

2024-2026 STRATEGIC PRIORITY





A letter from the executive director

Dear Only7Seconds family,

I am so excited to share a significant announcement about the future direction of Only7Seconds! Before I do that, I wanted to take a quick moment to express my gratitude. This grassroots movement has accomplished so much in the last 5 years and we could not have done that without the overwhelming support from all of our generous volunteers, partners and donors. We estimate that our message has been heard or seen by over 1 MILLION individuals. Thousands have used our resources. We have hosted & participated in over 100 events and activities. There are multiple stories of lives saved— simply because of our message.

Just a few weeks ago, I spoke with a high school teacher who saw one of our signs. It reminded them to check in on someone. As it turned out, that someone was a young adult in the middle of a suicide attempt when the message from this teacher came through. That message interrupted the attempt and now the individual is receiving the help they need. On some days, the message of Only7Seconds is that powerful. And on other days, it is as simple as giving someone a smile and making their day better.

In May this year, the US Surgeon General announced an advisory on the loneliness epidemic. Shortly following that, he also released an advisory on social media and youth mental health. We couldn't be more excited to see movement towards addressing loneliness in our country. While we have seen resources grow for many groups and individuals, there continues to be a serious lack of resources & support for youth loneliness and connection. Gen-Z still represents the loneliest generation.

- We have hosted multiple school assemblies this year and in each of them, over 50% of students self-reported that they have felt lonely in the past week. Furthermore, 20% said they felt lonely always or almost always.
- Nearly 50% of youth in Washington State are experiencing clinically diagnosed anxiety, yet most are not being treated or supported in any way.
- On average, youth spend 5 hours a day on social media.
- 2022 was the highest number of youth suicides in the history of the United States with nearly 50,000 youth taking their own lives.

- More than 20% of teens seriously considered suicide.
- Loneliness is among the strongest predictive factors for suicide and other mental health disorders.

Only7Seconds started because of youth loneliness. Both my mom (our founder) and I have worked with youth throughout most of our lives. We have seen how lonely youth are. I have been a camp counselor, camp director, youth group leader, a public speaker for youth, and now a parent of youth. I began working with Only7Seconds because of youth loneliness that led to suicide. I have a deep passion for youth and their well-being.

Because of all of this, I couldn't be more excited to announce that Only7Seconds board and staff agreed that our exclusive and specific focus will be youth and young adults for the next 3 years.

WE WANT TO ERADICATE YOUTH LONELINESS.

To start, we have a goal to reach and empower at least 500,000 youth & young adults by 2027. In short, here's a bit of what that will look like!

- In the coming months and year, you will see more of our resources and programs specifically dedicated to youth or people who work with youth.
- We will be expanding our Connection Curriculum to as many classrooms and groups as possible.
- We will be focused on bringing awareness and the message of Only7Seconds to as many youth as possible.
- If you work with youth (through schools, after-hours programs, coaching, etc.) or spend time with youth, we will be working to bring you meaningful resources and training.
- If you are a youth or young adult, we want to engage with you to participate and advocate for our mission to your peers!

I am so excited to have this focus of serving youth. To create a world and culture of connection, it starts with the next generation being equipped with the tools to connect, to build empathy and compassion for others, and create a support system of meaningful connections. Thank you for helping us over the last 5 years to arrive at this moment. Our story is only getting started!

Because you matter, Luke (Wall

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITY

By 2027, Only7Seconds is established as a national leader addressing the youth and young adult loneliness epidemic.

3 YEAR GOAL

Reach and empower 500,000 youth and young adults (ages 8-24).

VVe Believe:

ABOUT OUR WORK:

WE CREATE

with excellence.

WE ENGAGE

with courage and boldness.

WE PARTICIPATE

with respect and joy.

WE SUPPORT

a culture of belonging and community.

ABOUT INDIVIDUALS:

EVERY PERSON MATTERS.

We recognize the dignity of each person and the innate value they bring through their beliefs, culture, heritage and abilities.

EVERY INDIVIDUAL HAS IMPACT.

Whatever your circle of influence, everyone has the ability to positively impact others.

EVERYONE NEEDS CONNECTION.

No one is immune to the need for human connection. It is vital to our health and well-being.

ABOUT LONELINESS:

THE SOLUTION TO LONELINESS IS CONNECTION.

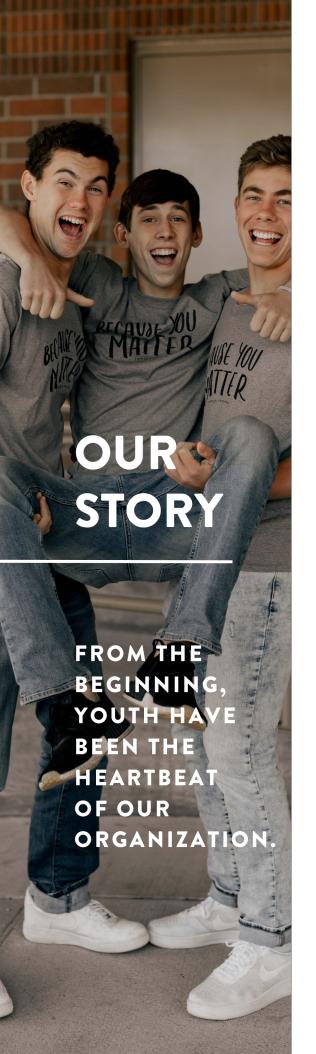
Loneliness can have a profound impact on life. Solving loneliness begins by intentional, meaningful connection. Connection is a basic human need.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY.

Showing up with compassion creates the ability to see others and help others feel seen. Empathy is critical to meaningful connection.

THE POWER OF STORIES.

Stories move us toward empathy. Stories connect us together. Stories remind us that we are not as alone as we may feel.



In 2018, Ethan Wall was unexpectedly bedridden with a sickness for nearly a month. During that time, friends and family didn't reach out and check in on him. It led to loneliness and then depression. After a few weeks, his mom Kristin asked "How long does it take to send the text: 'I care about you.' or 'How are you doing?'? How long does it take to dial a phone number and hit send?" Going out to the kitchen table, she timed it—only 7 seconds.

Years of working with youth in a separate non-profit, Kristin recognized the pain of loneliness through life experiences of anxiety, depression, eating disorders, addiction, trauma, and suicide. Recognizing how seven seconds of intentionality could make a difference was the beginning of Only7Seconds. A simple text, smile, handwritten note, a t-shirt, a sign, or a post-it note are ordinary acts that make an extraordinary difference.

From there, Kristin began working with youth through school assemblies and events and community outreach. Community partners and schools began to support the message of Only7Seconds and increase awareness of loneliness and the simplicity of making connections. In 2020, COVID-19 hit the entire world. Isolation, mandatory lock-downs and social distancing pushed loneliness further into the public conversation. Multiple youth suicides in Washington State, where Only7Seconds is located, emphasized the urgent and crucial need for conversation around loneliness and connection.

Only7Seconds rapidly grew into a 501(c)3 non-profit organization based in Chelan, Washington. Kristin served as a board member, staff and now volunteer & advisory, while her oldest son, Luke, serves as the Executive Director.

Over the last three years, Only7Seconds has served primarily as an awareness campaign regarding loneliness and social isolation. Our message has been heard by hundreds of thousands of individuals through SHARE Days (7th of each month), Ambassadors (our most ardent supporters), the I Know Lonely Project, merchandise, yard signs, partnerships, and more. We have stories of hundreds of lives impacted and many lives saved as a result of our work.

In May of 2023, the US Surgeon General published an advisory about the epidemic of loneliness. Despite no longer having a worldwide pandemic and lockdowns, rates of loneliness remain critically high. Thankfully, dozens of individuals and groups are beginning to raise the alarm of this issue and responding to the US Surgeon General's call.

Following the advisory, the Only7Seconds team embarked on a journey to determine the future of Only7Seconds.Instead of being a broad awareness campaign, we have determined that narrowing the depth of our focus towards youth and young adults is the most important priority. Youth are the loneliest demographic in the United States. From the beginning, youth have been the heartbeat of our organization. Our future is supporting youth to live more intentionally, meaningfully connected lives.

Glossary of Definitions

LONELINESS

The state of distress or discomfort that results when one perceives a gap between one's desire for social connection and actual experiences of it.

CONNECTION

When two or more people interact with each other and each person feels valued, seen and heard.

COMMUNITY

A unified body of individuals sharing common interests, goals or values.

SOCIAL ISOLATION

Lack of social contacts or having few people to interact with regularly.

EXCELLENCE

Collaboratively innovating new approaches, practicing mindfulness, adjusting course when needed, & remaining disciplined in fulfilling our ambitious mission.

COURAGE

Demonstrating a readiness to face the challenges and speak the truth needed to show support and inspire hope.

BOLDNESS

Willingness to act innovatively and engage with confidence.

RESPECT

Recognizing the dignity of each person and the innate value they bring through their beliefs, culture, heritage and abilities.

JOY

Engaging with people and places that encourage gratitude.

BELONGING

The feeling of security, support and fitting in when there is a sense of being valued and appreciated.

EMPATHY

The art of stepping imaginatively into the shoes of another person, understanding their feelings and perspectives, and using that understanding to guide your actions.

7 SECONDS

In a world more connected than ever (through technology), it takes 7 seconds or less to reach out and make an intentional connection with someone you care about.

ONLY SECONDS

Join us as we work to end youth loneliness.

BECAUSE YOU(TH) MATTER



WWW.ONLY7SECONDS.COM

BECAUSE YOU(TH) MATTER