



# TALK TO A STRANGER

NOV. 18-24, 2024 WEEK



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CAMPAIGN GUIDE



LEARN MORE: [www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org](http://www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org) @GenWellProject



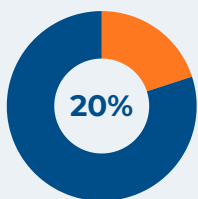


**We've always been told, "Don't talk to strangers!"**

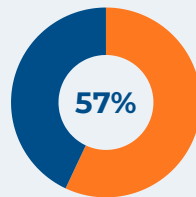
**We're here to change that.**

Talking to strangers offers so many benefits to our physical and mental health, including:

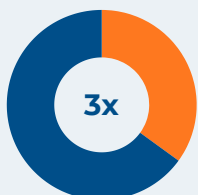
- Increased happiness
- A strengthened sense of belonging
- Increased mental sharpness
- Improved mood
- Improved trust
- Greater optimism
- Improved empathy
- Decreased sense of loneliness and isolation



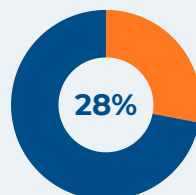
Only 20% of Canadians speak to strangers everyday.



57% of Canadians believe that talking to strangers can open them up to new perspectives.



Canadian research shows that those who speak to strangers once a week are up to 3x happier than those who don't speak to strangers.



Only 28% of Canadians believe that speaking to strangers can make them happier.

*\*Results from GenWell's 2021 Canadian Social Connection Survey*



## ■ What is Talk to a Stranger Week?

Talk To A Stranger Week, which takes place from **November 18-24, 2024**, is intended to raise awareness of the benefits of talking to strangers and give Canadians the excuse and permission to make it happen.

Talking to strangers is an opportunity to build a sense of connection and community that many need in a post-pandemic world. It is seizing the opportunity that many of us have each day to make a difference in our own lives and the lives of others by simply saying hello, smiling, or striking up a conversation with a stranger.

Many of us are still not as socially connected as we were pre-pandemic, so we hope an excuse like Talk To A Stranger Week can provide another opportunity for Canadians to build healthier connection habits starting today.

**Learn more at: [www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org](http://www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org)**

**Follow us at @GenWell and share our message with your community!**

## Why November?

- The holiday season is a time of hustle and bustle. By setting the tone at the end of November, we hope to inspire a more empathetic and compassionate society during the holidays by building more connections and conversations.
- Research shows that people can struggle with seasonal transition, so creating an excuse and giving permission to connect with others is a helpful way of getting people connected when they may need it most.
- Fall is an important time to inspire human connections for Canadians, as we are heading into the darker, colder days of winter and the holiday season, when both can lead to greater social isolation, disconnection and loneliness.

**“A stranger today can be a friend tomorrow.”**



Follow us on Instagram: @GenWellProject



Tag us in your posts: #TTASW24



# ■ Tips for Talk to a Stranger Week

We want to empower Canadians with five tips for a more connected fall and set the tone for the holiday season and beyond. Here's what we suggest:

1. Be heads up, literally and figuratively, about the opportunity to use eye contact as a catalyst to connect with a stranger.
2. Make the extra effort to connect with someone who may be a little preoccupied. They will likely appreciate the effort.
3. Keep an eye out for familiar faces on your daily routes. That person you see every day could lead to new opportunities for friendship, learning or laughter.
4. Recognize that the simple act of saying hello to someone else may have a greater impact on their well-being than you will ever know.
5. If you don't succeed at first and someone doesn't respond to your outreach, try the next person you come across. Not everyone understands the power of talking to strangers like you do...yet.



## ■ Where Might You Talk to a Stranger?

- In a line at the grocery store, at a coffee shop, or a retail store
- Sitting in a bar or restaurant (don't forget to say hello to the staff!)
- In a classroom, workplace or high-density building
- In or waiting for an elevator
- Conference or event
- Strolling down the street
- On a hike or walk on the Trans Canada Trail (or any trail!)
- In your neighbourhood
- At a party or gathering
- On a plane, train, or bus

## ■ Tips to Connect With a Stranger

- Say hello
- Compliment someone
- Make eye contact and smile
- Celebrate or complain about the weather
- Speak about a current event
- Strike up a conversation in a line up
- Ask for directions
- Ask for advice
- Tell a joke or make light of a situation
- Introduce yourself
- Ask them about them and their day
- How about those Raptors?



**“There are no strangers here; only friends you haven't yet met.”**

- William Butler Yeats

## ■ Ideas to Get the Week Started

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Whether at work, in the classroom, or out and about in your community, we've compiled some ideas for you to implement during Talk to a Stranger Week - and beyond!



### ■ Workplace

#### **"Coffee Chat Challenge"**

Encourage employees to participate in a "random coffee chat" initiative where they are paired with colleagues they may not know well. Provide some fun or thought-provoking conversation starters to kick the conversations off, if needed.

#### **Cross-Departmental Lunches**

Organize lunches where people are randomly grouped with colleagues from different departments. This provides an opportunity for employees to meet new people and collaborate across teams.

#### **"Talk to a Stranger" Recognition**

Provide incentives or recognition for employees who engage with the most "new" people throughout the week, such as a small prize or public acknowledgment at the end of the week.

## ■ Classroom

### Rotating Partner Discussions

Set up chairs in two circles (one inside, one outside). Have the students in the inner circle stay seated while those in the outer circle rotate. Each pair gets a minute or two to talk to each other about a given topic, then rotate. This allows students to meet multiple classmates quickly.

### Conversation Starters in a Hat

Create a list of fun or thoughtful conversation starters, write them on slips of paper, and have students randomly draw one. They'll then pair up with someone they don't usually talk to and discuss the prompt.

### Classroom Bingo

Create bingo cards with different personality traits, experiences, or hobbies (e.g., "Find someone who plays a musical instrument" or "Find someone who has travelled to another country"). Students need to talk to classmates they don't usually interact with to fill in their bingo cards.

### "Meet Someone New" Reflection

At the end of each day or week, ask students to reflect on someone new they spoke with and what they learned from that interaction. It can be done through journaling or class discussion.



## ■ Community

### Community Coffee or Tea Meet-Ups

Organize casual meet-ups at a local café, community center, or someone's home. Encourage attendees to invite a neighbour they don't know well, creating an opportunity to build new relationships in a relaxed setting.

### Walking Partner Program

Set up a "walking buddy" system where community members can sign up to take a walk with someone they haven't met before.

### "I GenWell" Door Signs

Access the I GenWell posters in our tools section and post it prominently on your front door so people start conversations about the movement and the power of human connection.

### Intergenerational Connection Event

Host an event where different generations in the community (seniors, adults, teens, children) come together for storytelling, games, or a shared meal. It's a great way to bridge the gap between different age groups and foster understanding.





[Talk To A Stranger Week 2023](#)



[Talking to Strangers Can make you up to 3x happier!](#)

## ■ Campaign Logo



Main logo (English)

## ■ Colour Palette



#004E89  
r: 0  
g: 78  
b: 137



#FE781F  
r: 254  
g: 120  
b: 31

## ■ Fonts

Montserrat

\*used in documentation

Headline - Omnes

\*used in logo design

## ■ Campaign Posters

Click on the posters below to access & download:



"GenWell Canada's' Human Connection Movement, is excited to once again be catalyzing more human connection across Canada with the launch of Talk To A Stranger Week. November 18-24th.

A week when, together, we can raise the collective consciousness about the power of talking to strangers and give Canadians from coast to coast to coast the opportunity to give it a try, do it more often or create the healthy connection habit that sees us doing it each day, for our own health and happiness or for the health and happiness of those we connect with." - **Pete Bombaci, Founder and CEO, GenWell**

"Talk To A Stranger Week will encourage Canadians to reach out to the neighbour who is always wearing a pair of gardening gloves, the dog-walker with the cute French bulldog, the local barista, and all the other often unnoticed people that help us feel connected to our neighbourhood.

Making the time to connect will make you feel good and can make a real difference to their day, too. What's more, these little chats add up to something much bigger: a sense of trust and community that benefits us all." - **Dr. Gillian Sandstrom, Senior Lecturer in the Psychology of Kindness at University of Sussex**

"Talk To A Stranger Week will provide Canadians with the reminder that we all need to help us reach out to neighbours, acquaintances, and, yes, even strangers. It is through building happy and healthy relationships across our communities that we find the greatest source of health and happiness." - **Dr. Kiffer Card, Assistant Professor at Simon Fraser University, Chair, GenWell Scientific Advisory Panel.**



# Join us November 18-24

 [www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org](http://www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org)

 [@GenWellProject](https://www.instagram.com/GenWellProject)

