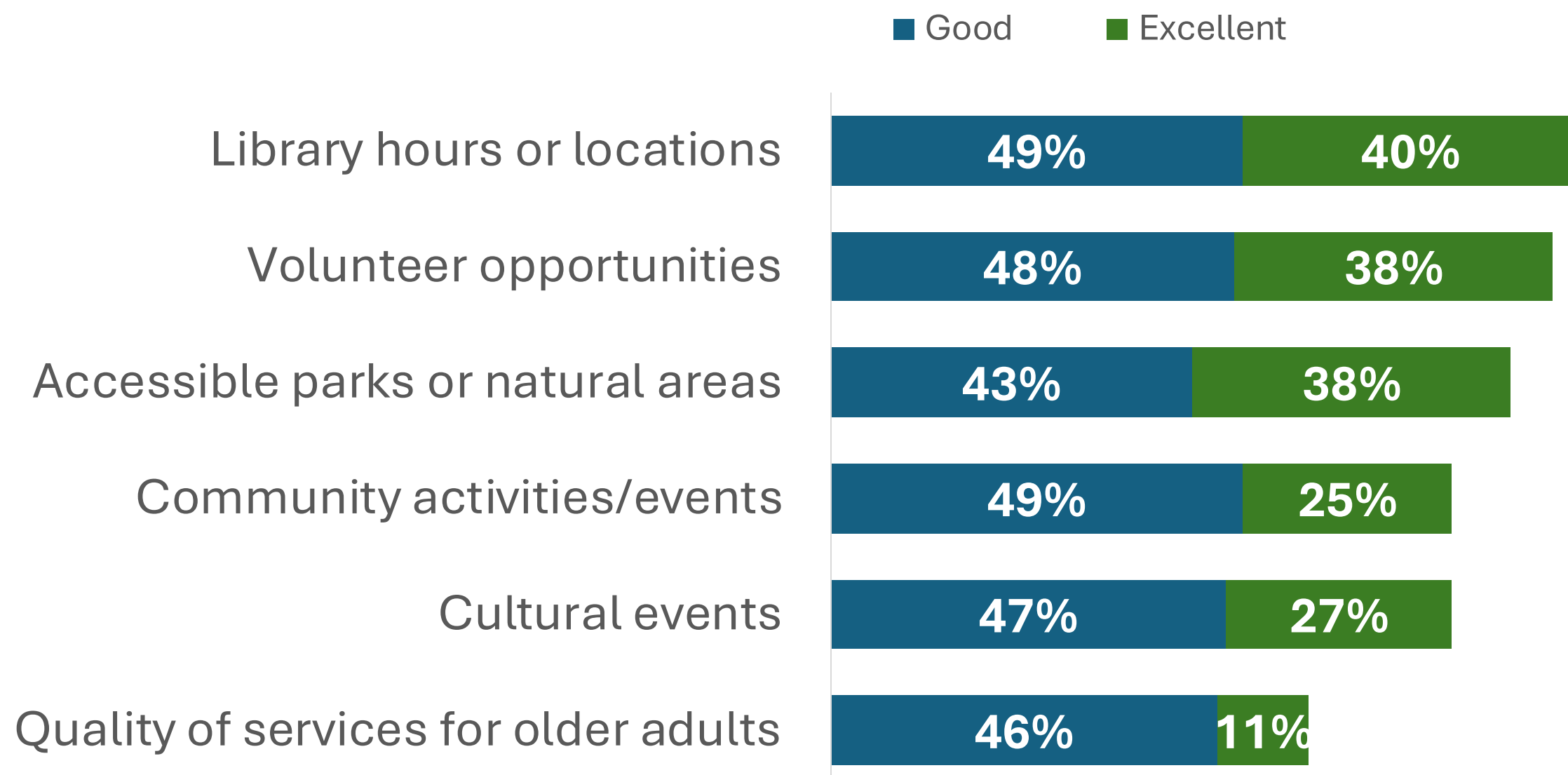
- U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy



Source: US Dept. of Health and Human Services

**GOAL:** "We will have lifelong opportunities for work, volunteering, engagement, and leadership and will be protected from isolation, discrimination, abuse, neglect, and exploitation."

## Older adults express very positive views of their communities.



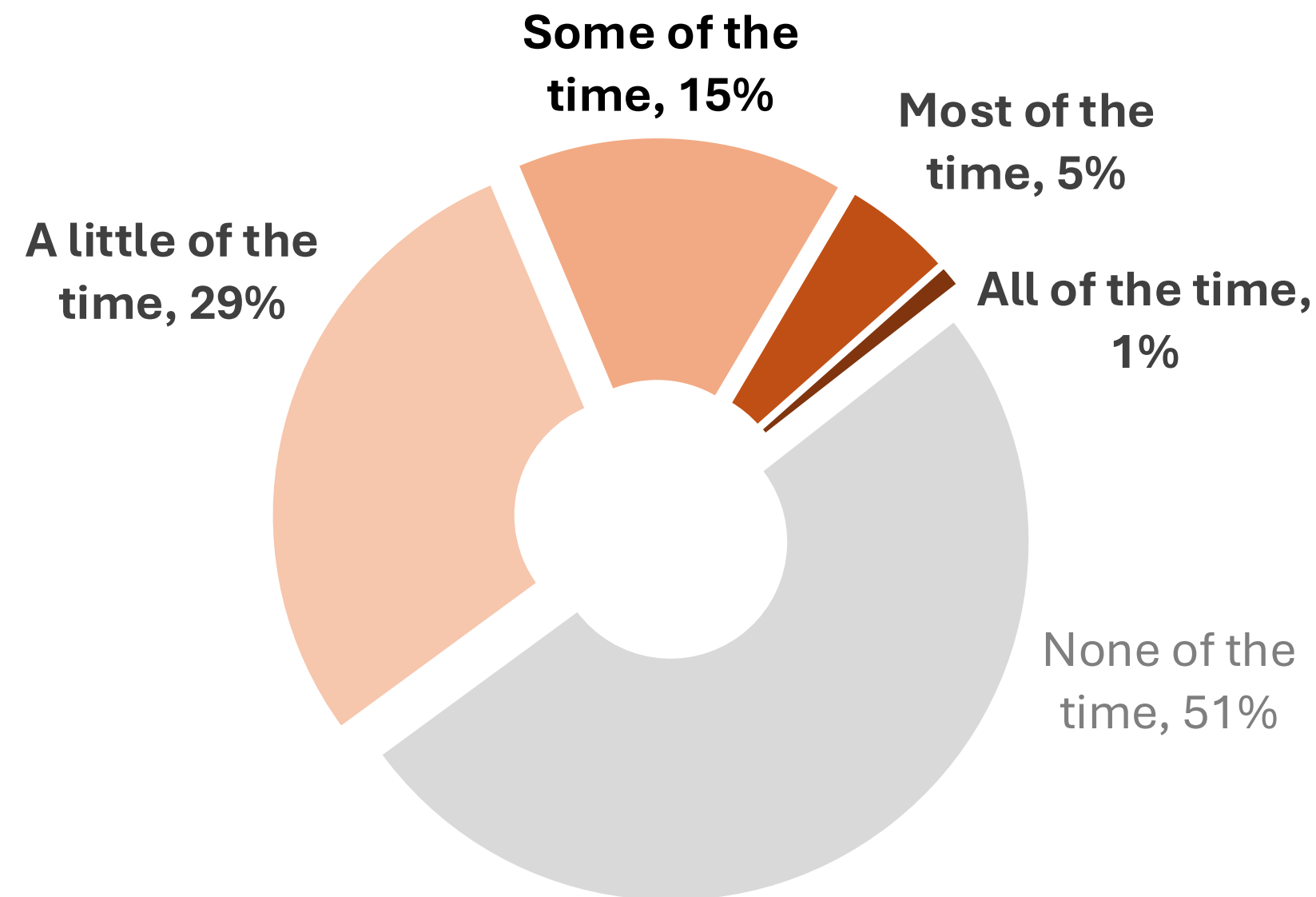
Note: Based on 1,754 to 2,167 respondents aged 60+.

**Watsonville respondents** aged 60+ rated their community less positively than residents of City of Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, and Capitola on all dimensions except services for older adults.



What services and resources do older adults in Watsonville value?

## In the past 30 days, how often did you feel lonely or isolated?



Note: Based on 2,331 respondents aged 60+

*"I'm watching friends disappear and drift off in different directions. I feel isolated in little units, and I don't socialize as much."*

**13%** of low-income respondents felt lonely or isolated **most** or **all** of the time.

### Who feels lonely or isolated more frequently?

- Younger residents (aged 40-59)
- Those who are unstably housed
- Those who live alone
- Those who report a disability
- Low-income respondents

### What would improve your quality of life?

*"Not being alone all the time... having another around sometimes... the energy... would do a world of good."*

*"I might be the only person to say good morning to the person that day." – Meals on Wheels volunteer*

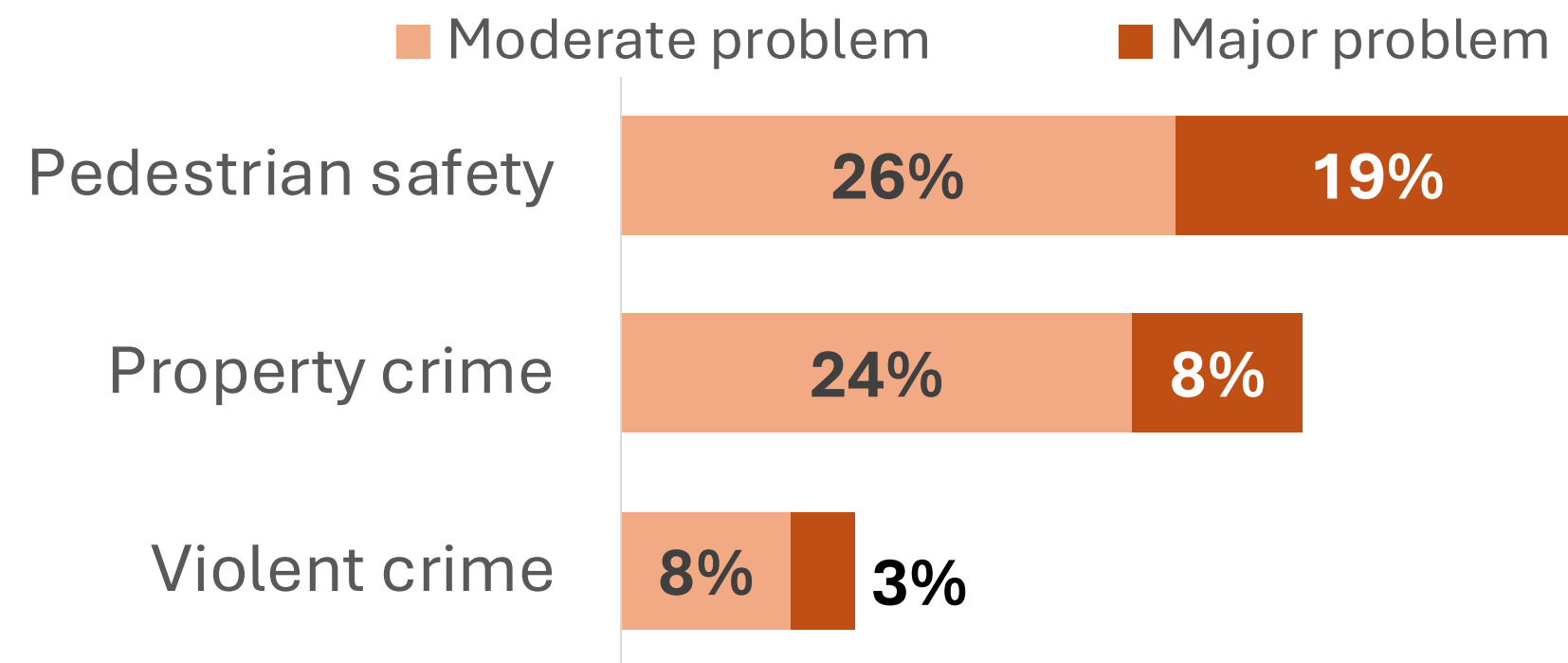
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### How might we decrease loneliness and isolation?

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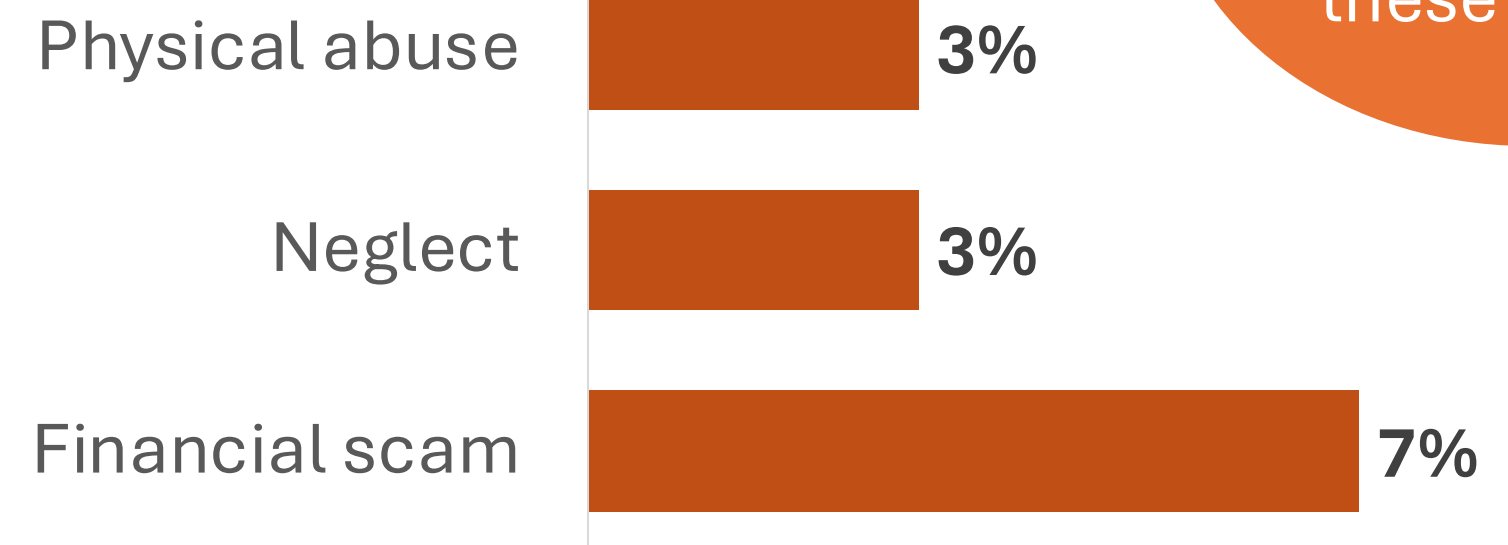
### How might we connect individuals who are most likely to feel lonely and isolated?

**44% of adults 60+ identify pedestrian safety as a moderate or major problem in their neighborhood.**



Note: Ns = 1,929-2,234 respondents aged 60+.

**In the past year, have you experienced any of the following?**



**11%**  
experienced at least one of these issues.

Note: Ns = 2,311 respondents aged 60+.

### Where is pedestrian safety of greatest concern?

- San Lorenzo Valley, North Coast, Live Oak, Watsonville, City of Santa Cruz.

### Where is property crime of greatest concern?

- City of Santa Cruz, Live Oak, Inland South communities.

### Who is at greater risk of physical abuse?

- Respondents with **low income** and those with a **disability** report abuse at **2x** the rate of their counterparts.
- **Spanish-speaking** and **unstably housed** respondents report abuse at **3x** the rate of their counterparts.

### Who is at greater risk of scams?

- Those who **live alone**, report a **disability**, and have **low income** report being victimized by financial scams at higher rates.



**How might we ensure the safety of all residents, especially those at higher risk?**