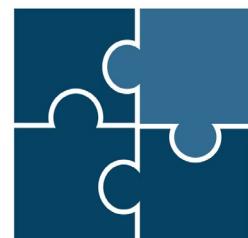


Module 1: Understanding the Multiple Needs of Families Involved with the Child Welfare System

Child Welfare Training Toolkit



National Center on
Substance Abuse
and Child Welfare

Acknowledgement

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Learning Objectives

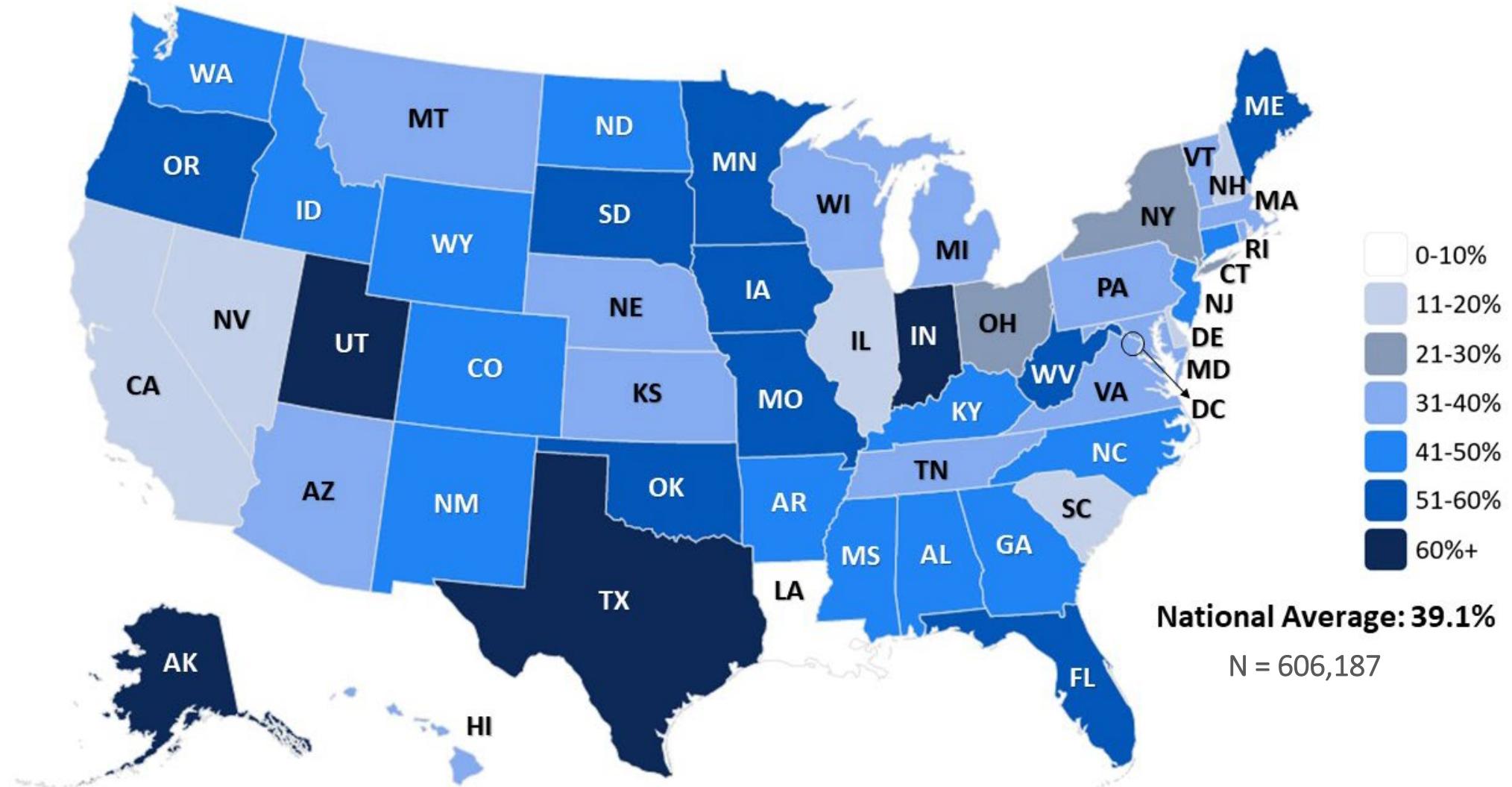
After completing this training,
child welfare workers will:

- Identify the prevalence of trauma, substance use and mental disorders in the child welfare population
- Recognize the effects of substance use and co-occurring disorders on children and families
- Describe the negative effects of stigma on treatment and recovery outcomes
- Understand the importance of a family-centered approach when working with families affected by co-occurring disorders
- Identify the benefits of collaborating with other systems and service providers to better serve children and families



What the Data Tells Us About Parental Substance Use

Parental Alcohol or Drug Abuse as a Condition Associated with Removal by State, 2021



Note: Estimates based on **all children in out-of-home care at some point** during the Fiscal Year

Source: AFCARS Data 2021, as of 10/01/24

Year 2021 Data Listed by State (A-K)

State	Percentage	Number
AK	67.2%	2768
AL	46.8%	4250
AR	50.3%	3610
AZ	34.3%	7640
CA	11.7%	8379
CO	49.9%	4063
CT	43.4%	2189
DC	15.7%	127
DE	19.6%	142
FL	51.8%	18745
GA	44.7%	7161
HI	35.4%	855
IA	60.0%	4448
ID	41.9%	1130
IL	11.1%	3033
IN	61.7%	13504
KS	35.5%	3654
KY	41.6%	5678

Year 2021 Data Listed by State (L-N)

State	Percentage	Number
LA	1.9%	109
MA	34.5%	4685
MD	31.2%	1715
ME	51.5%	1638
MI	39.3%	5693
MN	51.2%	6187
MO	51.3%	9924
MS	48.0%	2668
MT	39.4%	1984
NC	44.0%	6745
ND	42.6%	1053
NE	36.4%	2003
NH	15.4%	260
NJ	43.6%	2303
NM	43.6%	1319
NV	15.9%	1133
NY	30.9%	6181

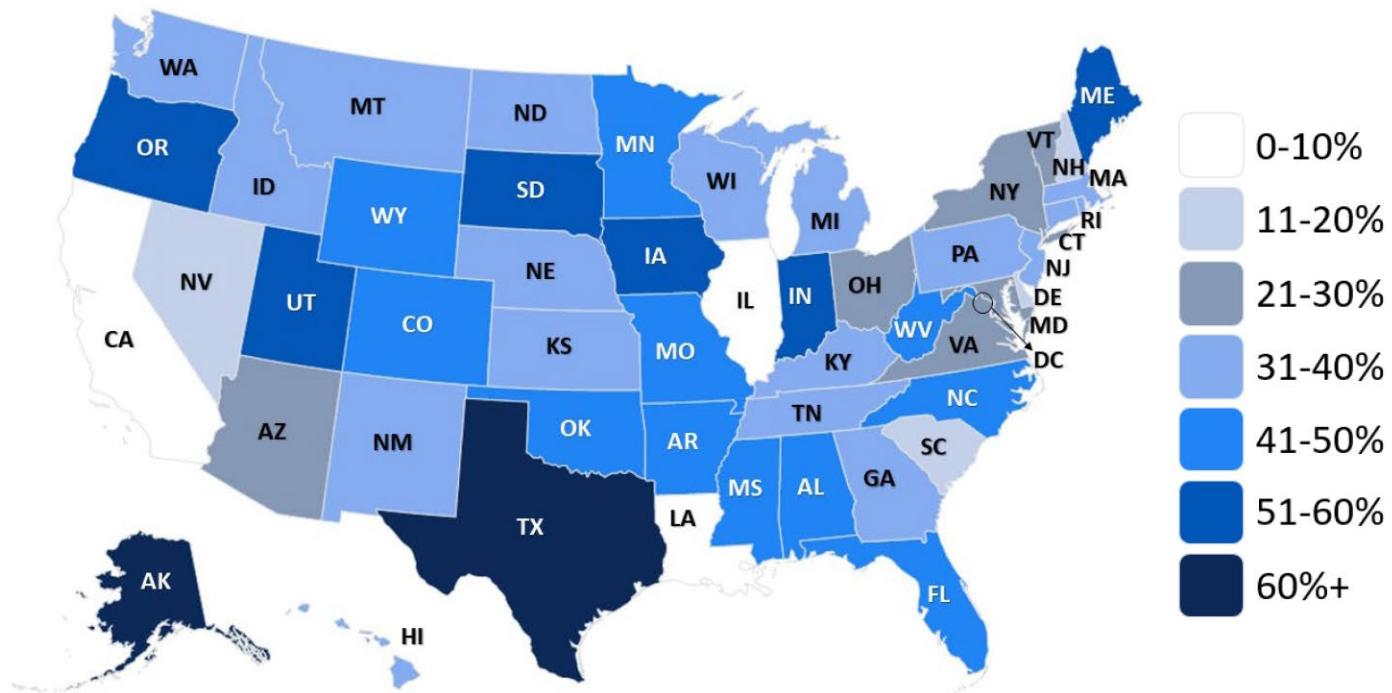


Year 2021 Data Listed by State (O-W, Puerto Rico)

State	Percentage	Number
OH	30.9%	7974
OK	52.9%	6088
OR	57.3%	4747
PA	36.8%	7896
RI	38.6%	1113
SC	17.3%	1162
SD	57.9%	1522
TN	40.1%	5843
TX	65.7%	29523
UT	61.3%	2374
VA	33.8%	2562
VT	31.6%	512
WA	44.5%	5944
WI	38.2%	4049
WV	55.2%	6574
WY	50.8%	813
Puerto Rico	17.5%	471
Total US	39.1%	236143

Parental Alcohol or Drug Abuse as a Condition Associated with Removal for Children by Age, 2021

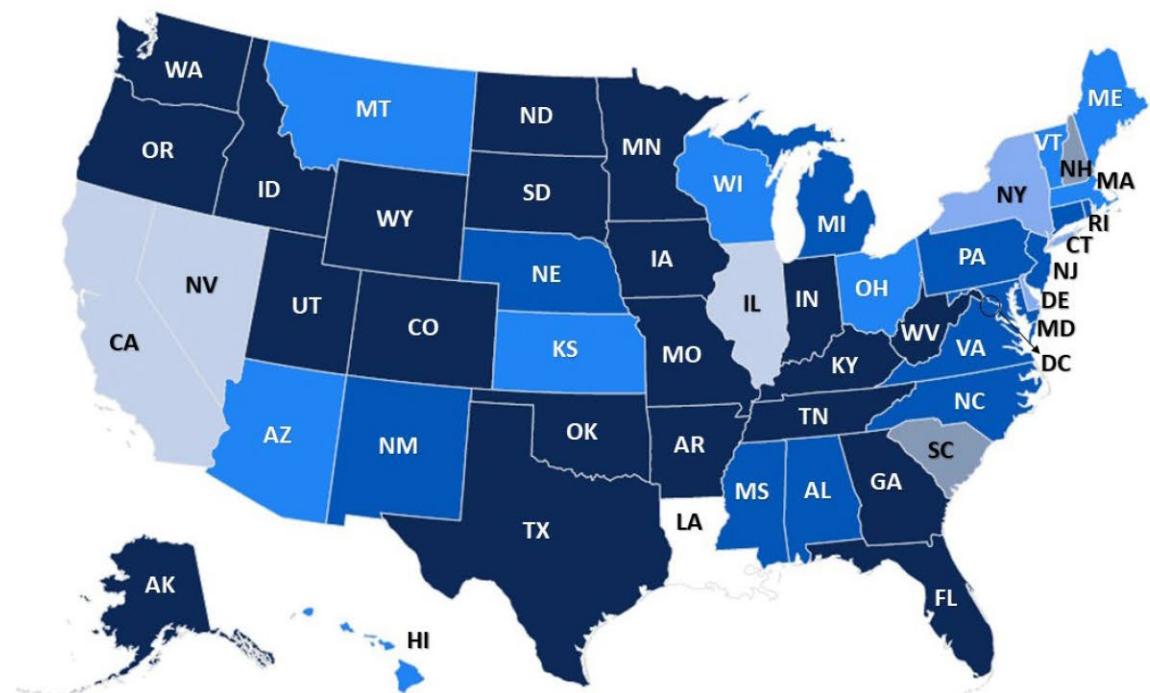
N = 606,187



Age 1 and Older

National Average: 36.0%

N = 480,645



Under Age 1

National Average: 51.3%

N = 123,178

Note: Estimates based on all children in out-of-home care at some point during Fiscal Year

Source: AFCARS Data 2021, as of 10/01/24

Year 2021 Data Listed by State, by Age (A-K)

State	Under Age 1	Age 1 and Older
AK	75.00%	565
AL	60.80%	1108
AR	64.90%	855
AZ	47.80%	2166
CA	16.70%	2612
CO	76.30%	1247
CT	54.00%	655
DC	27.00%	38
DE	37.20%	55
FL	66.00%	5152
GA	61.10%	1969
HI	48.30%	232
IA	70.80%	908
ID	63.10%	320
IL	14.00%	907
IN	72.50%	3180
KS	48.60%	731
KY	61.60%	1416
		2203
		3142
		2755
		5474
		5767
		2816
		1534
		89
		87
		13593
		5192
		623
		3540
		810
		2126
		10324
		2923
		4262

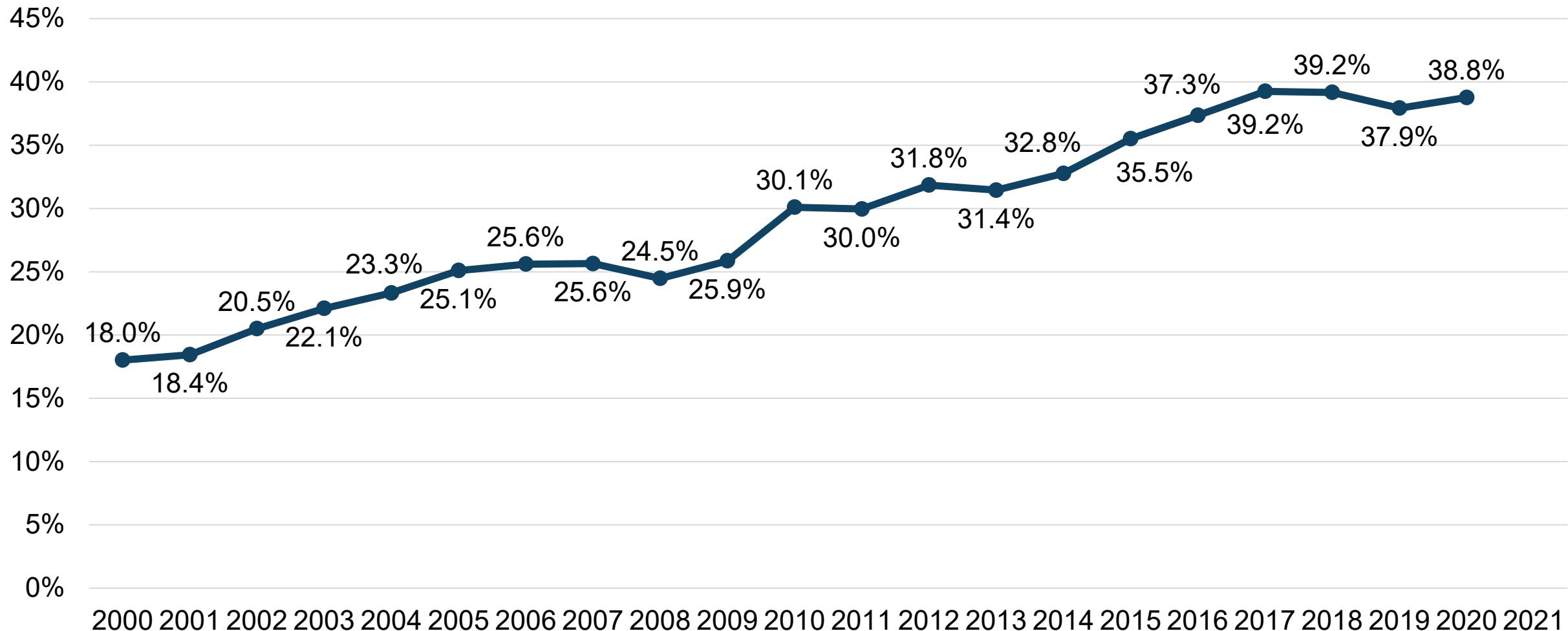
Year 2021 Data Listed by State, by Age (L-N)

State	Under Age 1	Age 1 and Older
LA	2.00%	28
MA	48.50%	1243
MD	51.90%	558
ME	50.70%	368
MI	53.10%	1657
MN	65.10%	1372
MO	70.50%	2654
MS	58.40%	687
MT	48.60%	476
NC	55.70%	1597
ND	67.10%	312
NE	52.10%	440
NH	26.90%	72
NJ	56.10%	840
NM	56.50%	316
NV	20.10%	332
NY	39.20%	1844

Year 2021 Data Listed by State, by Age (O-W, Puerto Rico)

State	Under Age 1	Age 1 and Older
OH	47.20%	2256
OK	65.30%	2015
OR	67.70%	1118
PA	53.40%	2284
RI	51.60%	320
SC	30.20%	300
SD	71.80%	328
TN	70.00%	1521
TX	76.70%	7564
UT	79.40%	540
VA	55.30%	591
VT	46.90%	123
WA	66.20%	2324
WI	49.10%	1066
WV	75.90%	1611
WY	70.50%	146
Puerto Rico	31.10%	111
Total US	51.30%	63130
		36.00%
		173013

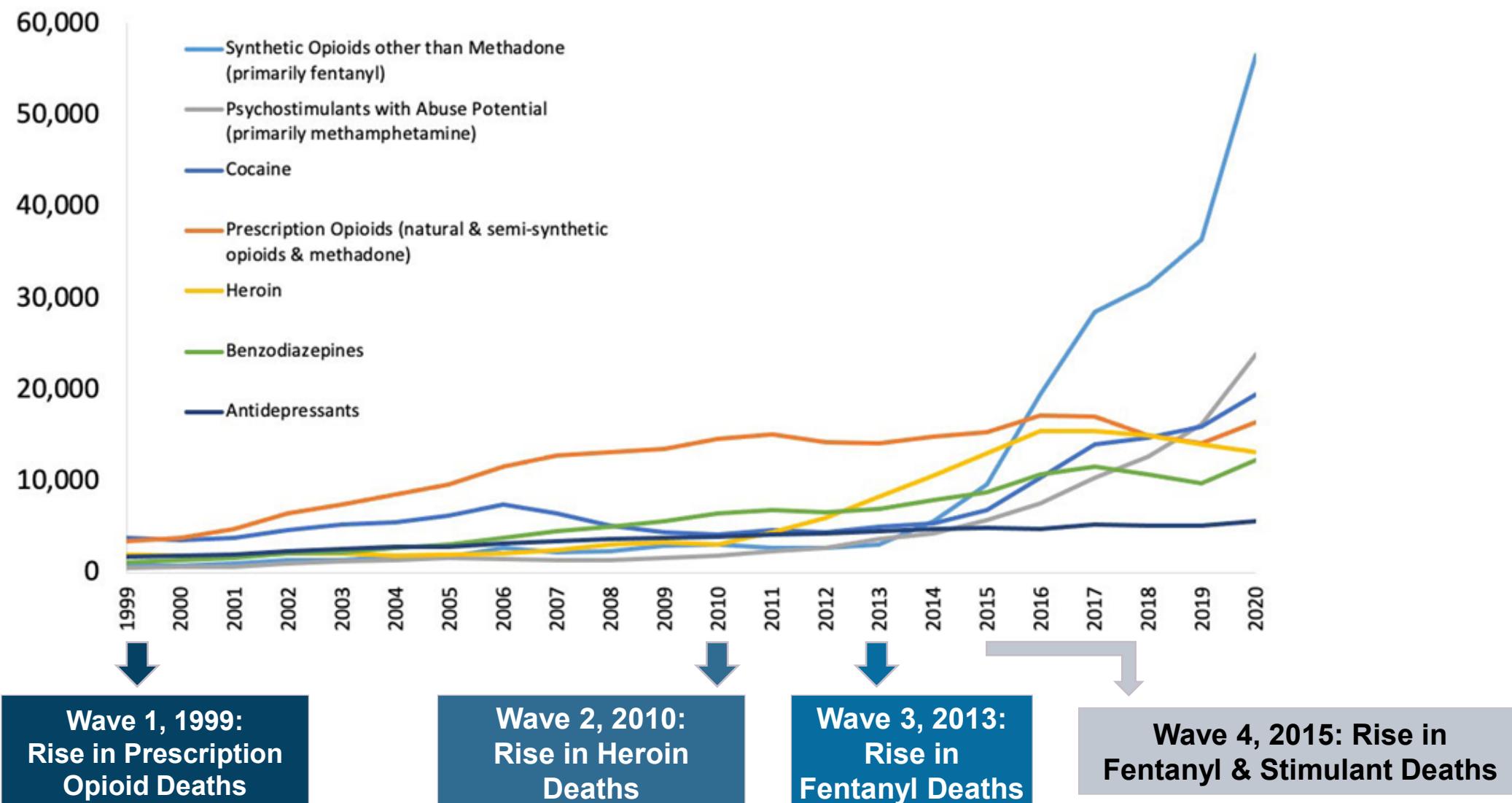
Incidence of Parental Alcohol or Drug Abuse as a Condition Associated with Removal in the United States, 2000 to 2021



Note: Estimates based on children who entered out-of-home care during Fiscal Year

Source: AFCARS Data 2021, as of 10/01/24

Understanding the Cumulative Effects of Overdose Rates on Parental Capacity & Family Well-Being



Child Welfare Laws & Considerations for Families Affected by Parental Substance Use

Key Federal Legislation Related to Infants with Prenatal Substance Exposure in the U.S.

1974

Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA)

2003

The Keeping Children & Families Safe Act

2010

The CAPTA Reauthorization Act

2016

Comprehensive Addiction & Recovery Act (CARA)

A close-up photograph of a woman holding a baby. The woman is wearing a yellow wrap and has her head tilted down, her face partially hidden by her hair. She is gently holding the baby's head with her hands. The baby is wearing a white onesie. The background is blurred green foliage.

Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)

Primary goals for child welfare intervention:

- Safety
- Permanency
- Well-being

Key ASFA Provisions

Permanency Hearings

Permanency Timeline

Reunification Guidelines

Safety Checks

Accountability

Conflicting Timelines: Time to Treatment Matters!



Child Welfare



Child Development



Treatment & Recovery



Indian Child Welfare Act

Historical Events Leading to the Passage of ICWA

Indian Removal Act of 1830

Boarding School Experience

Urban Relocation Program

Indian Adoption Project

The Passage of ICWA in 1978

Governs state child-custody proceedings by

- Recognizing Tribal jurisdiction over decisions for Indian children
- Establishing minimum federal standards for the removal of Indian children from their families
- Establishing preferences for placement of Indian children with extended family or other Tribal community members
- Instituting protections to ensure that birth parents' voluntary relinquishment of their children is truly voluntary

The Heart of ICWA: Lukas' Digital Story

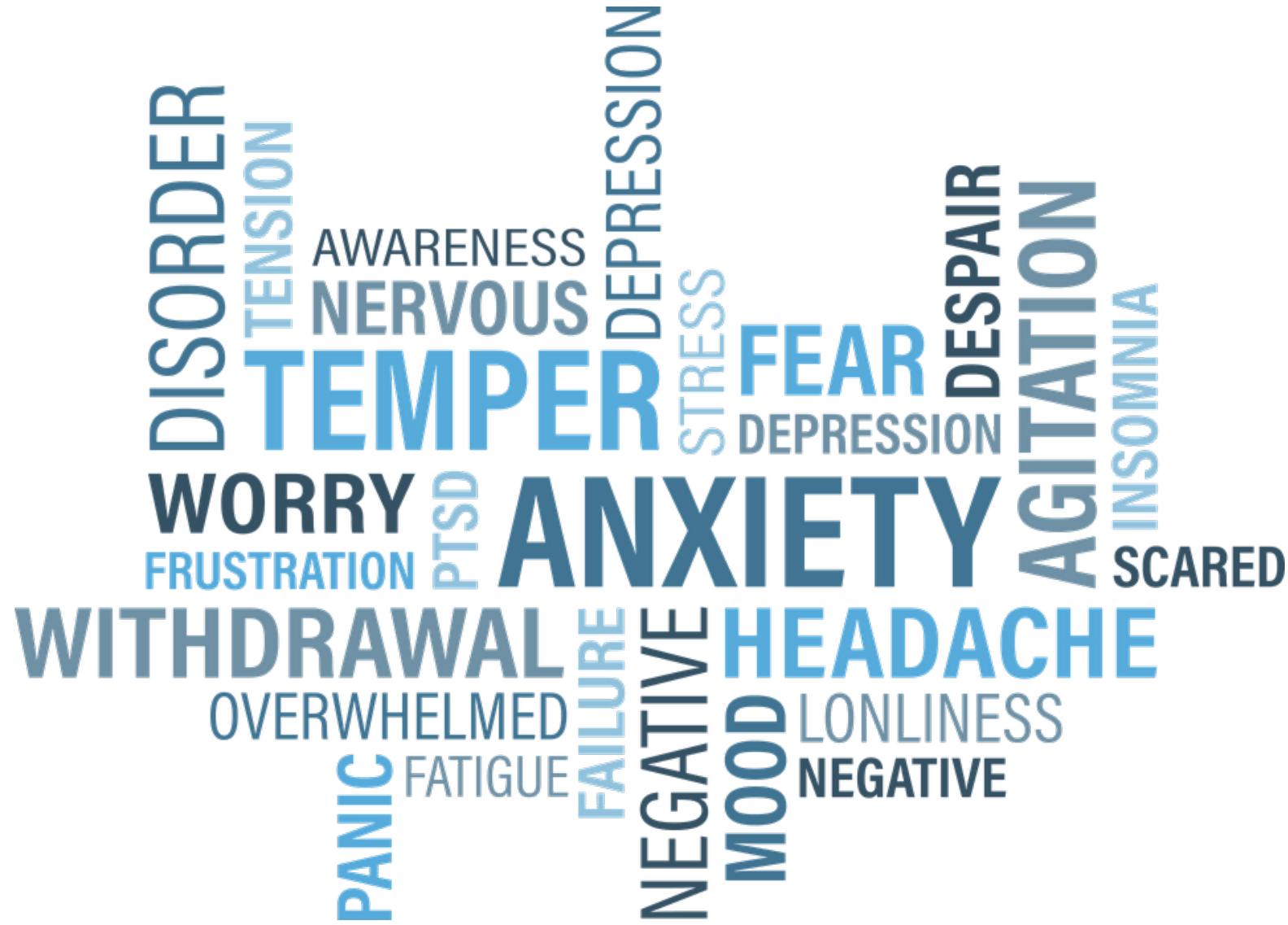
[Video Credit & Permission to Use by National Indian Child Welfare Association](#)
WWW.NICWA.ORG

Understanding Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders

What is a Co-Occurring Disorder?

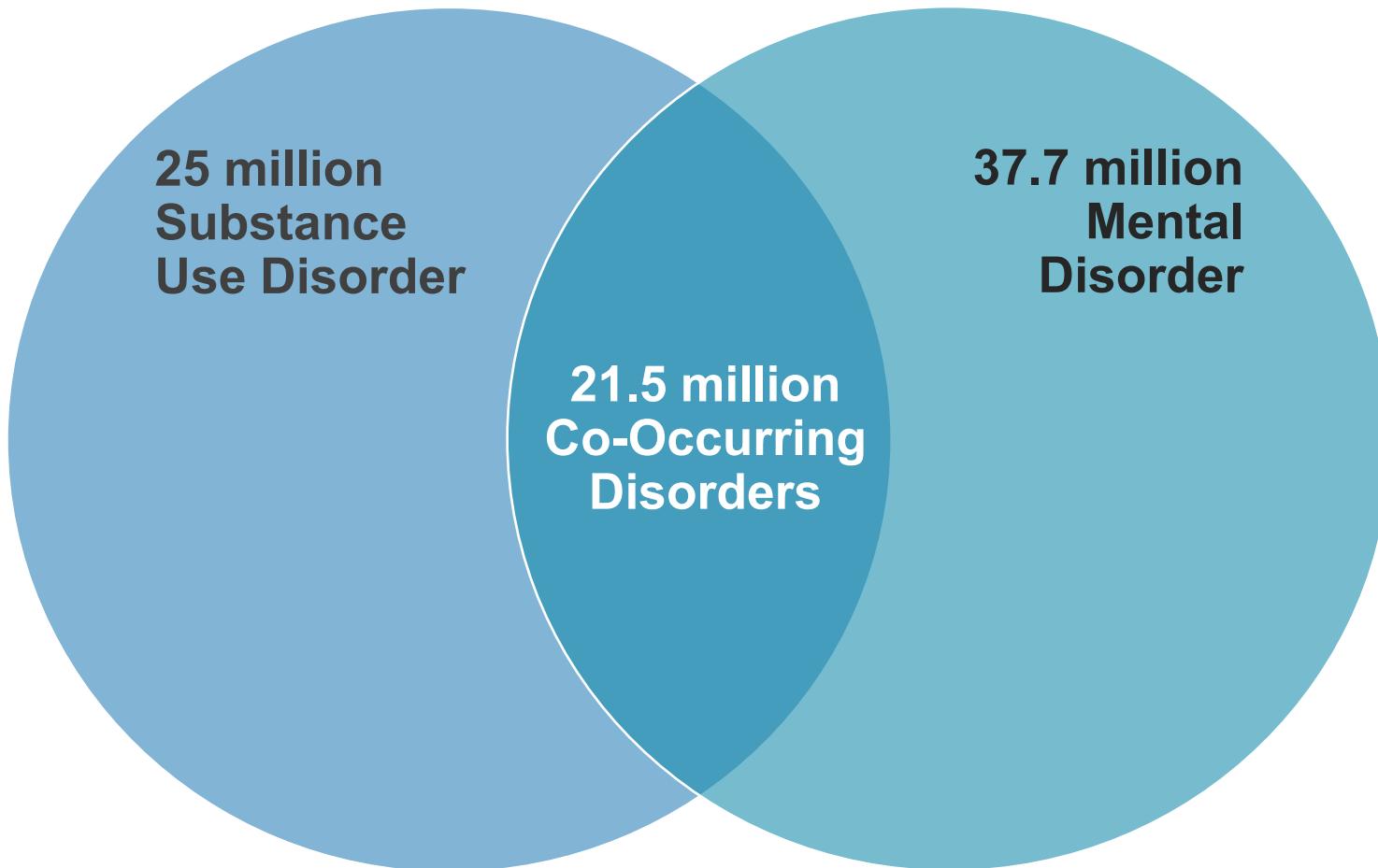


More on Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders



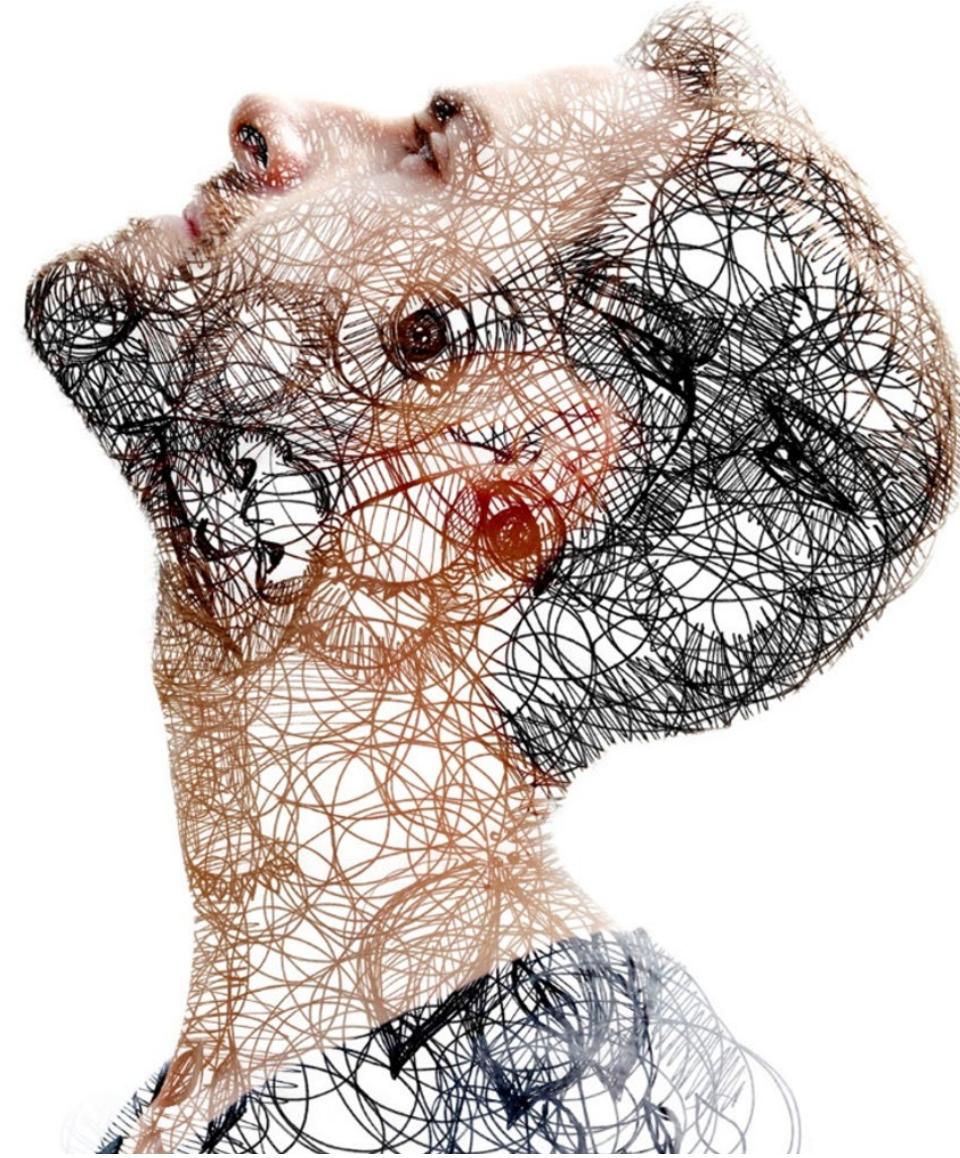
DISORDER
TENSION
AWARENESS
NERVOUS
TEMPER
DEPRESSION
WORRY
FEAR
DESPAIR
AGITATION
INSOMNIA
SCARED
WITHDRAWAL
ANXIETY
PANIC
HEADACHE
PANIC
FAILURE
OVERWHELMED
NEGATIVE
MOOD
LONELINESS
NEGATIVE
PANIC

Prevalence of Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders



Understanding the Cumulative Effects of Trauma

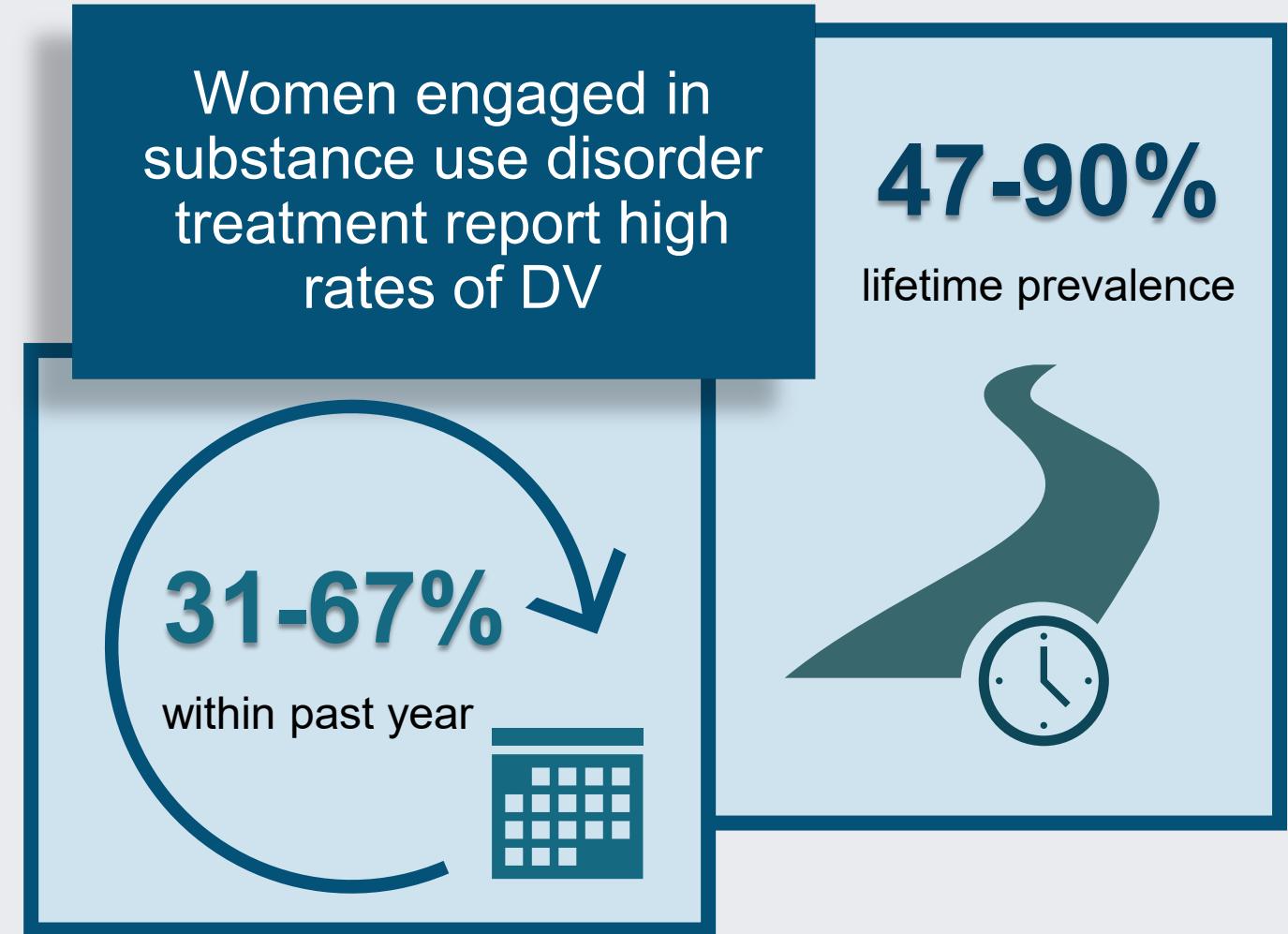
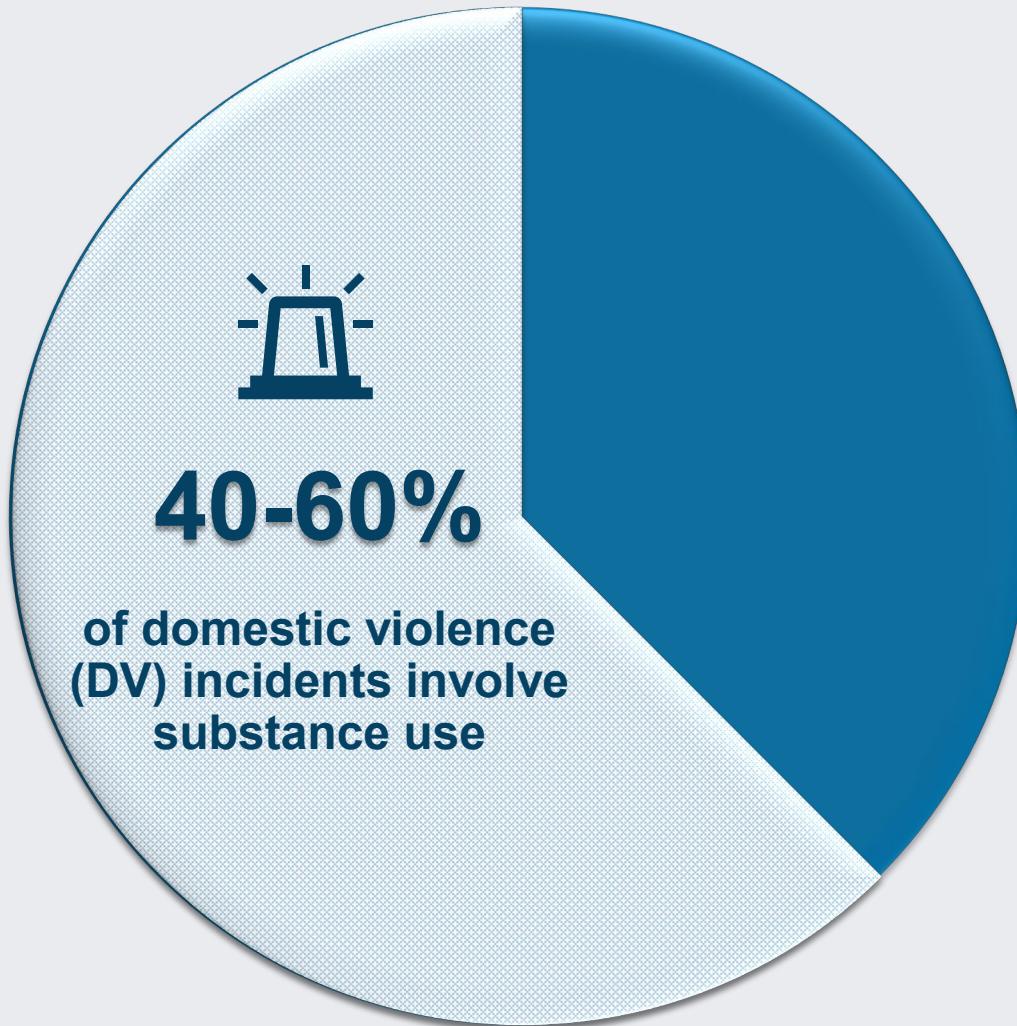
- Physical
- Emotional/Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Interpersonal



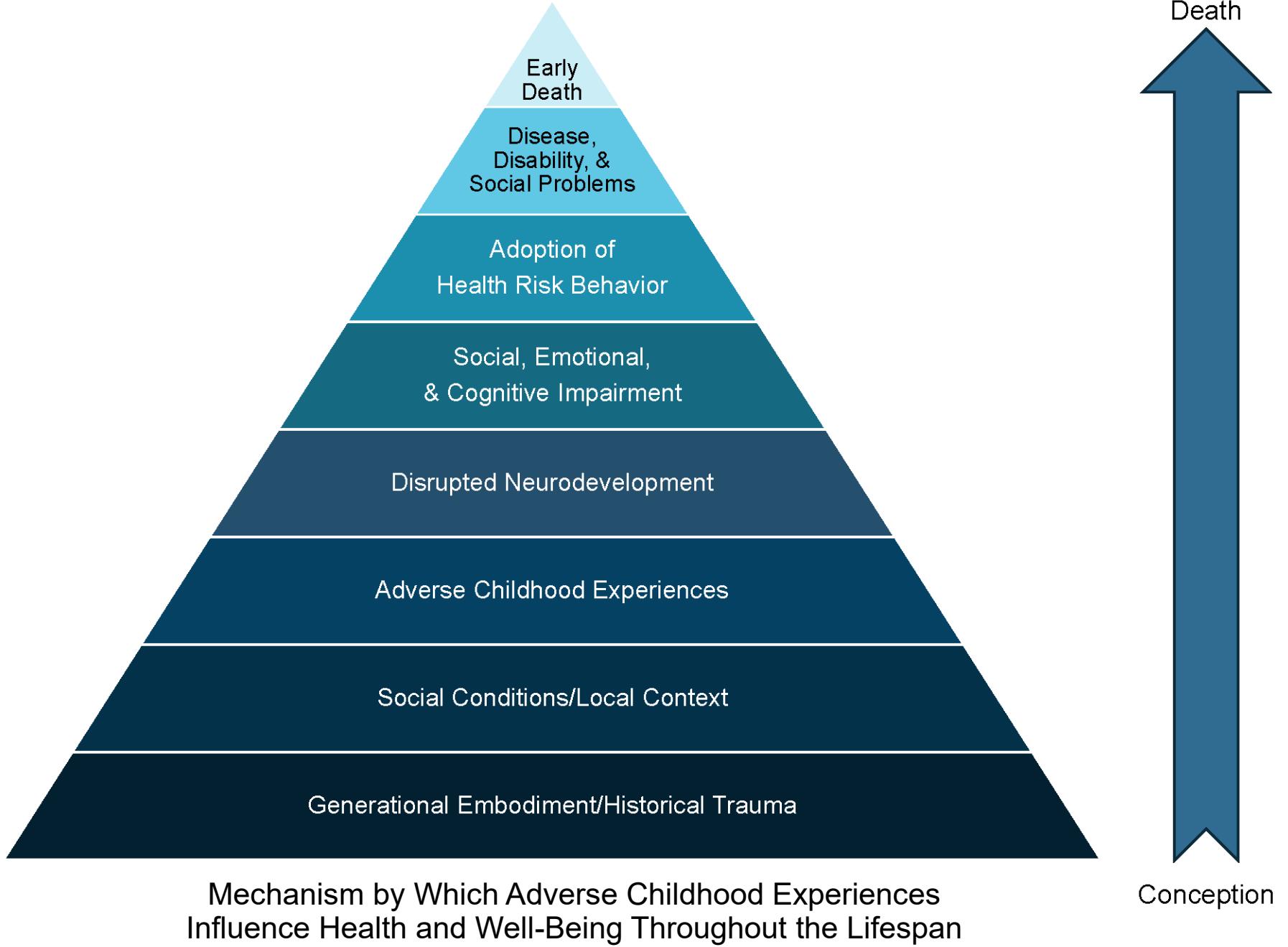
Trauma Symptomology

Small Group Activity

Substance Use Disorders & Domestic Violence



Long-Term Effects of Trauma



ACEs Primer on the Long-Term Effects of Trauma

[Video Credit & Permission to Use by KPJR Films](#)

Understanding the Effects of Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders on Children & Families

Effects of Substance Use Disorders on Family Functioning

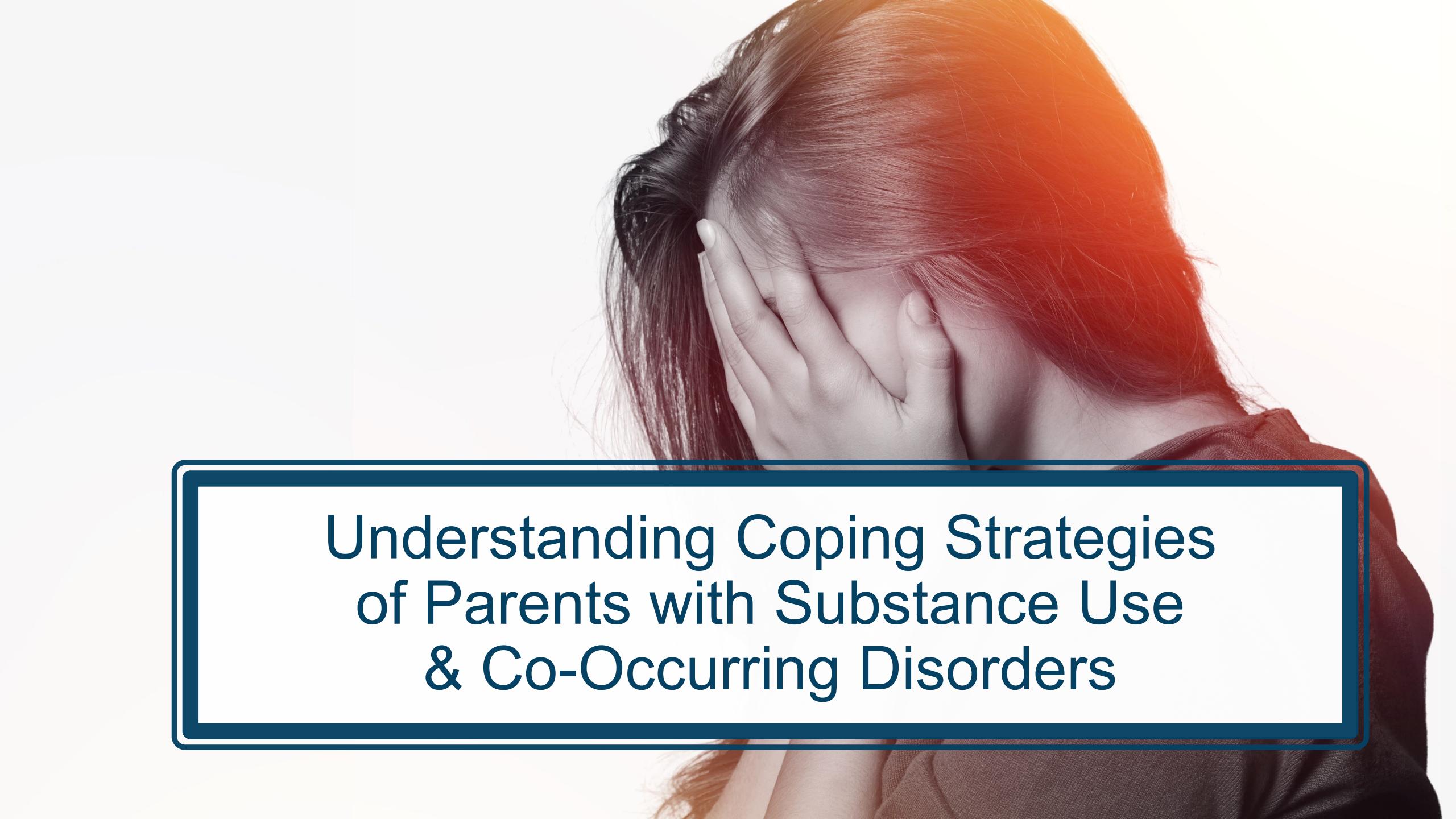
Child Development

Housing/Living Conditions

Level of Parenting and Supervision

Psychosocial Stressors

Support Network

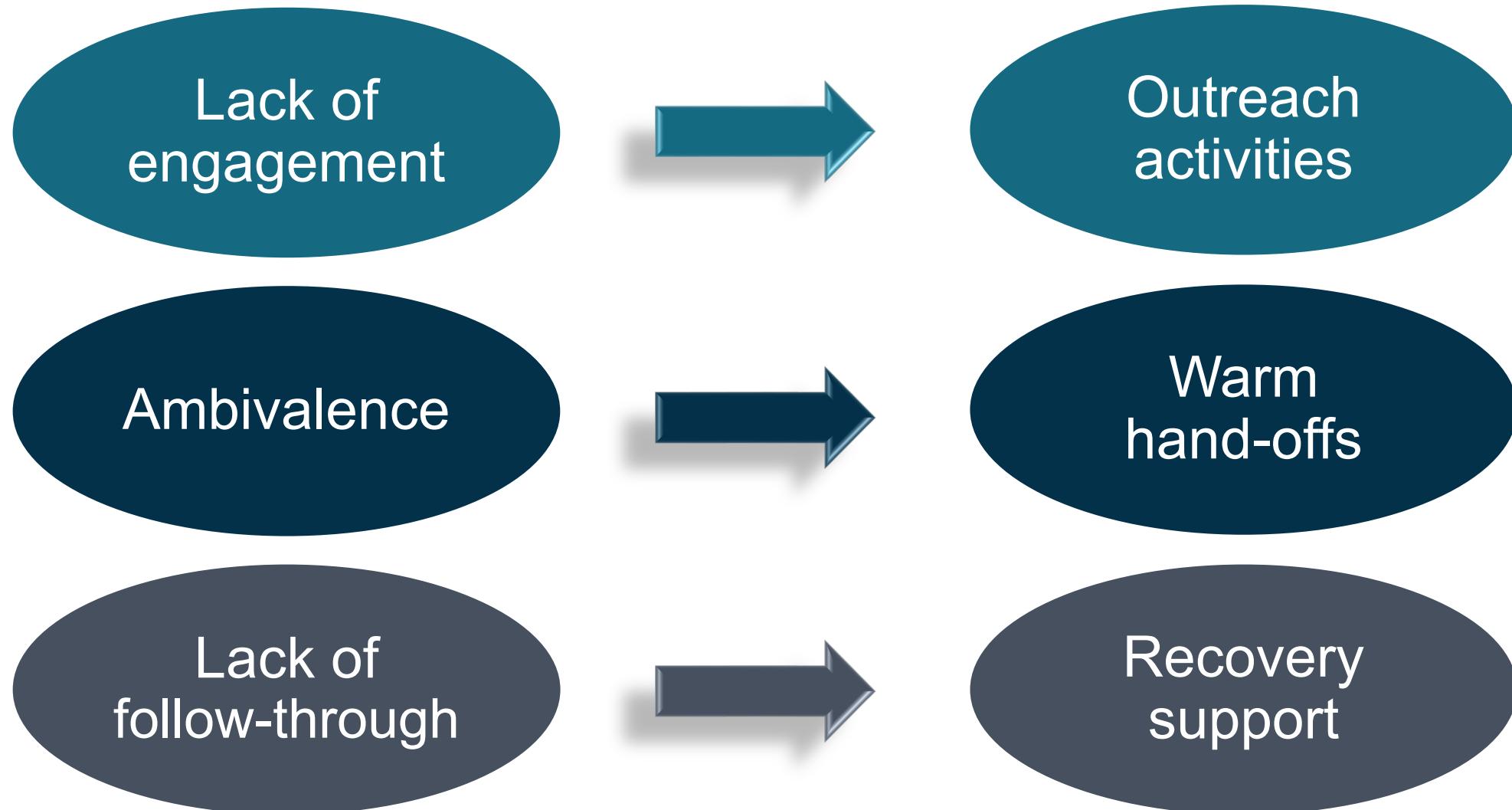


Understanding Coping Strategies of Parents with Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders

Assessment of Child Safety & Family Well-Being



Engagement Strategies for Parents with Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders



5 Points of Intervention for Families Affected by SUDs



PRE-PREGNANCY

Focus on preventing substance use disorders before a woman becomes pregnant through promoting public awareness of the effects of substance use (including alcohol and tobacco) during pregnancy and encouraging access to appropriate substance use disorder treatment



PRENATAL

Focus on identifying substance use disorders among pregnant women through screening and assessment, engaging women into effective treatment services, and providing ongoing services to support recovery



BIRTH

Focus on identifying and addressing the needs of infants affected by prenatal substance exposure, withdrawal symptoms, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder including the immediate need for bonding and attachment with a safe, stable, consistent caregiver



NEONATAL, INFANCY, & POSTPARTUM

Focus on ensuring the infant's safety and responding to the needs of the infant, mother, and family through a comprehensive approach that ensures consistent access to a safe, stable caregiver and a supportive early care environment



CHILDHOOD & ADOLESCENCE

Focus on identifying and responding to the unique developmental and service needs of the toddler, preschooler, child, or adolescent who was exposed and/or affected by parental substance use through a comprehensive family-centered approach

Understanding How Stigma Affects the Families We Serve

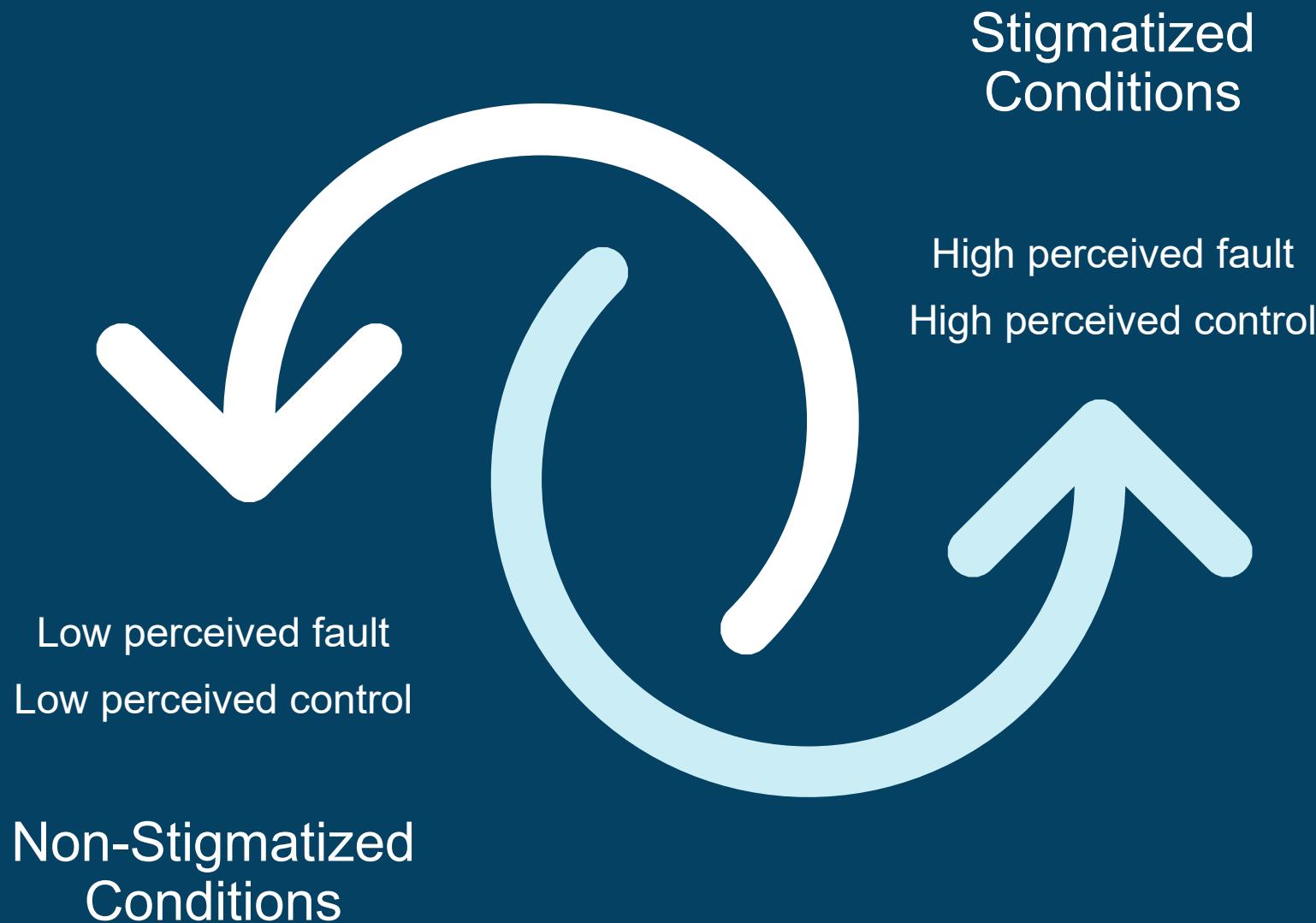
What is Stigma?



Disrupting Stigma to Support Meaningful Change

[Animated Video by Children and Family Futures](#)

Burden of Stigma



Your Choice of Language Reflects Your Understanding of Substance Use Disorders as a Disease

Instead of...

Try...

Addict/Drug Abuser

Person/Parent with a substance use disorder



Clean/Dirty Drug Screen

Screen tested negative or positive for substances



Former Addict

Person in recovery



Drug Addicted Baby

Infant with prenatal substance exposure



Hard-to-Place Kids

Children affected by trauma



Foster Child

Child in-care or out-of-home placement



Strategies for Combating Stigma

Small Group Discussion

- **Is the language we use to engage parents, children, and families strength-based and person-first?**
- **Are there other terms or labels that perpetuate stigma for families affected by substance use disorders?**
- **What about current child welfare policies and practices—do these help to reduce or perpetuate stigma for families affected by substance use disorders?**

Small Group Discussion Questions

Treatment of Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders

“Groundbreaking discoveries about the brain have revolutionized our understanding of addiction, enabling us to respond effectively to the problem.”

*—Dr. Nora Volkow,
National Institute on Drug Abuse*

A Treatable Disease

Overview of the Treatment Process

Early Identification, Screening, and Brief Intervention

Done at earliest point possible

Comprehensive Assessment

Determine extent and severity of disease

Stabilization

Via medically supervised withdrawal when necessary

Timely and Appropriate Substance Use Disorder Treatment

Address substance use disorder and co-occurring issues

Continuing Care and Recovery Support

Help parents sustain recovery, maintain family safety and stability

Specialized Treatment Services

- What is specialized treatment services?
- What are the benefits of this treatment option?
 - Considerations for males
 - Considerations for females

Family-Focused Intervention

Parent Recovery

- Parenting skills & competencies
- Family connections & resources
- Parental mental health
- Medication management
- Parental substance use
- Domestic violence

Family Recovery and Well-Being

- Food
- Housing
- Employment
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Family counseling
- Specialized parenting

Child Well-Being

- Physical health & well-being
- Social/Emotional development
- School readiness
- Trauma
- Mental health
- Adolescent substance abuse
- At-risk youth prevention

Family-Centered Approach



Recognizes that addiction is a **brain disease** that affects the entire **family**, and that recovery and well-being occurs **in the context of the family**

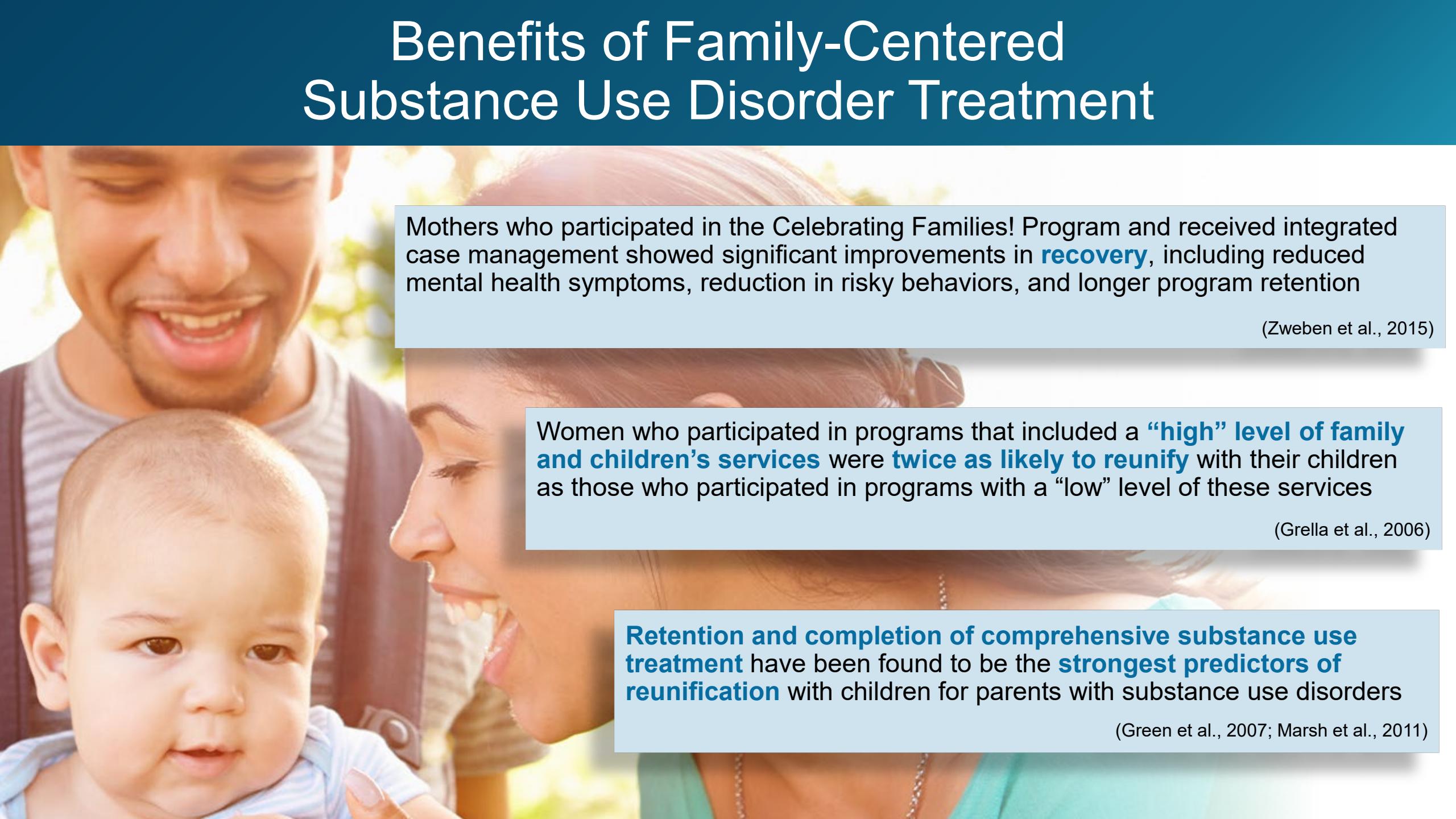


Provides a comprehensive array of clinical treatment and related support services that meet the needs of **each member in the family**, not only the individual requesting care



Extends well beyond the substance use disorder (SUD) treatment system, the child welfare system, the courts, and mental health services, and includes **all other agencies and individuals** that interact with and serve families

Benefits of Family-Centered Substance Use Disorder Treatment



Mothers who participated in the Celebrating Families! Program and received integrated case management showed significant improvements in **recovery**, including reduced mental health symptoms, reduction in risky behaviors, and longer program retention

(Zweben et al., 2015)

Women who participated in programs that included a **“high” level of family and children’s services** were **twice as likely to reunify** with their children as those who participated in programs with a “low” level of these services

(Grella et al., 2006)

Retention and completion of comprehensive substance use treatment have been found to be the **strongest predictors of reunification** with children for parents with substance use disorders

(Green et al., 2007; Marsh et al., 2011)

The Role of Collaborative Partnerships in Helping Families Navigate Parental Substance Use & Child Safety

The Need to Do Better for Families

Lower likelihood of successful reunification



Children tend to remain in out-of-home care longer



Improving Partnerships: No Single Agency Can Do This Alone

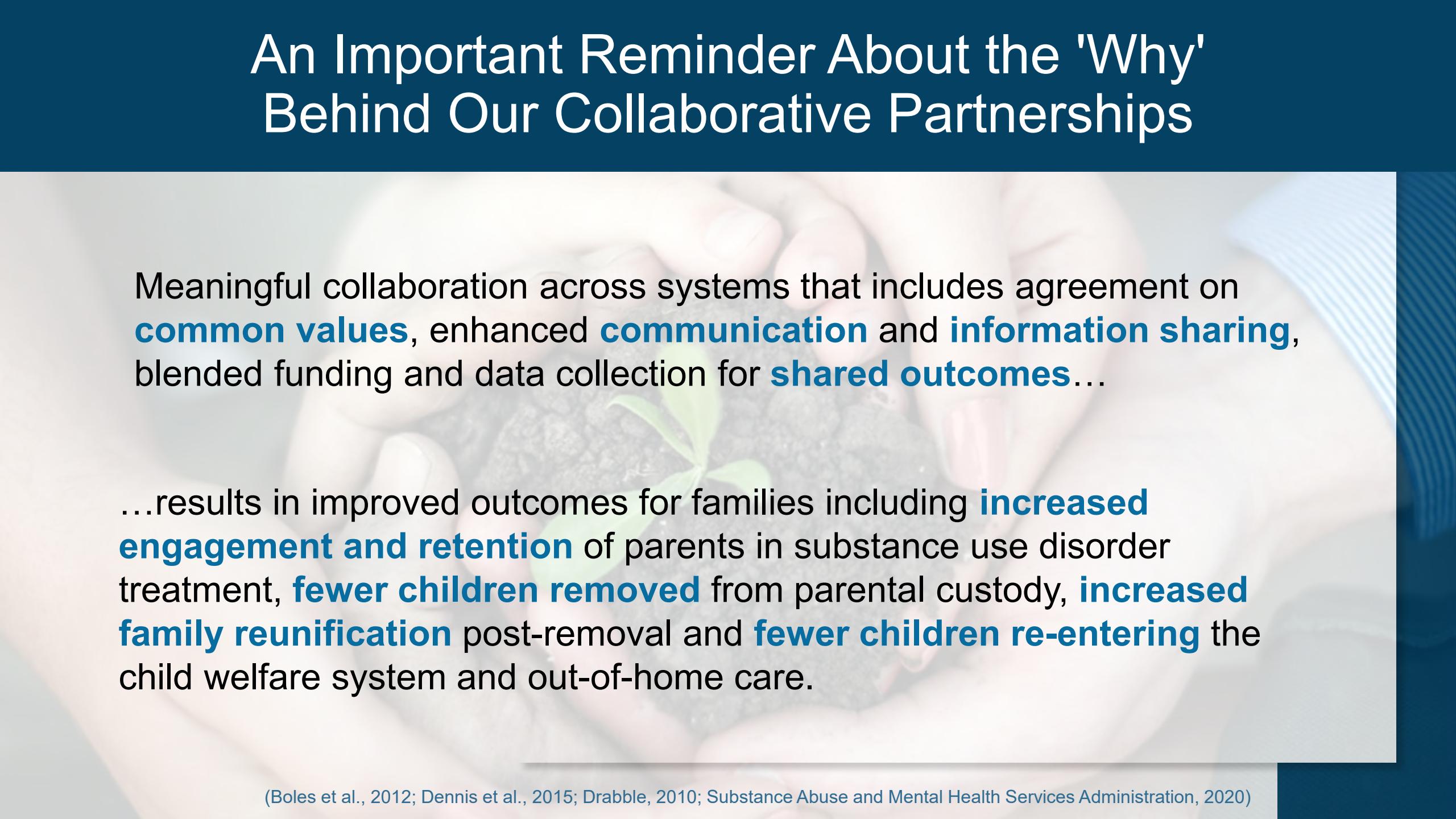


Better Together

Improving outcomes for children and families affected by parental substance use requires a coordinated response that draws from the talents and resources of *at least* the following systems:

- Child Welfare
- Treatment Providers
- Courts

An Important Reminder About the 'Why' Behind Our Collaborative Partnerships



Meaningful collaboration across systems that includes agreement on **common values**, enhanced **communication** and **information sharing**, blended funding and data collection for **shared outcomes**...

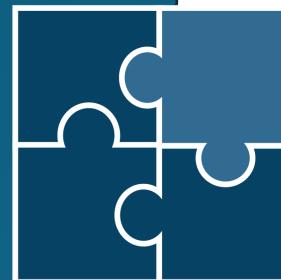
...results in improved outcomes for families including **increased engagement and retention** of parents in substance use disorder treatment, **fewer children removed** from parental custody, **increased family reunification** post-removal and **fewer children re-entering** the child welfare system and out-of-home care.

Contact

Contact the NCSACW Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Program

Connect with programs that are developing tools and implementing practices and protocols to support their collaborative

Training and technical assistance to support collaboration and systems change



**National Center on
Substance Abuse
and Child Welfare**



<https://ncsacw.acf.hhs.gov/>



ncsacw@cffutures.org



Toll-Free @ 1-866-493-2758

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