Connected

The most crucial work of Connect SH is increasing belonging. We want to be a community where everyone knows who they are and how they are valued. We want to ensure that everyone gets what they need to thrive and participate in our unique community mission.

identity + value + needs + mission = belonging

We figure out belonging by sharing stories in small groups. We tell stories about ourselves and what we want, the friends family, and other community members who have walked through life with us, the adversity we have faced, and how we have changed as we have faced it.

beginning character + community + crucible + changed character = story

As we share these stories, we proclaim, call out, pronounce, exclaim, and encourage our fellow storytellers by naming the positive and powerful character traits that make up their identity. We explain from our experience and perspective how they are valuable. We learn what they need and commit to caring for each other. And we begin to understand our shared mission.

We measure belonging in three ways

The Sense of Community Index
This is a scientifically validated measure made up of 24 questions + one more. We want everyone to fill it out as early as possible so we can compare our results later. This short survey is embedded in the Connect App - the tool we use to keep track of connections as they spread through our social network. As we collect this information, we get a collective "score" that tells us how much belonging we feel as a community. We can break this down by sector, by kinds of connections, by geography, and other meaningful metrics.

The Social Network Map
This is a visual representation of how belonging is spreading through our social connections like a beneficial contagion. Every time someone enters their answers in the Connect App, they are added to the map and connected to the people… they are connected to. Then we can see how much belonging there is in St. Helens. Where it's thriving and where we need to invest.

Stories
Since humans have inhabited the planet stories tell us who we are, who we have been, and who we can be. We want to use stories as a much more relatable measurement than data points to tell us these things as well as "how we do it here." We are hoping that our answer will be, we do it with belonging. Everyone fits. Everyone matters.
To that end, we need your stories. There are several ways you can contribute them.

1. Meet with one of our story collectors
2. Share on our Facebook page
3. Share on Instagram #connectshstories
4. Send a written or recorded story to connect@connectsh.org