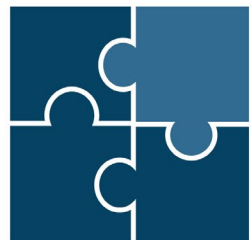


Module 1: Understanding the Multiple Needs of Families Involved with the Child Welfare System

Child Welfare Training Toolkit



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

Acknowledgement

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National Center on
Substance Abuse
and Child Welfare

Learning Objectives

After completing this training,
child welfare workers will:

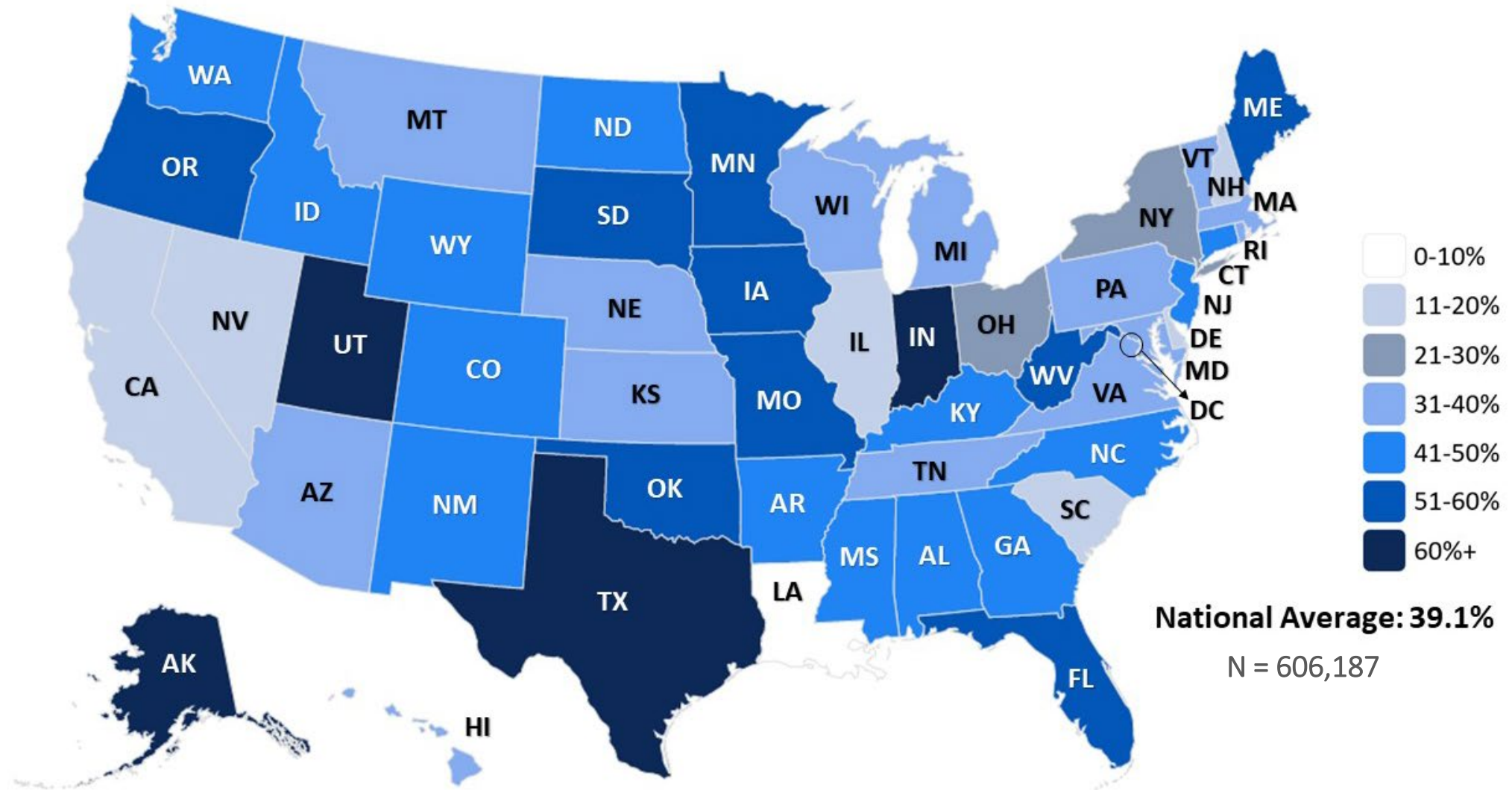
- Identify the prevalence of trauma, substance use and mental disorders in the child welfare population
- Recognize the effects of substance use and co-occurring disorders on children and families
- Describe the negative effects of stigma on treatment and recovery outcomes
- Understand the importance 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)

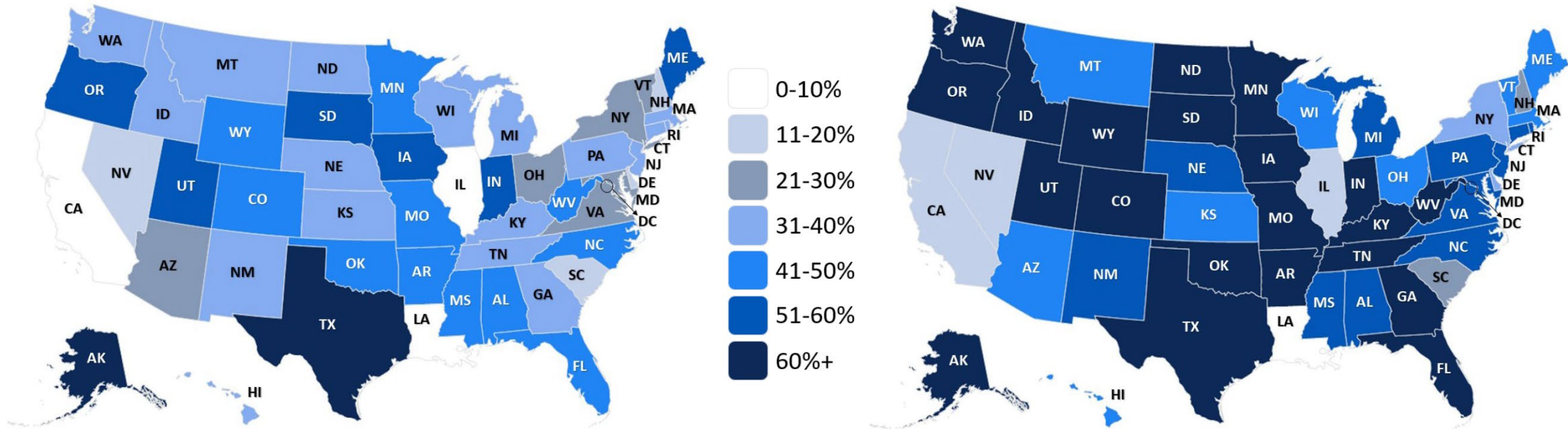
State	Percentage	Number
LA	1.9%	109
MA	34.5%	4685
MD	31.2%	1715
ME	51.5%	1638
MI	39.3%	5693
MN	51.2%	6187
MO	51.3%	9924
MS	48.0%	2668
MT	39.4%	1984
NC	44.0%	6745
ND	42.6%	1053
NE	36.4%	2003
NH	15.4%	260
NJ	43.6%	2303
NM	43.6%	1319
NV	15.9%	1133
NY	30.9%	6181

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



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	65.40%	2203
AL	60.80%	1108	43.30%	3142
AR	64.90%	855	47.10%	2755
AZ	47.80%	2166	30.90%	5474
CA	16.70%	2612	10.30%	5767
CO	76.30%	1247	43.20%	2816
CT	54.00%	655	40.10%	1534
DC	27.00%	38	13.30%	89
DE	37.20%	55	15.10%	87
FL	66.00%	5152	47.90%	13593
GA	61.10%	1969	40.50%	5192
HI	48.30%	232	32.20%	623
IA	70.80%	908	57.70%	3540
ID	63.10%	320	37.00%	810
IL	14.00%	907	10.20%	2126
IN	72.50%	3180	59.00%	10324
KS	48.60%	731	33.30%	2923
KY	61.60%	1416	37.60%	4262

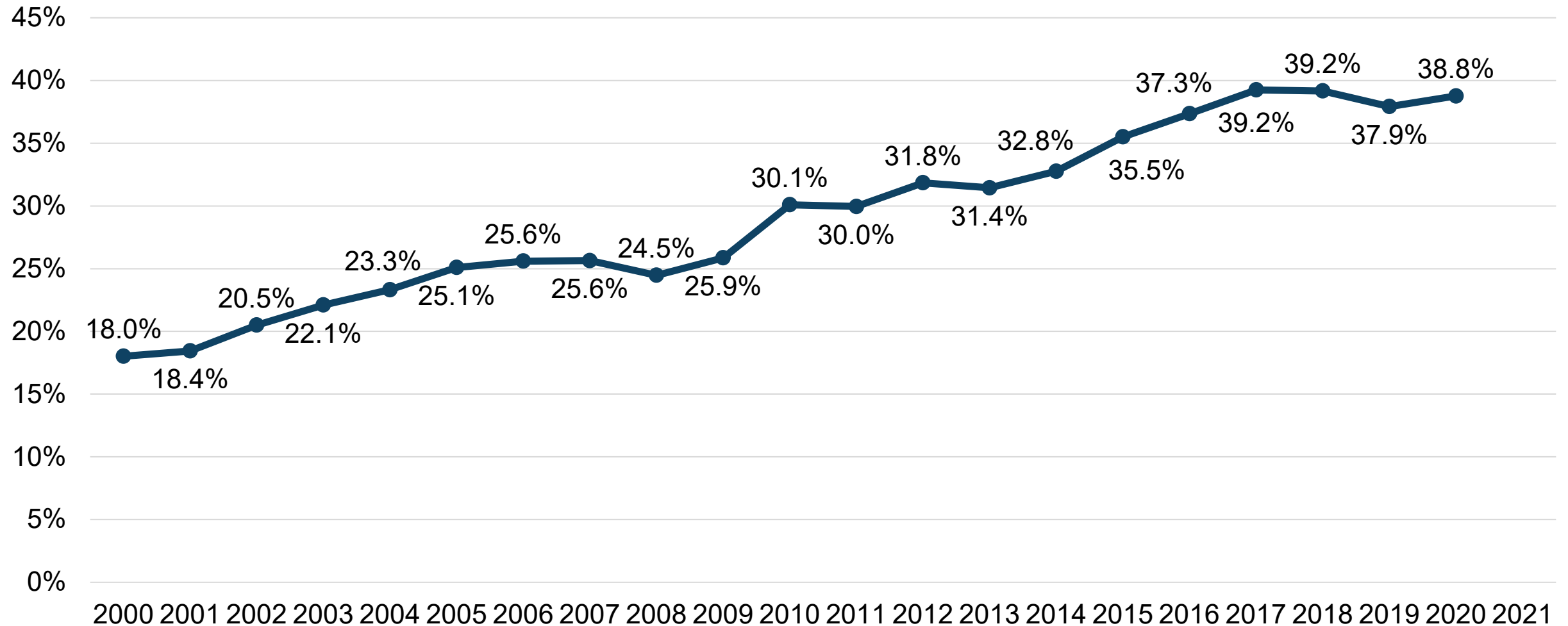
Year 2021
Data Listed
by State,
by Age (L-N)

State	Under Age 1		Age 1 and Older	
LA	2.00%	28	1.80%	81
MA	48.50%	1243	31.20%	3442
MD	51.90%	558	26.20%	1157
ME	50.70%	368	51.70%	1270
MI	53.10%	1657	35.50%	4036
MN	65.10%	1372	48.30%	4815
MO	70.50%	2654	46.70%	7270
MS	58.40%	687	45.20%	1981
MT	48.60%	476	37.20%	1508
NC	55.70%	1597	41.30%	5148
ND	67.10%	312	37.00%	741
NE	52.10%	440	33.50%	1563
NH	26.90%	72	13.20%	188
NJ	56.10%	840	38.60%	1463
NM	56.50%	316	40.60%	1003
NV	20.10%	332	14.60%	801
NY	39.20%	1844	28.30%	4337

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

State	Under Age 1		Age 1 and Older	
OH	47.20%	2256	27.20%	5718
OK	65.30%	2015	48.40%	4073
OR	67.70%	1118	54.70%	3629
PA	53.40%	2284	32.70%	5612
RI	51.60%	320	35.10%	793
SC	30.20%	300	15.10%	862
SD	71.80%	328	55.00%	1194
TN	70.00%	1521	34.90%	4322
TX	76.70%	7564	62.60%	21959
UT	79.40%	540	57.50%	1834
VA	55.30%	591	30.30%	1971
VT	46.90%	123	28.60%	389
WA	66.20%	2324	36.80%	3620
WI	49.10%	1066	35.40%	2983
WV	75.90%	1611	50.70%	4963
WY	70.50%	146	47.80%	667
Puerto Rico	31.10%	111	15.50%	360
Total US	51.30%	63130	36.00%	173013

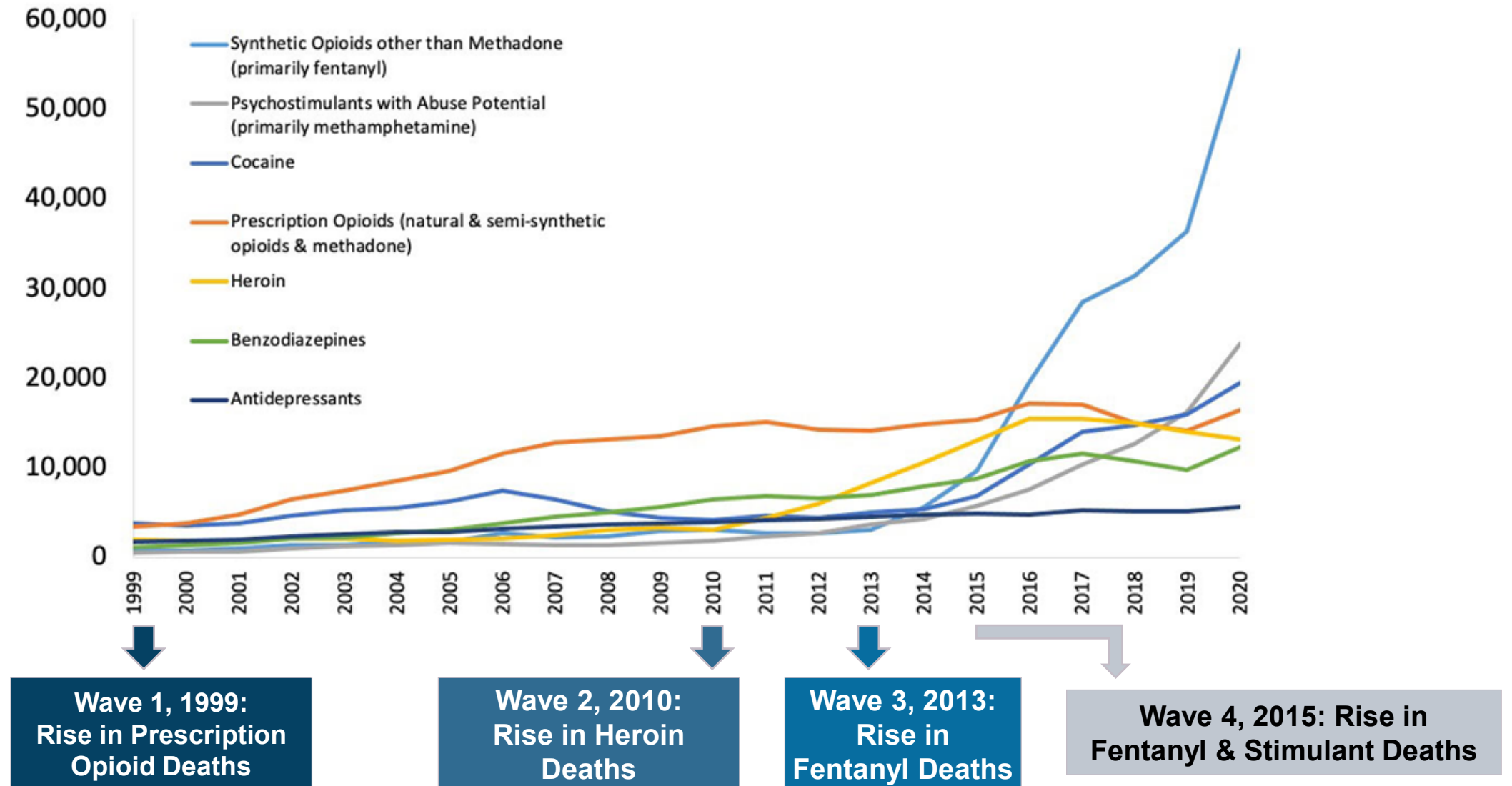
Incidence of Parental Alcohol or Drug Abuse as a Condition Associated with Removal in the United States, 2000 to 2021



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)



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

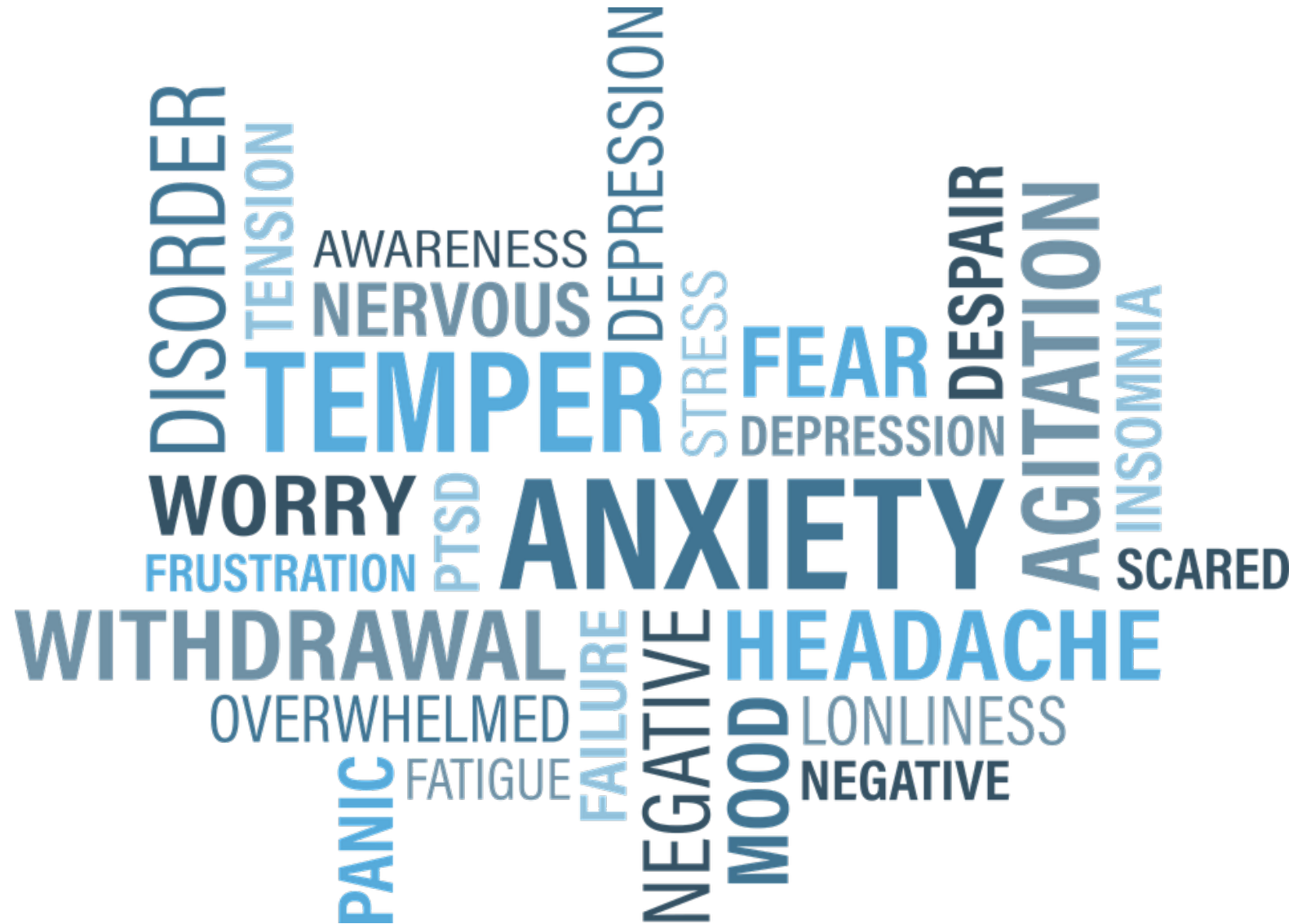
Video Credit & Permission to Use by National Indian Child Welfare Association
WWW.NICWA.ORG

Understanding Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders

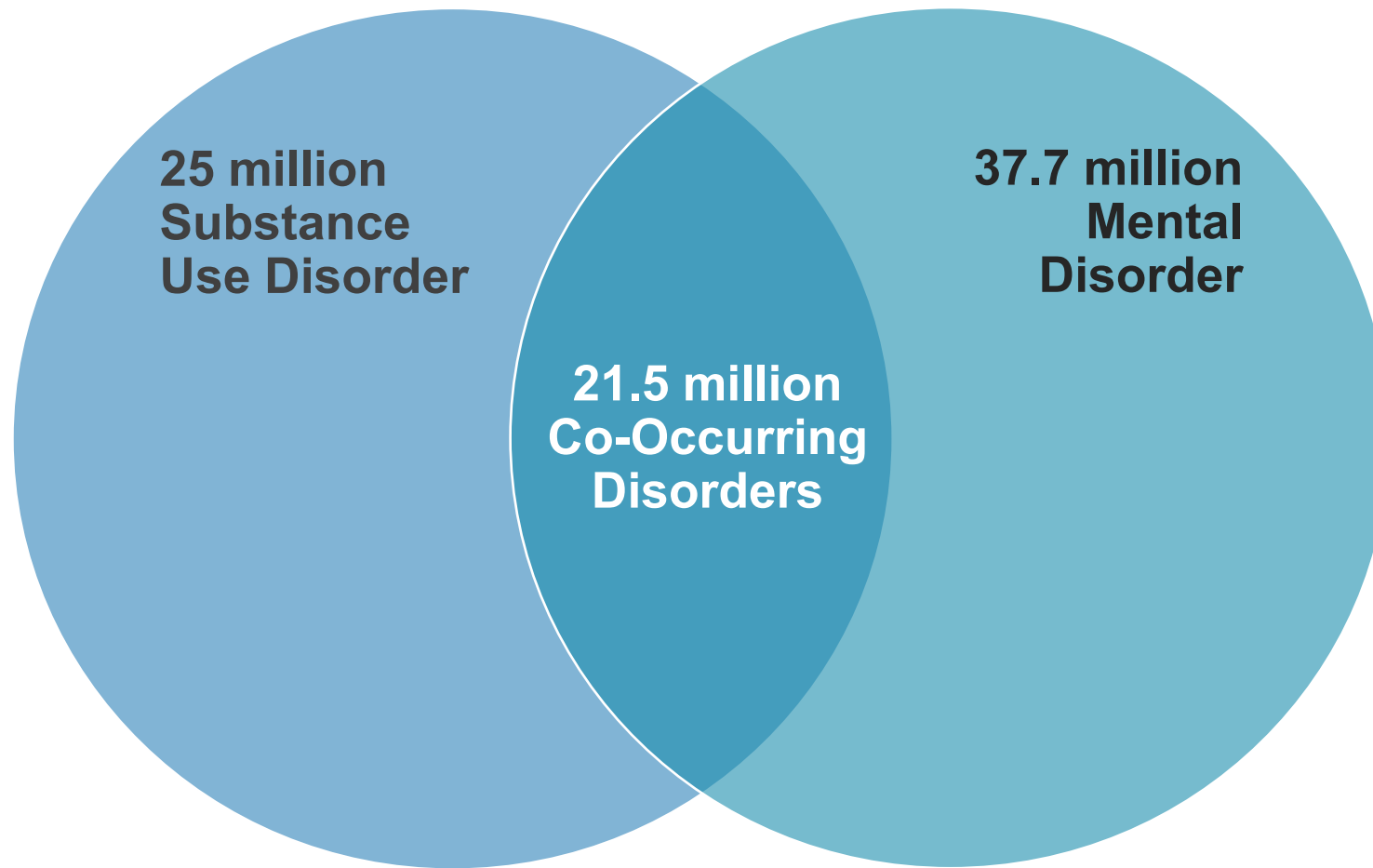
What is a Co-Occurring Disorder?



More on Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders



Prevalence of Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders



Understanding the Cumulative Effects of Trauma

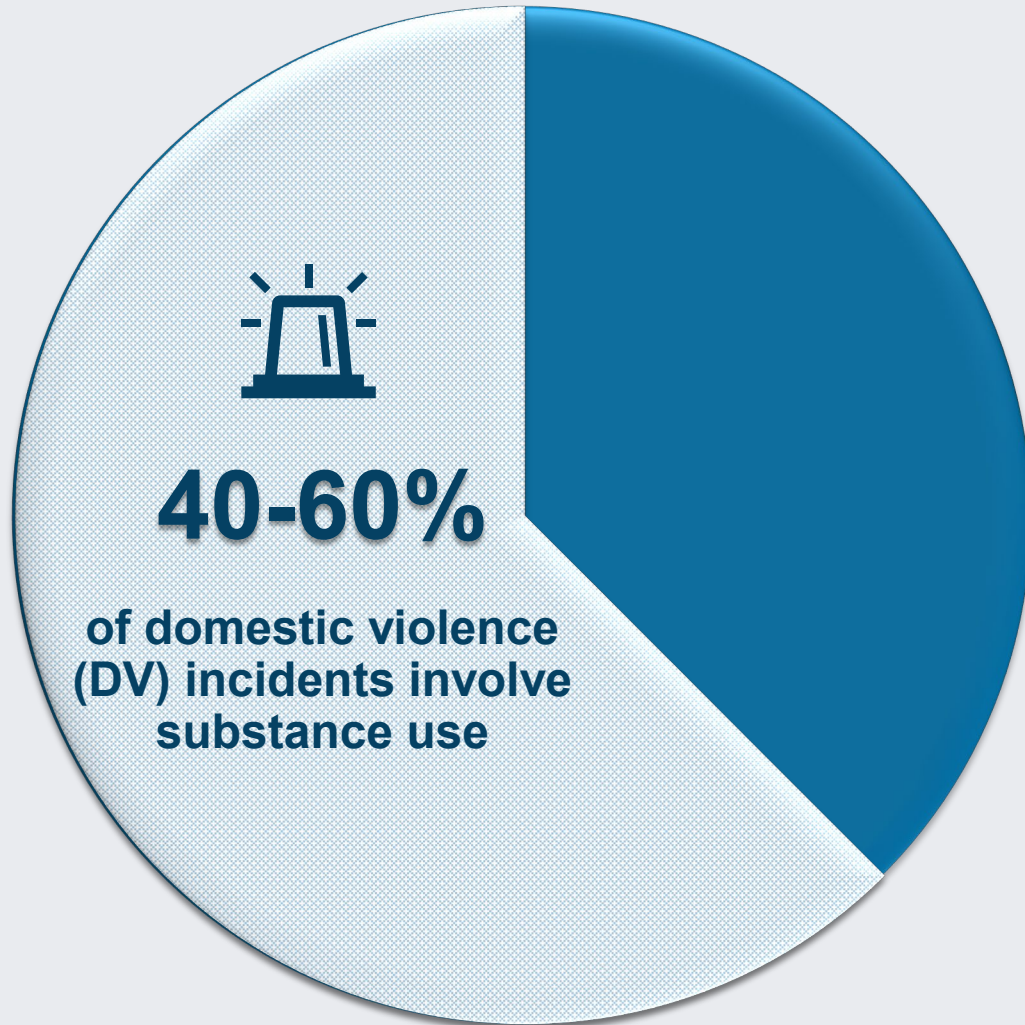
- Physical
- Emotional/Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Interpersonal



Trauma Symptomology

Small Group Activity

Substance Use Disorders & Domestic Violence



Women engaged in substance use disorder treatment report high rates of DV

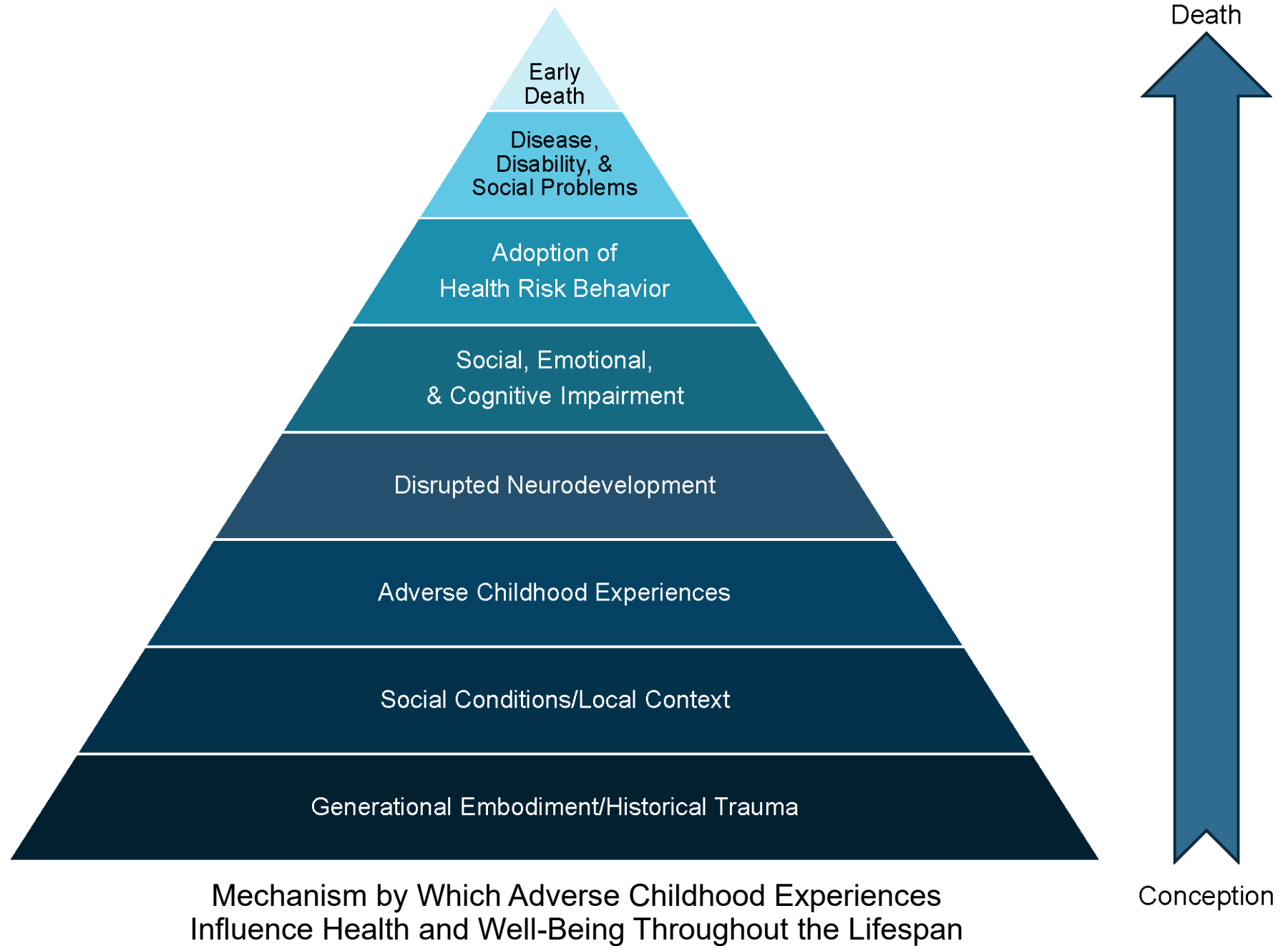
47-90%
lifetime prevalence

31-67%

within past year



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

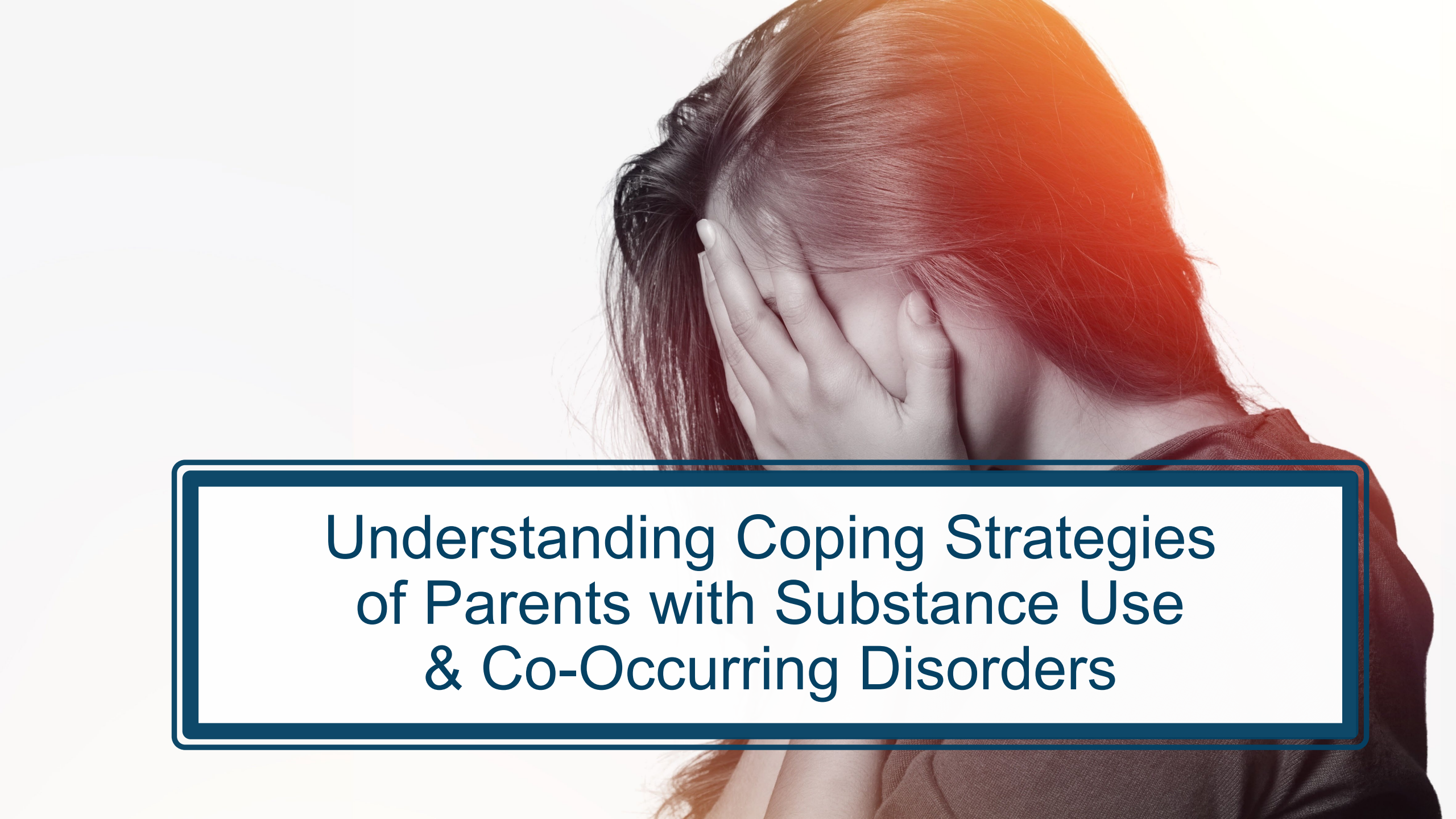
Child Development

Housing/Living Conditions

Level of Parenting and Supervision

Psychosocial Stressors

Support Network

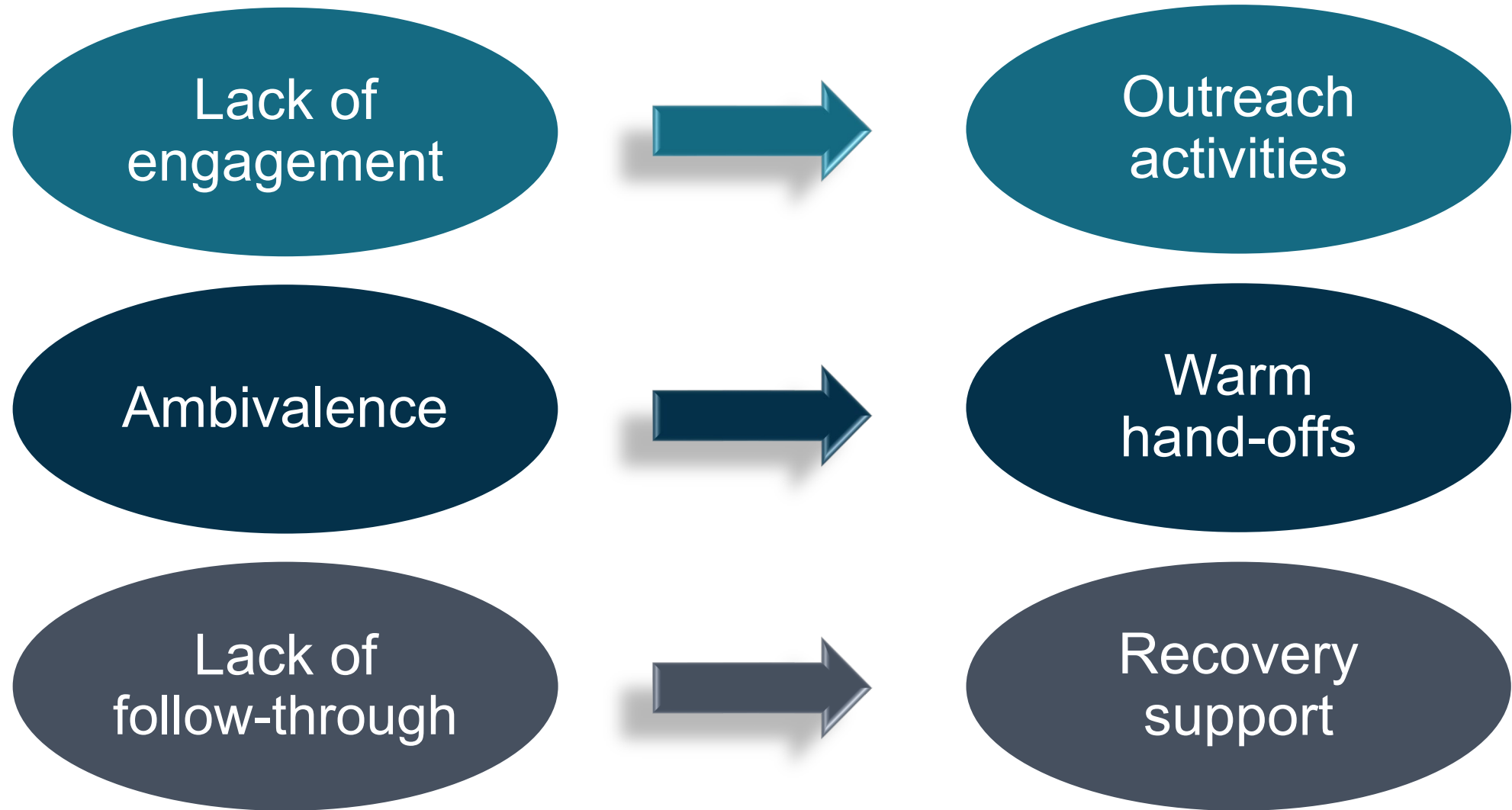


Understanding Coping Strategies of Parents with Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders

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

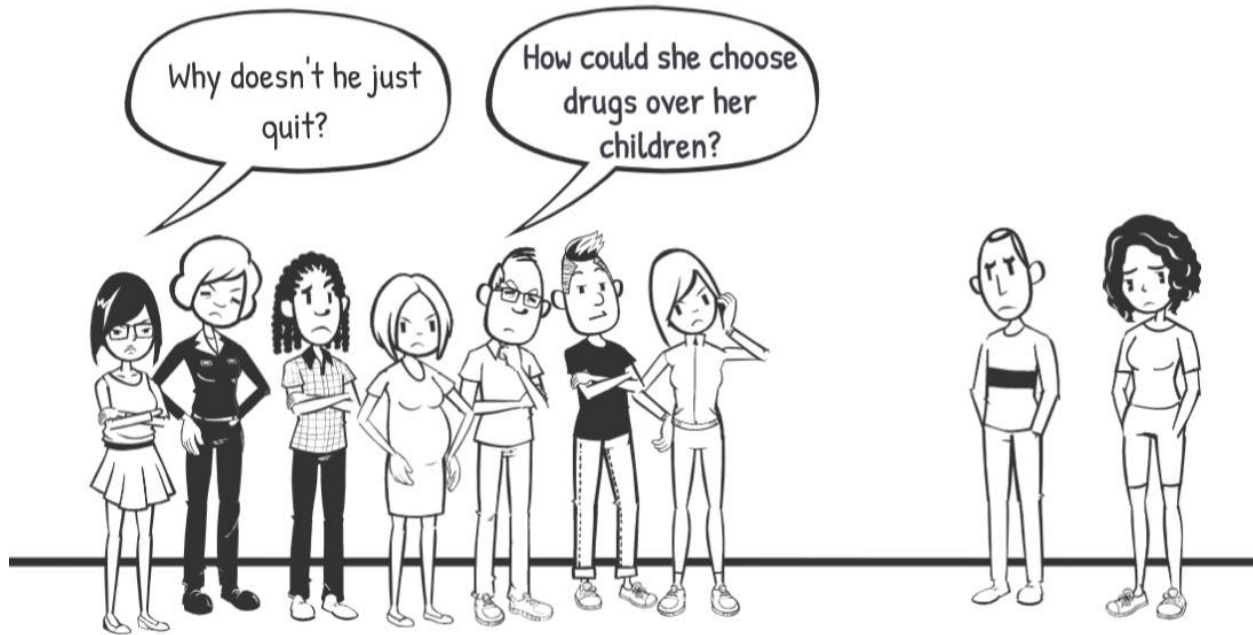
Focus on **ensuring the infant's safety and responding to the needs of the infant, mother, and family** through a comprehensive approach that **ensures consistent access to a safe, stable caregiver** and a supportive early care environment

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?



Listen
Learn
Respect

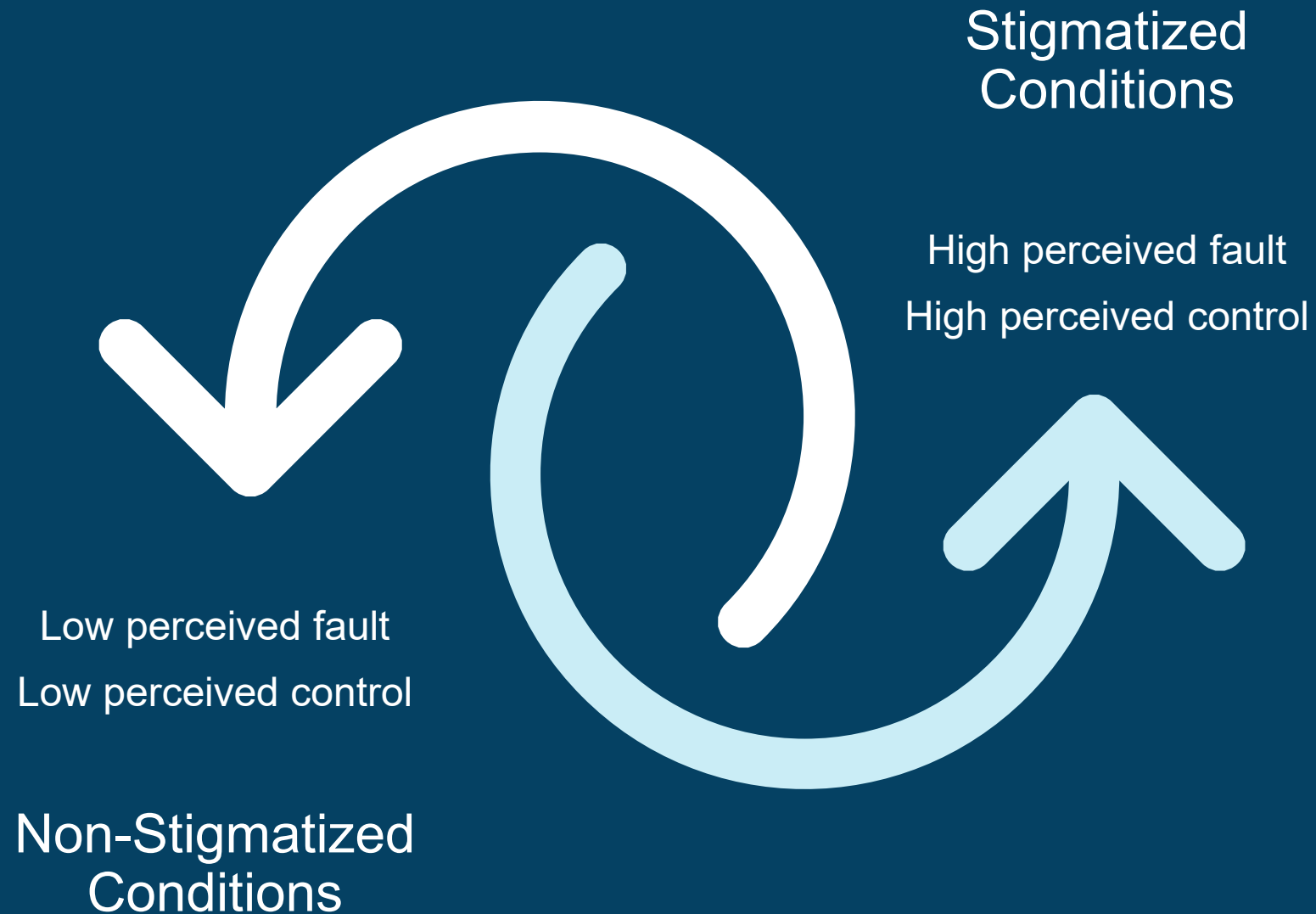
STOP STIGMA

Inform
Support
Educate

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

Two vertical dark blue bars of different heights are positioned on the left side of the slide.

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**

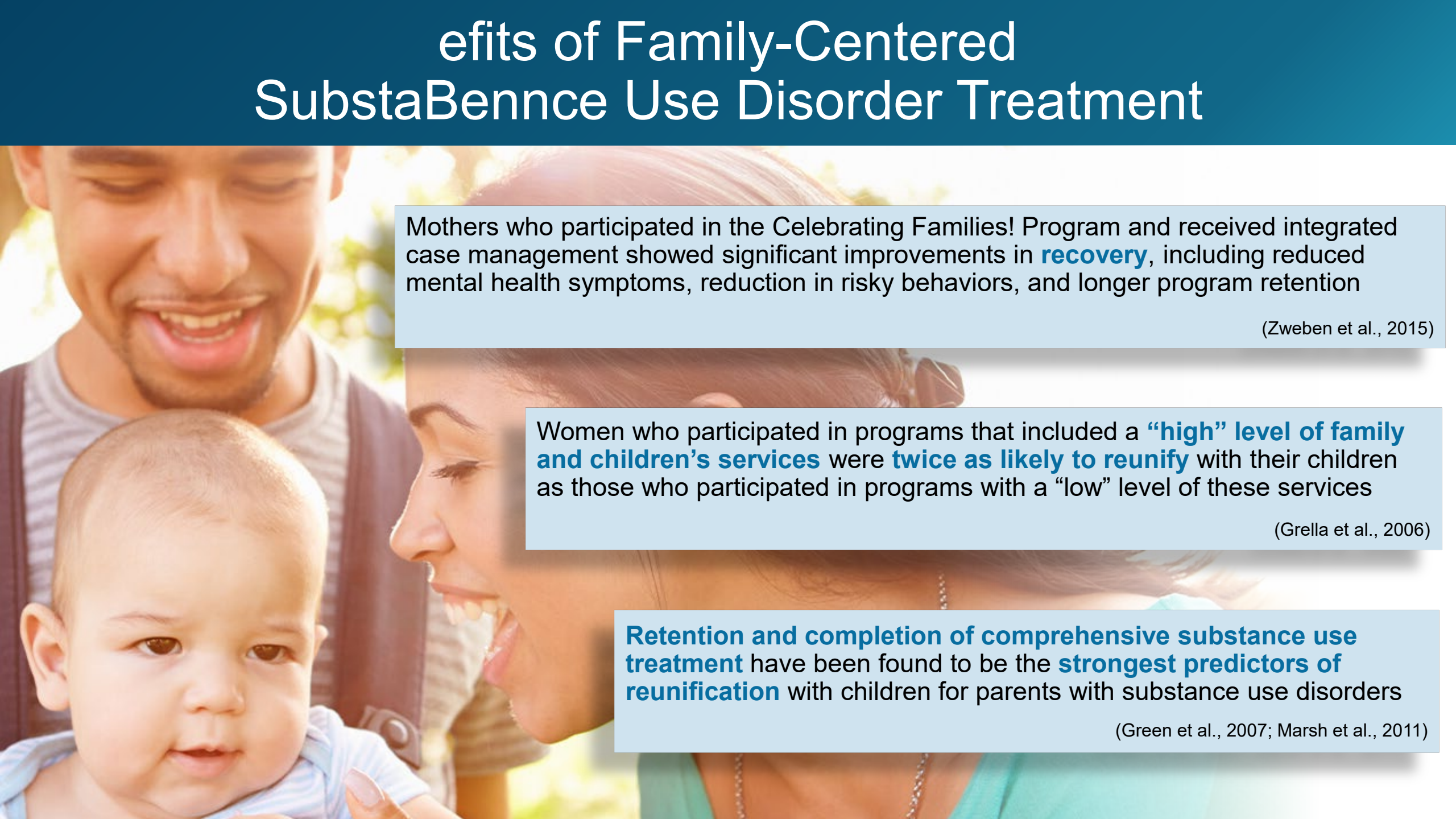


Provides a comprehensive array of clinical treatment and related support services that meet the needs of **each member in the family**, not only the individual requesting care



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

A photograph of a family: a man, a woman, and a baby. The man is on the left, smiling down at the baby. The woman is on the right, also smiling and looking at the baby. The baby is in a carrier and looking towards the camera. The background is bright and out of focus.

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**...

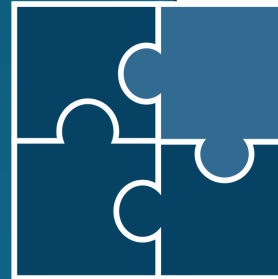
...results in improved outcomes for families including **increased engagement and retention** of parents in substance use disorder treatment, **fewer children removed** from parental custody, **increased family reunification** post-removal and **fewer children re-entering** the child welfare system and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