

Fabiana Dávalos

Carla Flores

Lore Baird

LONELINESS

IN ELDERLY

01

2025

Project.

GIDEP

CONTEXT

LONELINESS IN ELDERLY

- In recent years, **loneliness among older adults** has shown fluctuations but remains a **significant issue**.
- In 2023, about one in three adults aged 50–80 felt isolated or lacked companionship – an improvement from 2020, when feelings of isolation peaked due to the pandemic, but still higher than 2018 levels.
- Social contact also remains limited: 33% of older adults reported **infrequent interactions with people outside their homes**.
- Feelings of isolation are notably higher among individuals with poor mental or physical health, disabilities, those who live alone, or are not employed.

Overall, the data highlight that while post-pandemic recovery has reduced loneliness, **social isolation continues to affect a large portion of the elderly population**, especially among vulnerable groups.

LONELINESS PROBLEMS...

Social isolation and loneliness **not only affect emotional well-being** but also have serious **consequences for brain health**. They are linked to declines in cognitive function and a higher risk of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

Limited social activity can also reduce independence, making daily tasks like driving, managing finances, or taking medication more difficult.

Several factors increase vulnerability to loneliness, such as:

- Loss of mobility or sensory impairments (vision/hearing)
- Living alone or lacking transportation
- Major life changes (retirement, loss of a loved one)
- Financial difficulties or feeling a lack of purpose
- Health or psychological challenges
- Social barriers like discrimination or language differences

TECH AND CONNECTION

REBUILDING SOCIAL BONDS

Staying connected is key to protecting older adults from the negative effects of loneliness. Beyond maintaining physical and mental health through exercise, rest, and enjoyable activities, *technology now plays a crucial role in fostering social connection.*

Digital tools — such as video calls, messaging apps, social media, and online communities — help older adults stay in touch with friends and family, even across distances. Participating in virtual classes, online hobbies, or volunteering platforms can provide purpose, routine, and interaction.

Recent studies even explore **social gaming as a new way to reduce loneliness among older adults**, showing potential for technology-based interventions to enhance mood, engagement, and cognitive well-being.

In essence, **technology offers new opportunities for connection**, inclusion, and emotional support, helping older adults maintain a sense of belonging in an increasingly digital world.

02

PROJECT BRIEFING

THEME

MOBILE APP THAT CREATES A COMMUNITY TO CONNECT GENERATIONS THROUGH GAMES, REGARDLESS OF DISTANCE.

02

DESCRIPTION

Creation of an **accessible digital platform** that allows older adults, adults, and children to play classic games together from anywhere, **combining fun and closeness with integrated video calling**. It's not just about playing, but about sharing quality time across generations.

EXTRA INFORMATION

Classic games (Parcheesi, Dominoes, cards) are common and safe grounds for multiple generations.

Current technology can be a barrier, but it can also be a bridge if designed with empathy.

With age, visibility declines, needs change, and older adults require an appropriate interface.

Older adults don't just want to receive attention; they want to contribute, teach, and feel valuable.

QUESTIONS

03

How can we make the app so easy that even the **least tech-savvy grandparent** can use it without help?

How do we prevent this from being “just playing” and **make it a special moment between generations?**

Could we **connect people** who don't know each other but share interests? For example, a grandparent who loves Dominoes with a child who wants to learn?

How do we make it **more than “just another app”** but a window to **feel accompanied?**

CLUES / GUIDELINES

- Simple and accessible interface: large buttons, scalable text, SMS login.
- Matching by interests and skill level, with short sessions (15–30 min).
- Fixed schedules to create routines and facilitate regular meetups (building community).
- Involve volunteers and senior centers for initial support.
- Low cost: no downloads required, minimal maintenance, scalable to more games.



REFERENCES

- UNO Online / Parcheesi Star: classic games adapted for mobile and web, easy to understand.
- Scrabble: word game with skill-level-based matching.
- Chess.com / Lichess: chess platforms with quick games and optional video calling.
- Houseparty / Zoom: video chat combined with simple games for socializing.

