

Understanding the Role of the Brain in Race/Ethnicity-Based Stressors

Jamie Hanson¹, Jaime Booth², & Seong-Jae Hwang³

¹-Department of Psychology (Dietrich school of arts and sciences); ²-Social Work; ³- School of Computing and Information

Motivation

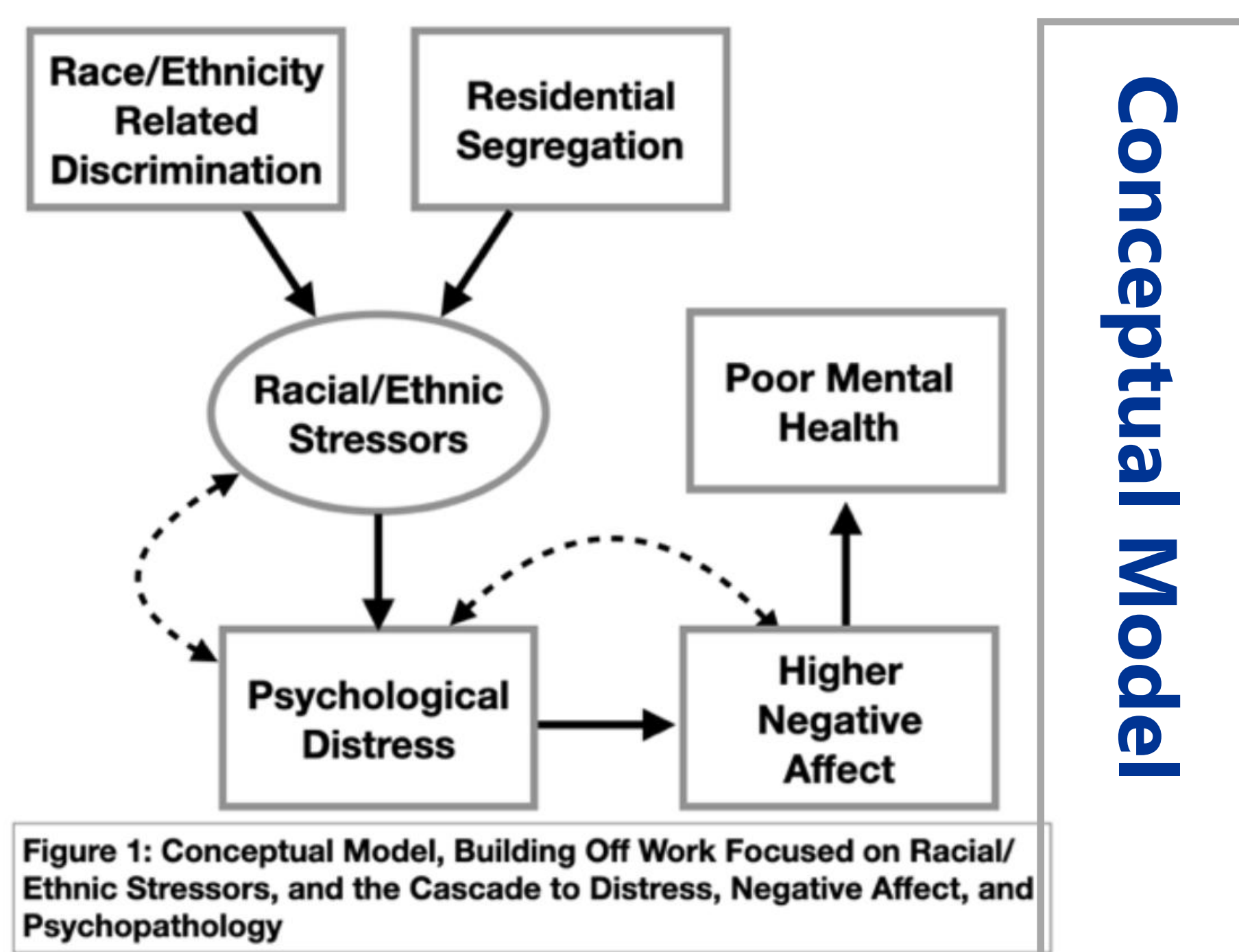
- **Experiences of racism gets under the skin**, relating to a verity of health outcomes including mental health in adolescence
- More specifically, experiencing racial/ethnic discrimination are related to changes in how the body responses to stress
- This dysregulation could impact the development emotion and reward processing centers of the brain, during a critical developmental period

Project Description

- Aim 1: Examine impact of race/ethnicity-based stressors on brain regions involved with emotion and reward processing
- Aim 2: Test if these brain differences relates to mental health outcomes in adolescence.

Context

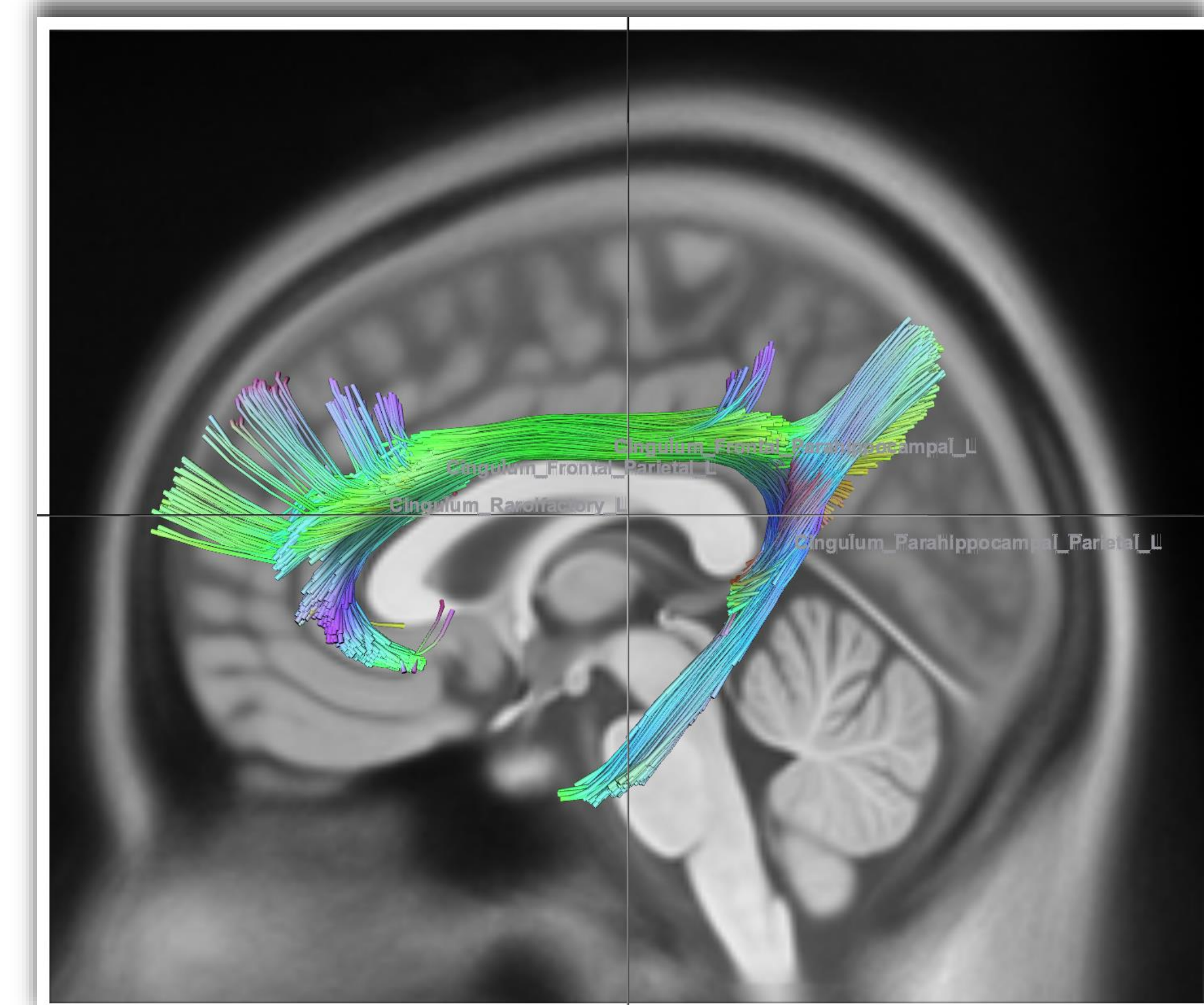
- Information about how racism impact the brain may shed light on underlying mechanisms (i.e., reward processing) that play a role in the mental health youth of color.



The stress associated with experiencing racism and discrimination during adolescence may influence brain development

Project Deliverables

- **Academic**-- Grant Applications; Research Publications
- **Applied**-- Policy Briefs and Outreach Talks to Community Organizations
- Funding will allow staff and students to be hired to complete the technical elements of the work
- **Benchmarks at 6 months**— Initial Processing of the dataset
- **Benchmarks at 1 year**— Submission of 1 grant application (to allow for future funding to support the work)



Potential Impact

- Understanding critical pathways between youth of color's context and brain development may be crucial to promote mental health in communities of color.
- These pathways that are typically overlooked when youth are aggregated.
- Understanding these mechanisms may also give insight into brain development that may be applied to promoting mental health and preventing health disparities.

