

# EVERYTHING WE LEARNED THROUGH LONELY NOT ALONE

## About Lonely Not Alone

**Lonely Not Alone** is a **Co-op Foundation** campaign made by young people, for young people, to tackle the stigma of youth loneliness. It was created in partnership with specialist design agency, **Effervescent**.

We launched Lonely Not Alone in 2019 to **help everyone show they cared about youth loneliness**. It was part of our wider Belong programme which aimed to tackle youth loneliness in three ways; Fund projects ; Strengthen the youth sector ; Tackle stigma. The final objective was informed by our [All our Emotions research](#) that found **81% of young people said a fear of others' reactions would stop them talking about feeling lonely**. We wanted to change that.

Lonely Not Alone helped us to **build fairer and more co-operative communities** and deliver on Co-op's vision of **'Co-operating for a Fairer World.'**

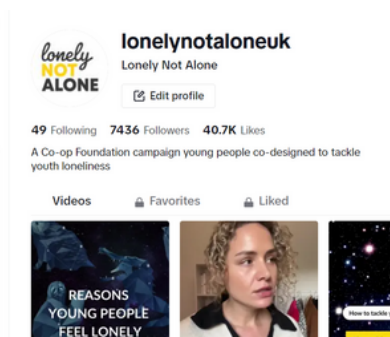
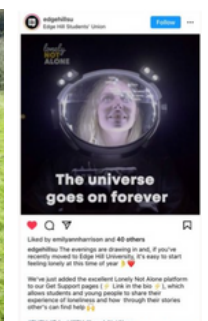
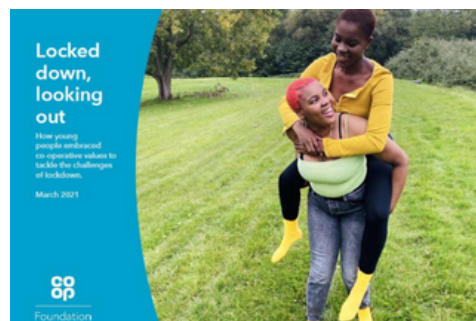
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# Key Achievements

We've achieved a lot over the last five years thanks to young people. This includes:

- **Working with 50 young co-designers from across the UK. Two of these have volunteered throughout the lifetime of the campaign.**
- Developing the first ever Theory of Change for a Co-op Foundation campaign.
- **Achieving 208 pieces of media coverage and gaining more than 12,000 social media followers.**
- Reaching 3.1m young people at our peak. 97% of this group took an action as a result of our campaign (2021 data from a survey of 2,000 young people).
- **Seeing positive upwards trends across all our outcomes and impact measurements.**
- Hundreds of organisations got behind the campaign over the years to help us spread the word about the campaign
- **Writing and publishing five pieces of research into youth loneliness, many of which have been cited by other researchers and within the DCMS Tackling Loneliness Hub.**
- Presenting our campaign to MPs at two APPGs on loneliness and one Loneliness Action Group Conference. This is the first time the Foundation has been asked to present in the House of Commons.
- **Achieving MP engagement and support from Secretaries of State, Loneliness Ministers and the Prime Minister.**
- Launching an interactive digital universe that now has over 300 stories and over 60 messages of support to show young people that they might be lonely, but they're not alone.
- **Creating opportunities for young people to support each other via social media and the website**



# Our recommendations

## Creative development with young people

- Be guided by young people's authentic lived experience
- Young people who are not creative professionals benefit from rehearsal days before photoshoots
- Give young people active roles in developing content they've suggested
- Need different types of activations for campaigns - some people are more able or willing to do more than others
- Timelines need to be planned out well in advance, taking into account peak periods for young people, etc.

If you'd like some help, support or advice about co-creation, email [eloise.bella.day@gmail.com](mailto:eloise.bella.day@gmail.com) or visit [BellaDay.co.uk](http://BellaDay.co.uk)

## Marketing

- Young people prefer behind-the-scenes content and user generated content. Start collating a bank of content as soon as possible.
- It's important to be audience-first when choosing marketing channels
- Involve young people in the management of social media platforms to create authentic engagement and give them a platform to facilitate conversations
- Consider outsourcing social media support to capitalise on trends and create a consistent buzz
- People want to hear from the young people directly, so give them the opportunity to be involved in being a spokesperson for the campaign

## Funders

- Partnerships are essential when developing campaigns and trying to reach desired audience
- Lonely Not Alone would have benefitted from an exit strategy from the start
- It's hard to measure some topics, like loneliness. We used the four outcomes from our Belong programme. We then turned these into campaign outcomes and tracked them each year. If anything was looking like it needed particular attention, we amended our campaign strategy.
- Regular research with our target audiences showed impact and informed annual campaign strategies - different levels available depending on budget
- It is difficult to encourage national behaviour change through a campaign alone, particularly when budgets are limited
- Campaigns can have reach and impact that goes beyond funding alone

## Research

- Can be time intensive but very important for understanding impact
- PR value of research is incidental
- Helps to influence campaign output and strengthen decision making