

# Loneliness in COVID-19 Pandemic Among Adults Impacted by Developmental Disabilities

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## BACKGROUND:

- Loneliness has been correlated with depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation and behavior (Ernst et al., 2022; McClelland et al., 2020).
- Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (DD) may experience more feelings of loneliness (Ailey et al., 2006; Hymas et al., 2022).
- Parents of children with DD experience high levels of depression, stress and caregiver burden (Miodrag & Hodapp, 2010).
- However, little information is known about the experience of loneliness in adults impacted by DD in the context of COVID-19 pandemic.

## STUDY AIM:

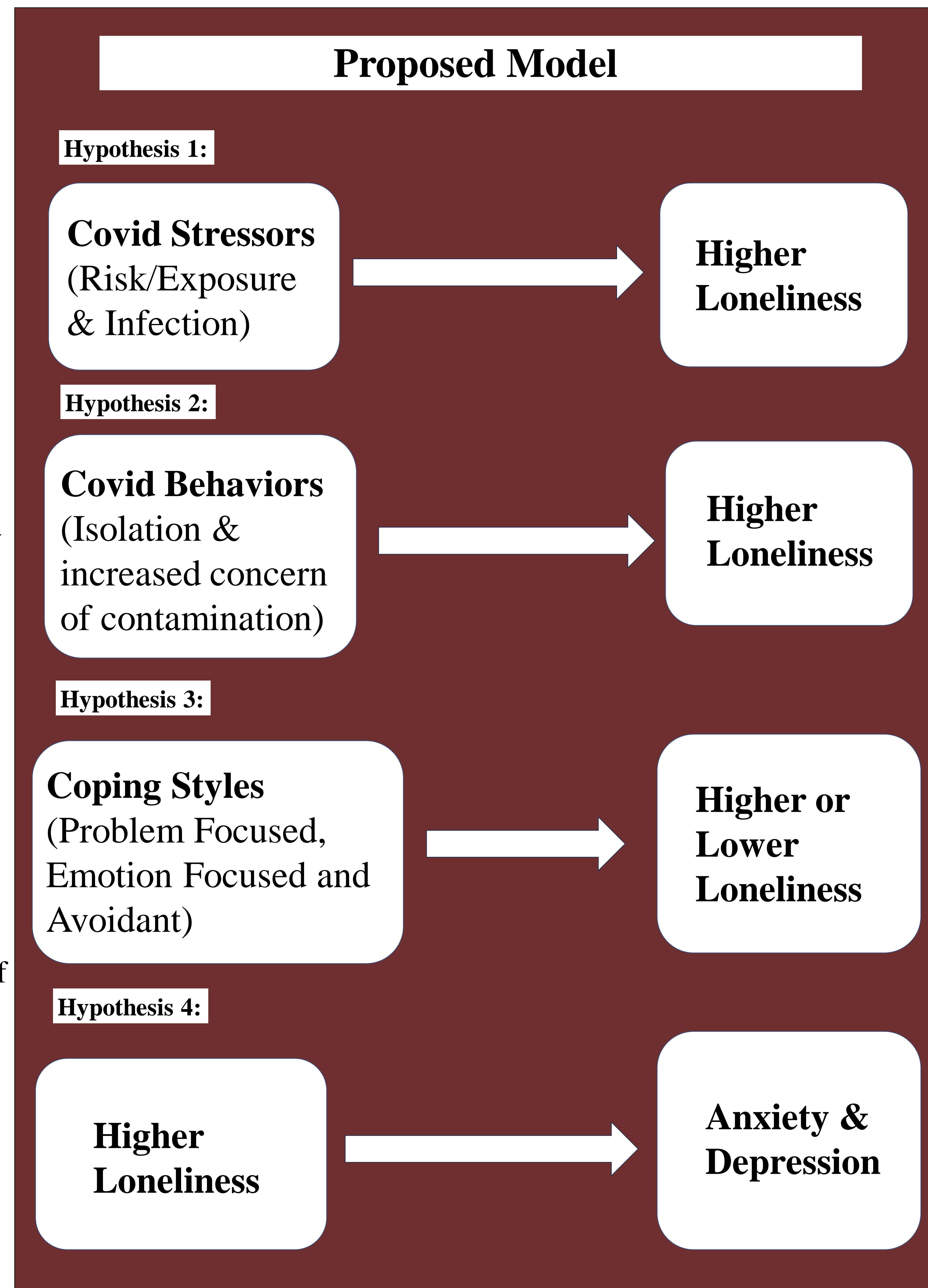
- To examine loneliness in adults impacted by DD during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Examining the relationships between loneliness, pandemic stress, coping styles, anxiety, and depression.

## HYPOTHESES:

- **Hypothesis 1:** Covid stressors (risk/exposure, infection) will predict higher loneliness.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Engaging in covid related behaviors (isolation, increased concern of contamination) will predict higher levels of loneliness.
- **Hypothesis 3:** Problem focused coping and avoidant coping styles will predict higher or lower levels of loneliness.
- **Hypothesis 4:** Higher levels of loneliness will predict higher levels of anxiety and depression.

## METHODS:

- Cross-sectional data from a larger web-based parent and self-report survey.
- Data collected over a 13-week period from April 2020 to July 2020.



## PARTICIPANTS:

- Total 106 participants, 65 parents of children with DD (PCwDD) and 41 adults with DD (AwDD)
- PCwDD ( $M_{age} = 46.5$ ,  $SD = 9.51$ , 88% F) DD reported: ASD ( $n=41$ ), ADHD ( $n=26$ ), LD ( $n=16$ ), and Down syndrome ( $n=8$ ), 53% reporting multiple DD
- AwDD ( $M_{age} = 28.18$ ,  $SD = 10.94$ , 64% F) DD reported; ASD ( $n = 20$ ), ADHD ( $n = 15$ ), LD ( $n = 8$ ), 44% reporting multiple DD

## MEASURES:

- **Anxiety:** GAD-7
- **Coping:** Brief COPE & Brief Resilient Coping Scale
- **COVID-19 Questionnaire**
- **Depression:** PHQ-2
- **Loneliness:** UCLA Loneliness Scale
- **Stress:** PSS-10

## PLANNED ANALYSES:

- We plan to run a series of regressions and correlations.

## IMPLICATIONS:

- This study will provide insight on how the pandemic affected these individuals and further provide recommendations on how to prevent loneliness if a similar situation would arise again.

Questions? Email:  
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References:

