



EFFECTS OF ISOLATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR OLDER ADULTS

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AGENDA & OBJECTIVES

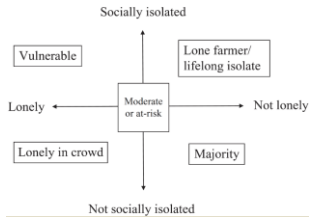
Pre-COVID-19	COVID-19	Implications
Define isolation and loneliness Describe basic patterns of isolation and loneliness for older adults before the pandemic and their impacts	Describe basic patterns of isolation and loneliness for older adults during the pandemic	Describe intervention strategies for reducing isolation and loneliness during and after the pandemic

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PRE-COVID-19

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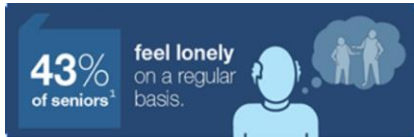
DEFINITIONS:
ISOLATION & LONELINESS



Newall & Menez, 2019

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PREVALENCE



<https://www.hrsa.gov/news/past-issues/2019/january-17/loneliness-epidemic>
Holt-Lunstad, 2017

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RISK FACTORS

- Isolated & lonely:
 - Older
 - Widowed
 - Living alone
 - Poor health
 - Low income
- Lonely:
 - Caregivers
 - Negative/toxic relationships
 - High reliance/expectations
 - Institutionalized



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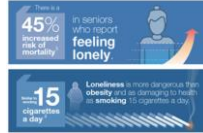
IMPACTS

Functional decline

Depression

Dementia

Death



ADvancing States, 2020; HRSA, 2019; Holt-Lundstad, 2017; Manca, 2020; Perissinotto et al., 2019; Tyrrell, 2020

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COVID-19

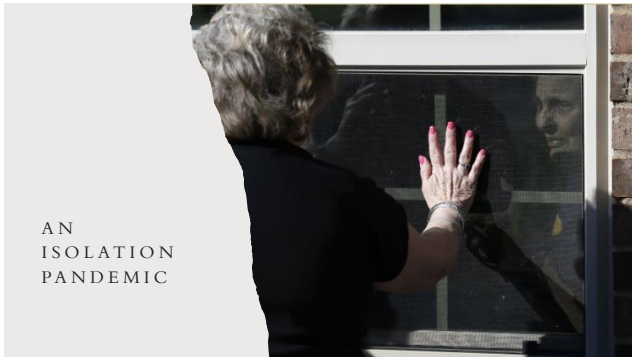
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OLDER ADULTS WITH COVID-19 ILLNESS

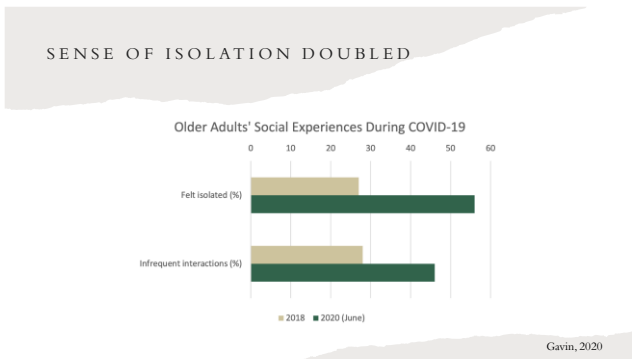
- Acute impacts:
 - Death, hospitalization, physical complications
 - Altered mental status, delirium
- Long-term impacts?
 - Physical decline, institutionalization
 - Dementia, psychiatric diagnoses

Manca, 2020
Taquet et al., 2021

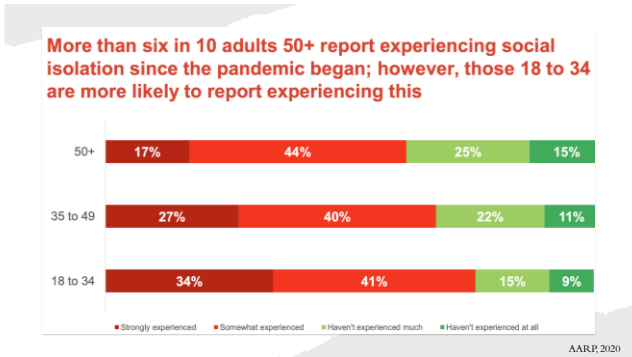
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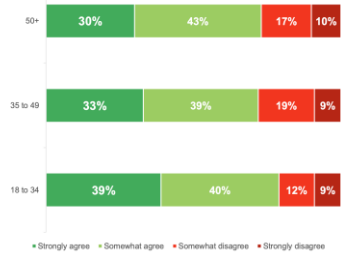


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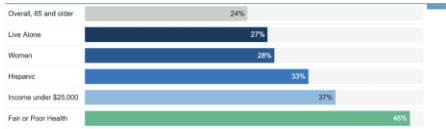
No matter their age, most adults agree that the pandemic has made it more difficult for them to connect with friends



AARP 2020

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DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY INCREASED



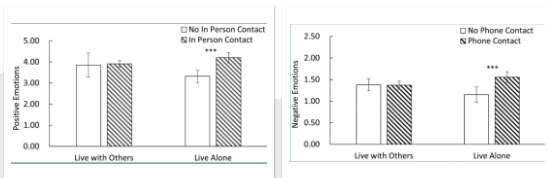
NOTE: Analysis is among adults age 65 and older. Self-reported health status. Adults of Hispanic origin may be of any race, but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis. All other groups are non-Hispanic.
SOURCE: KFF analysis of U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey, August 19-31, 2020. KFF

1 in 4 (2020) vs 1 in 10 (2018)

Koma et al., 2021

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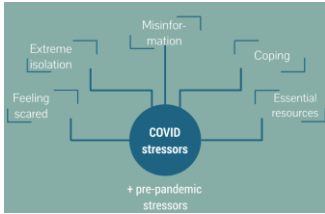
IN-PERSON CONTACT BETTER?



Fingerman et al., 2021

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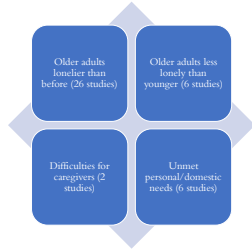
LIVING ALONE WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT



Portacolone et al., 2021

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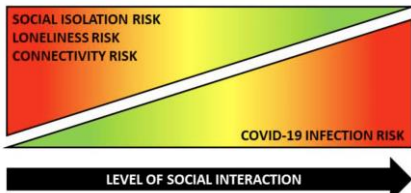
REVIEW OF 135 STUDIES



Lebrasseur et al., 2021

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COVID-19 SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY PARADOX



Smith et al., 2020

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SOME STORIES



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OLDER ADULTS IN FACILITIES

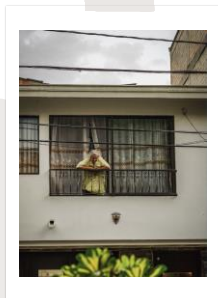


Aronson, 2020; Khimm, 2020; Markowitz, 2020

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IN THE COMMUNITY:
ISOLATED AND LESS
ACTIVE

• "Well, the senior center places aren't open, you know. I don't have any family. I don't have anybody, so I counted on that to kind of have someone to talk to, to socialize with..."



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- "She stays in her bed most of the time. You know, she's got her TV and her Netflix and everything in there. And, you know, she reads, does crossword puzzles, ... photo albums. And sometimes we get her out in a webinar. And someone's coming over which, you know, since COVID, that's ... more secluded by normal."
- "No, it's only my doctor calls me on the phone. We do telemed so nothing really changed. Except, you know, I don't get out as much... because I have to be very careful because my illness, you know, my immune system is very low. Because I'm on steroids."
- "I think she does feel lonely but like I tell her there are not a lot of places she can really go, you know, where she can't wear a mask or you know, do all of the little things that we used to do before now."

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LONELY AND DEPRESSED

- "Well, I think she has been for a lot of years, but she just has a way of coping with things ... she gets upset. And sometimes, you know, she's crying, and I want to talk to her about it. You know, we try to talk it out. You know, it's, it's just, it's just the state the of the world."
- "And sometimes ... I'm gonna be honest, I get depressed that you can't do nothing that you want to do. Maybe we'll wait and see here... I would like to see my friends, or go to a movie or something, and ... we can do nothing here."
- "Yeah, I'm very lonely. As I say, I tried to talk to loved ones. Frequently, when we talk, we reminisce, you know, about our younger days ... We talk about things that happened way back ... but when I hang up... I feel, I feel even more lonely. Sometimes, My daughter calls me every couple of days. But she's, she's in [other state], you know, and it helps because I want to see her, and I can't get out of here and she can't get out of there."



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GETTING ASSISTANCE

- "It's the grocery store, the Spanish grocery store, and they'll deliver it for free. Oh yeah, if I didn't have my food stamps, I don't know what I do. I wouldn't have any juice. I wouldn't have any milk. I wouldn't have anything."
- "my niece will, you know, do the shopping. But I gotta send her the list. And she doesn't like me to go out at all. Because she's so afraid because of my age. And I have COPD and I have heart problems. She's afraid I'll get COVID, so she just doesn't like for me to come away."
- "We have somebody that grocery shops, and prepared like two meals, so she does the majority, they will run to the store, like to get some little things themselves. And then I'll make a meal sometimes, or my sister will make a meal."
- "Yes, I'm very happy that that this County, I think, has more.... senior services than any place I've ever lived, you know. They do so much. I'm very grateful for that."

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MAKING THE BEST OF IT

- "The good part was all through it. My community is much as like, I could see my son, he didn't come by, except for like a drive by and that type of thing. ... I could put my mask on and walk through my neighborhood. And ... we would walk through the neighborhood and wave at each other. That was, that was good."

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TAKING RISKS

"it's just been, just like anybody else would say, something we never expected to see coming. And it made me saddest. When my granddaughter in [other state] was crying her eyeballs out because she's a brilliant student in math. And she wasn't going to be graduating with her class. I mean, you know what happened to graduation. ... And I wasn't going to go, I was scared. You know, there's not going to be a party like the other granddaughters had in [other state]. No party, no nothing. And she was just a mess. So I went, I went, despite all odds I got on that plane. And my oldest daughter bought my tickets. ... and they got me a seat where I was not around anybody else. And I, I went to [other state], and ... that was wonderful. I was so glad I did it, scary...., but I did it. And I was so glad."

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IMPLICATIONS

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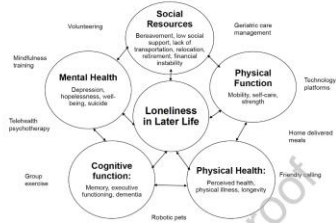
NOTICING RESILIENCE

- "the heterogeneity that is a hallmark of aging"
- Managing better than younger adults
- Wisdom
- High-quality relationships
- Using technology
- Vahia et al., 2020

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PSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACHES

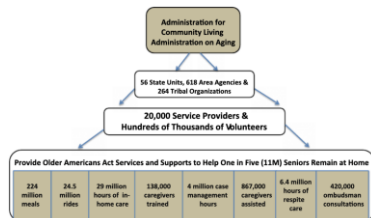
Figure 1. Towards a personalized approach to selecting programs for loneliness in later life.



Van Orden et al., 2020; Van Orden, 2021

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INNOVATING SERVICES



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SERVICES



CRISIS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



MEAL DELIVERY



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



ONLINE RESOURCES



TELEHEALTH



NURSING HOME VISITATION

ADvancing States, 2020; Smith, 2020; CMS Policy, 2021

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ENGAGED POLL OF AGING AND DISABILITY NETWORK ORGANIZATIONS

Arts	Health & Wellness	Volunteer Engagement	Learning
77% offer virtual Radio Show Programming	88% offer virtual Peer Support/Counseling	79% offer virtual Medicare Outreach or Counseling	72% offer virtual Educational Classes
76% offer virtual Pain Rel Programs	85% offer virtual Telephone Respite Services	65% offer virtual AmeriCorps Seniors Programs	72% offer virtual Lifelong Learning Sessions
69% offer virtual Book Clubs	76% offer virtual Caregiver Support Programs	66% offer virtual Intergenerational Mentoring	79% offer virtual Technology/Computer Assistance
68% offer virtual Storytelling	71% offer virtual Wellness Checks		82% offer virtual Faith-Based Classes
41% offer virtual Cooking	68% offer virtual Meditation/Meditation		

- November-December 2020
- 249 organizations responded (98% serve older adults, 73% serve people with disabilities, 72% serve caregivers)

engAGED, 2021

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INNOVATIVE SERVICES

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A FEW RESOURCES

n4a's website offers a repository of innovative programs across the US:
<https://www.n4a.org/covid19>

engAGED National Resource Center Innovations Hub and resources:
<https://www.engagingolderadults.org>

AARP's Connect2Affect website offers additional ideas and resources for connecting during the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://connect2affect.org/coronavirus/>

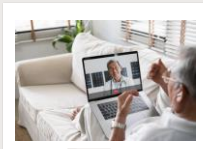
The Institute on Aging's 24-hour toll-free Friendship Line: 1-800-971-0016

American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living: See Tips for Keeping Residents Engaged: www.ahcancal.org/coronavirus

Van Orden et al., 2020

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CONCLUSIONS



- Isolation and loneliness were problems for older adults and caregivers prior to the pandemic, and got worse
- Evidence of flexibility and resilience: Aging service and other providers adjusted quickly to offer innovative services and offer standard services via technology. Older adults and families also adjusted and have been able to utilize technology to stay connected
- Simply offering opportunities for social interactions is not enough: Some individuals and families need additional mental health and other support

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