

North Carolina Problem Gambling Program (NCPGP)

• NCPGP total \$3 million in SFY 2025

“ ..for gambling addiction education and treatment programs..”



Treatment

No cost support for individuals and families



Education

Trainings and classes from industry experts



Prevention

Evidence based programs for vulnerable populations



Helpline

24/7 access to help and resources



Recovery

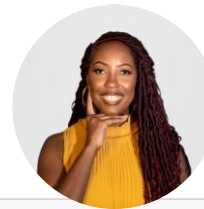
Recovery-oriented assistance



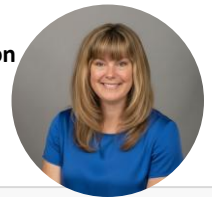
Research

Understand the effects of gaming in the State

Tiffany Reddick, LPC
Treatment & Recovery
Coordinator

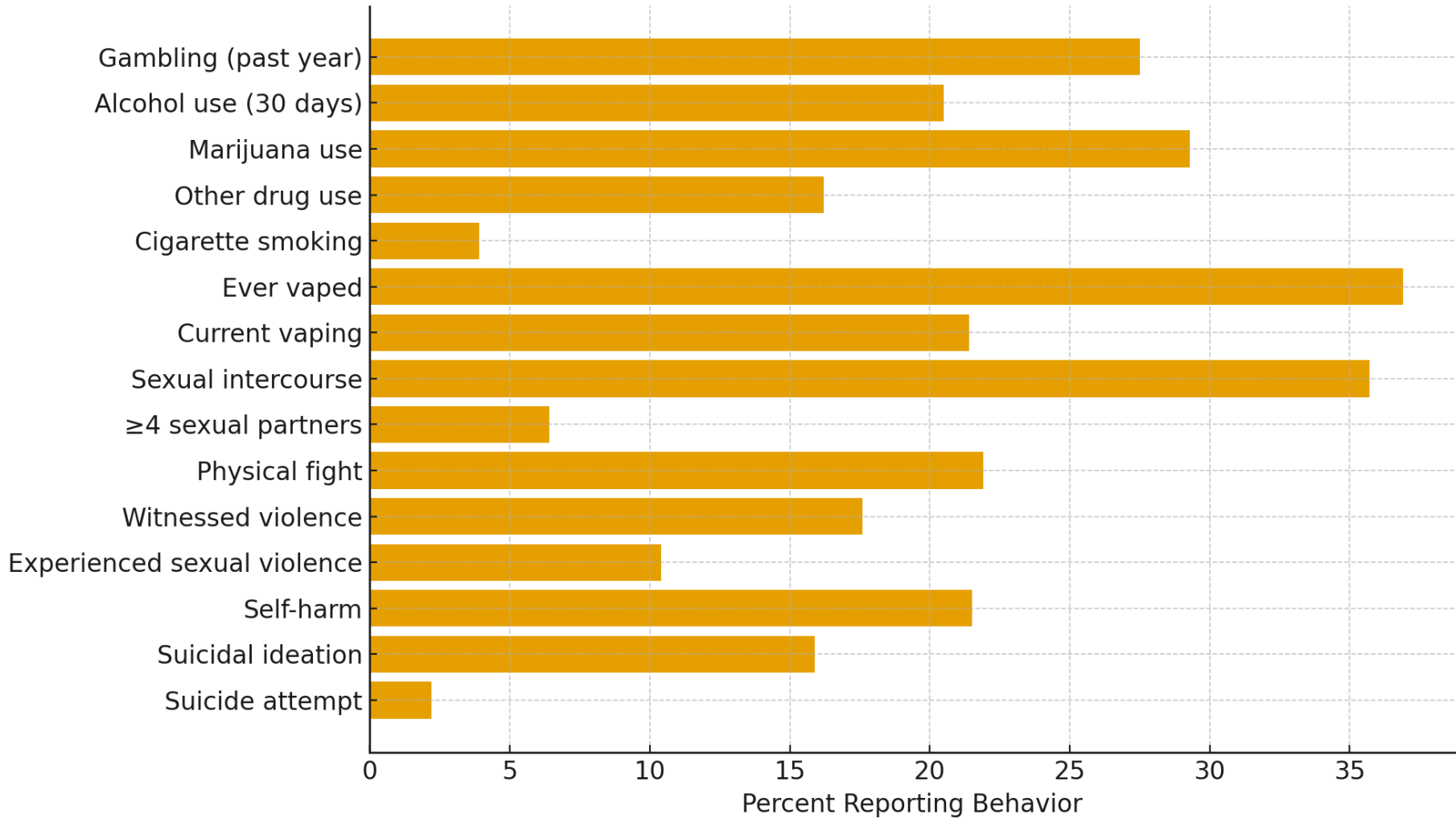


Alison Wood,
Youth Prevention
Coordinator



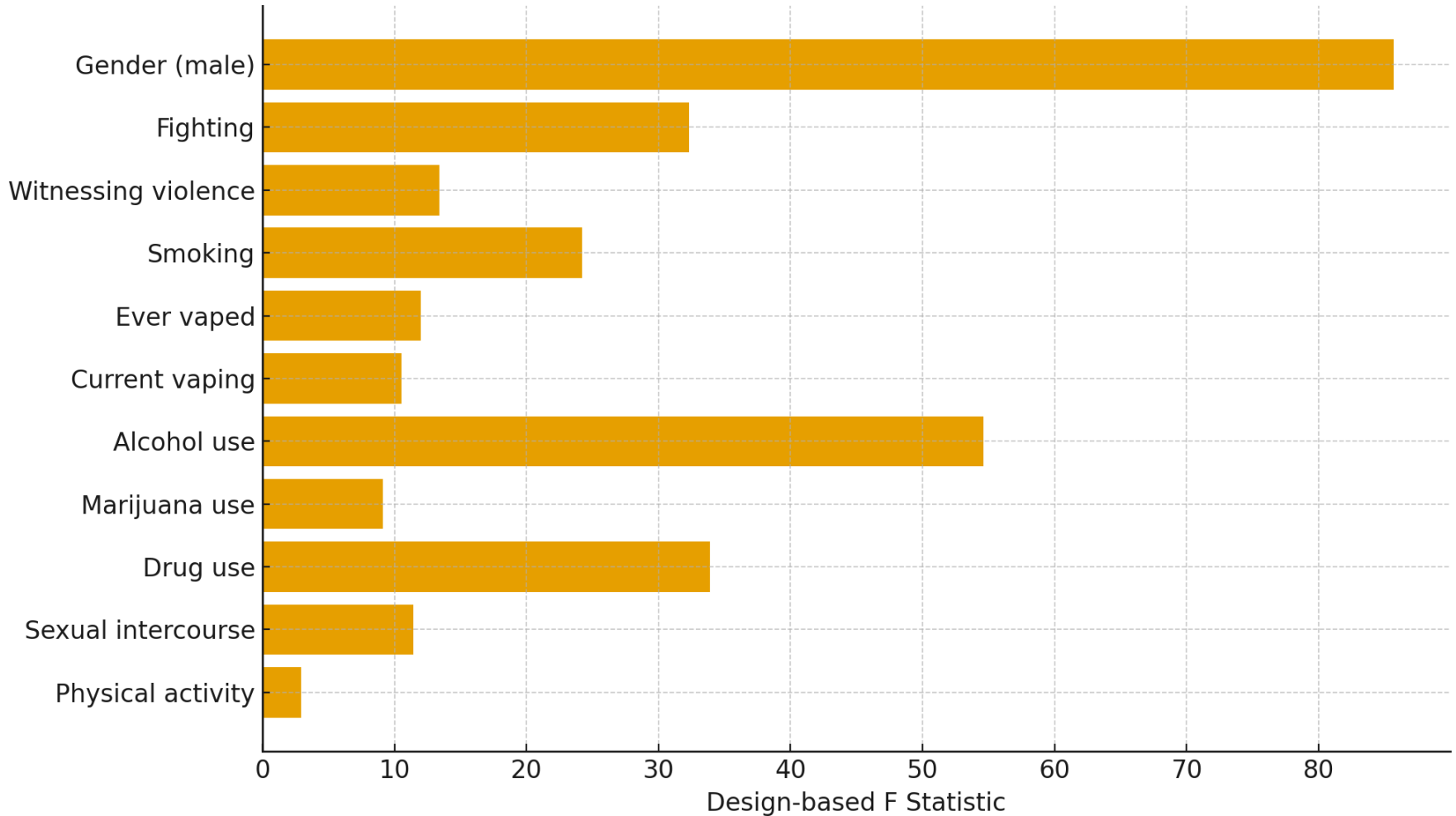
NC YPE Middle School and High School Students	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Games of Skill	34.5	33.9	22.6			33	43
Playing Cards or Dice for Money	24.5	26.9	17.4	22	22	26	35
Sports Betting	31.6	34.8	19.7	25	25	24	38
Lottery Tickets	19.6	30.2	16.4	19	19	23	31
Instant Win Tickets	16.7	26.9	10.5	21	21	25	34
Bingo	13.3	26.4	17.3	21	21	24	34
Slot Machines	13.9	23.2	8.8	16	16	17	27
Horse or Dog Racing	12.4	19.5	10.3	17	17	17	28
Internet Gambling	16.9	21	9.9	18	18	21	33
Bet on Skins				21	21	25	36
Purchased Skins				26	26	29	43
Bet on eSports				21	21	22	34
Purchased Loot Boxes				23	23	24	39
Engaged in in-app purchases				30	30	34	42
Played a Social Casino Game				17	17	20	28

YRBS 2025 Data



YRBS 2025 Data

Significant Bivariate Associations with Gambling (Weighted YRBS)



YRBS 2025 Conclusions

- Prevalence: Roughly 1 in 4 students reported gambling within the past year.
- Co-occurring risks: Gambling is highly correlated with other substance use and externalizing behaviors, particularly among male students.

Why Do Young People Gamble?

- Fun and excitement
 - Influence of celebrities and influencers
 - Online exposure (social media)
 - Risk-taking behavior
 - Family History
 - To make money (those living in countries with low socio-economic populations)
- * Those living with problem gambling score higher on emotional dysregulation and maladaptive coping strategies

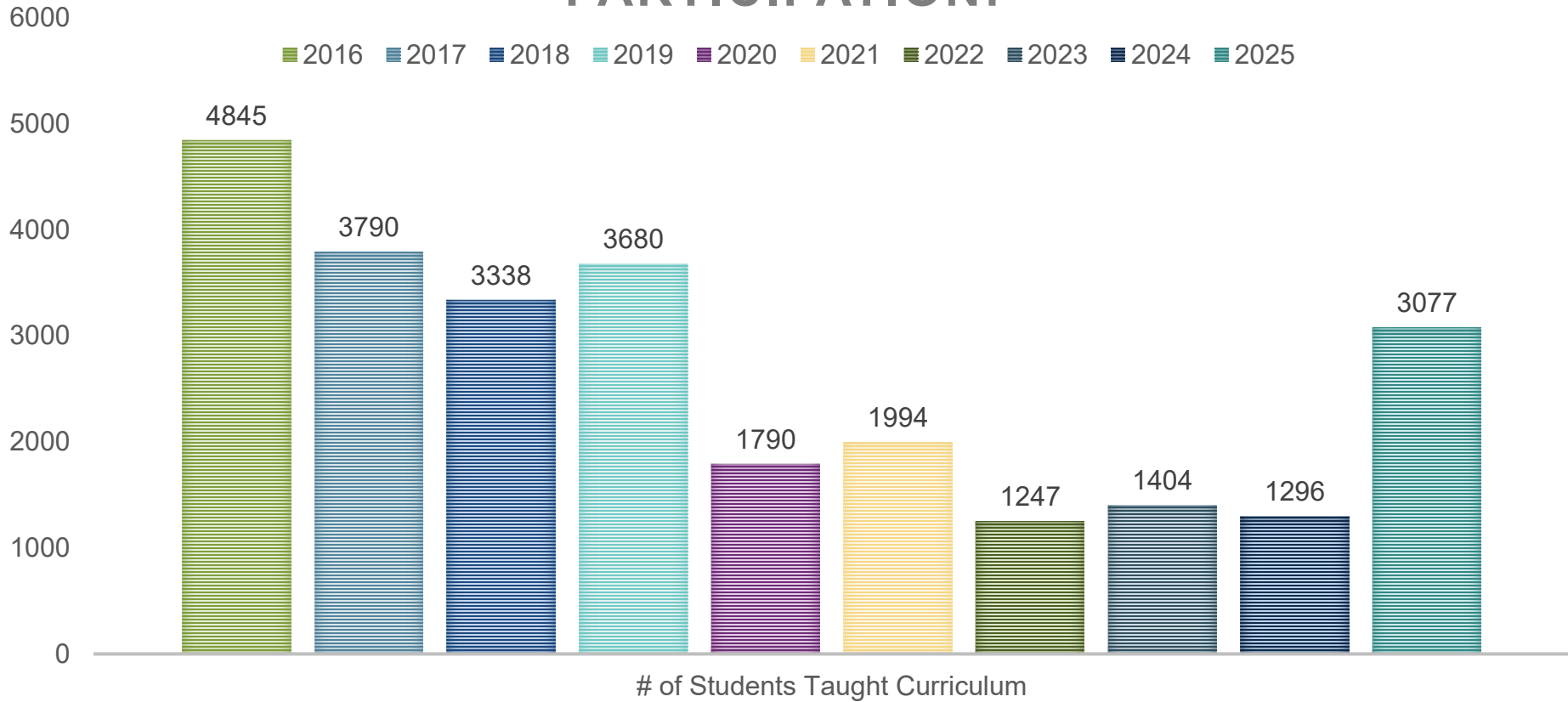
Gambling Disorders do not Exist in a Vacuum



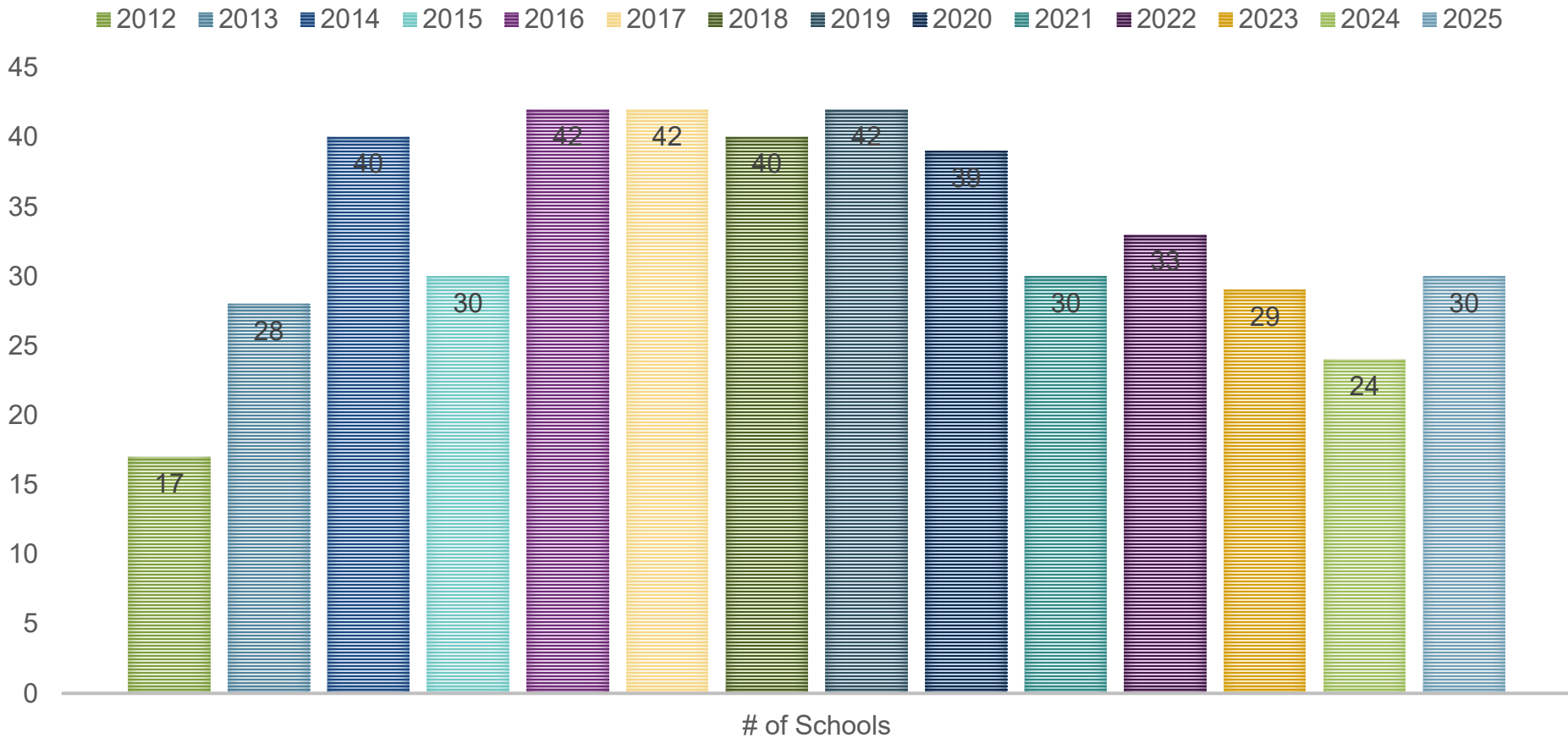
Recommendations – Dr. Jeffrey Derevensky

- Merely focusing on cognitive and mathematical aspects associated with gambling will likely be insufficient
- Need to address a multitude of mental health issues; cause & effect issues
- Need to focus on developing youth coping strategies in the face of adversity and resilience
- Need for increased training of school-based mental health prevention and treatment providers
- Need to build problem gambling prevention into a wider mental health curriculum
- Mental health prevention initiatives should begin in elementary school

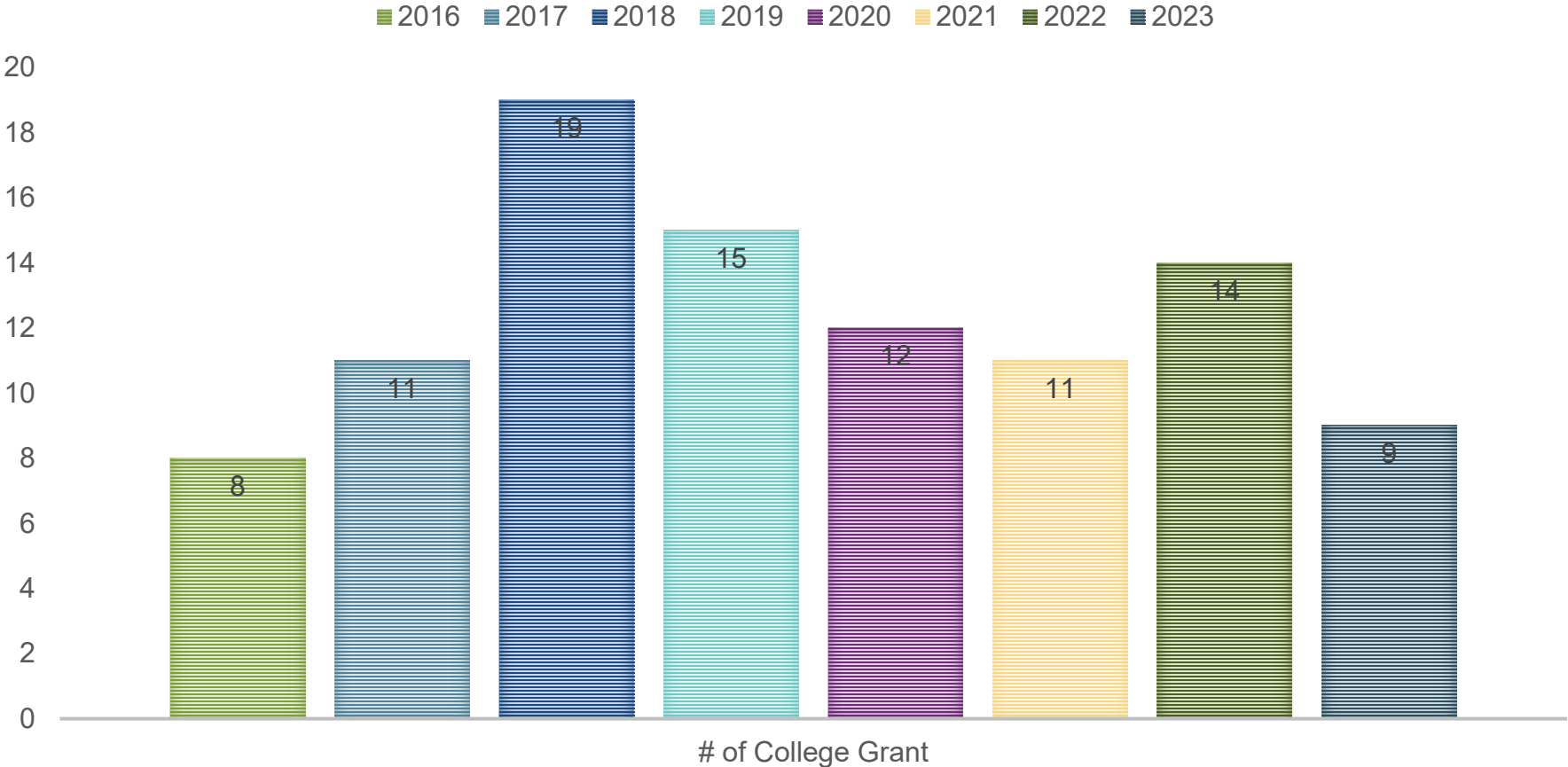
YOUTH PREVENTION EDUCATION STUDENT PARTICIPATION:



YOUTH PREVENTION EDUCATION GRANT SITES

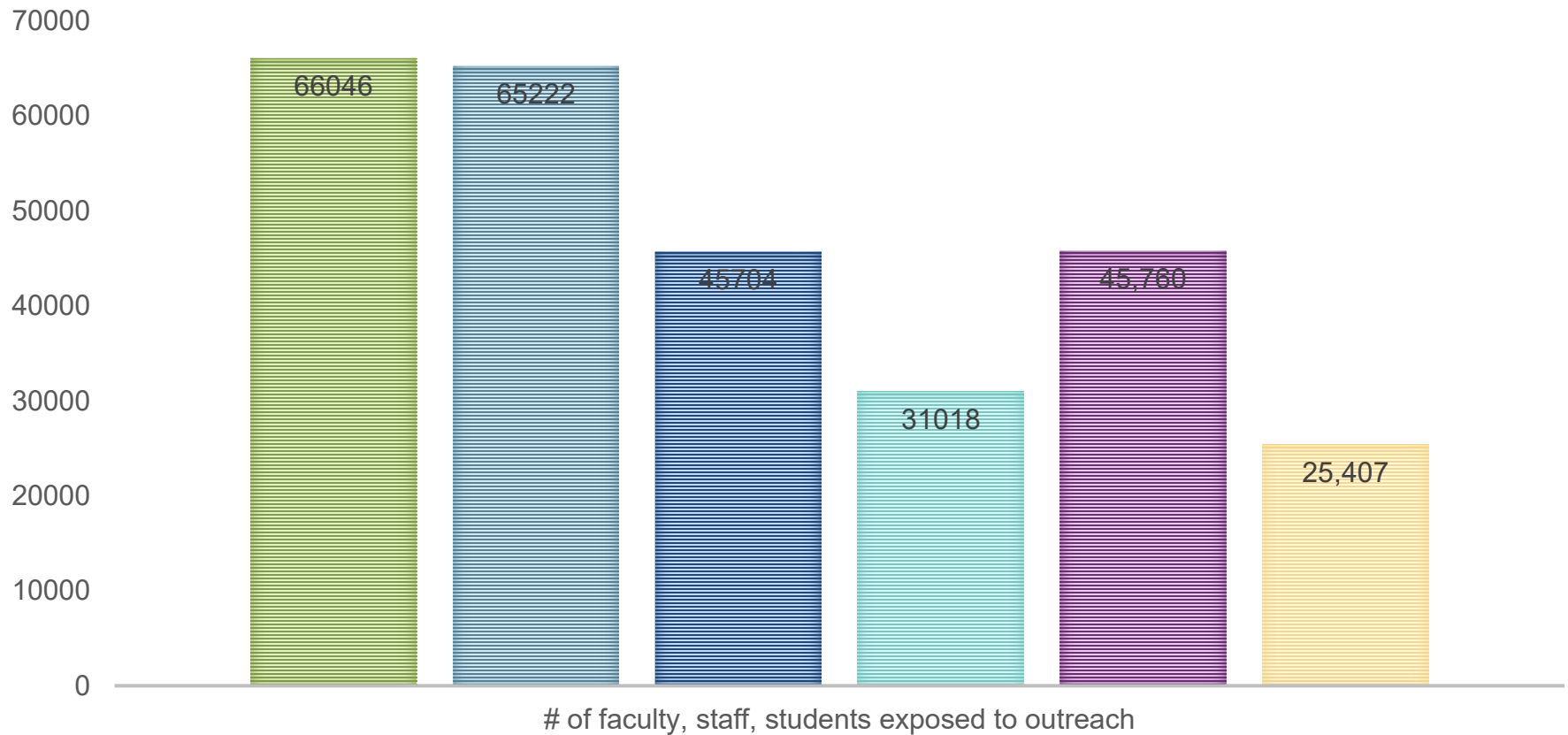


COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY GRANT AWARDS 2016-2021



COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY OUTREACH: IMPACT OF COVID-19

■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021 ■ 2022 ■ 2023



College/ University Outreach and Education

Provide information about the North Carolina Problem Gambling Program and problem gambling to students, faculty and staff by the following:

- Distribute promotional items with the NCPGP logo.
- Create an educational event or presentation.
- Select a population of students to focus on with an educational event or marketing campaign.
- Create a curriculum for courses or trainings.
- Participate in Problem Gambling Awareness Month.
- Create a marketing campaign or social media campaign to release on campus.
- Send staff, counselors, peer educators or administrators to Sure Bet workshops.
- Integrate problem gambling into a health and wellness coalition.
- Have peer educators attend the bystander approach training and implement on campus.
- Train problem gambling focused peer support specialists.

School Mental Health Policy

Teaming

- School and Community Partnerships

Needs and Resource Mapping

- Assess mental health needs and strengths
- Conduct or assess resource mapping

Mental Health Promotion Tier 1

- Improve school climate and staff training
- Increase mental health literacy and social emotional learning

Early Intervention & Treatment Service Tiers 2 & 3

- Evidence-based services and supports that are monitored with clear goals and mapping out student progress

Screening

- Screen students for distress and well-being and refer students to supports

Funding and Sustainability

- Funding from multiple and diverse sources
- Retain staff

Impact

- Document and report comprehensive school mental health system impact on social emotional learning, education, and behavior

High-Risk Behaviors

Alcohol Use
or Binge
Drinking

Pornography
Use

Suicidal
Behavior

Self-Injury

Dating
Violence

Marijuana
Use

Nicotine,
Tobacco, or
Vaping Use

Gambling

Illegal “Street”
Drug Use

Driving Under
the Influence

Risky Sexual
Behavior

Bullying or
Cyberbullying

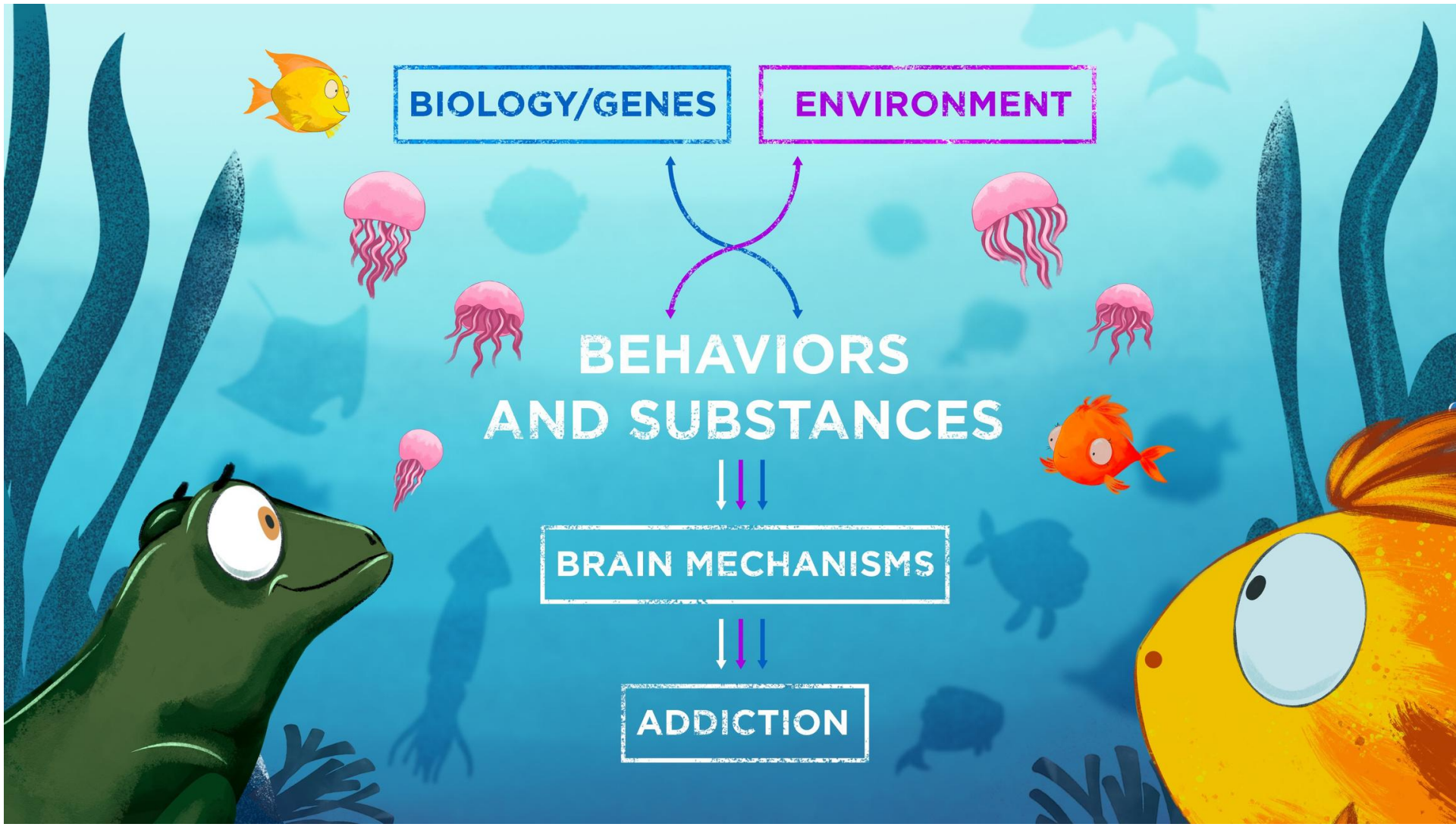
Eating
Disorder
Behavior

Sexting or
Sending Nude
Photos

Video Game
Overuse

Technology
Overuse

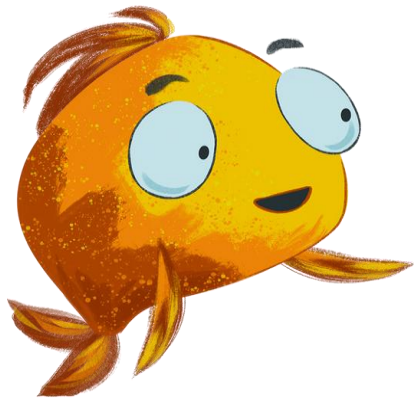
Bio-Psycho-Social-Plus (including technology)



Triple Literacy Approach

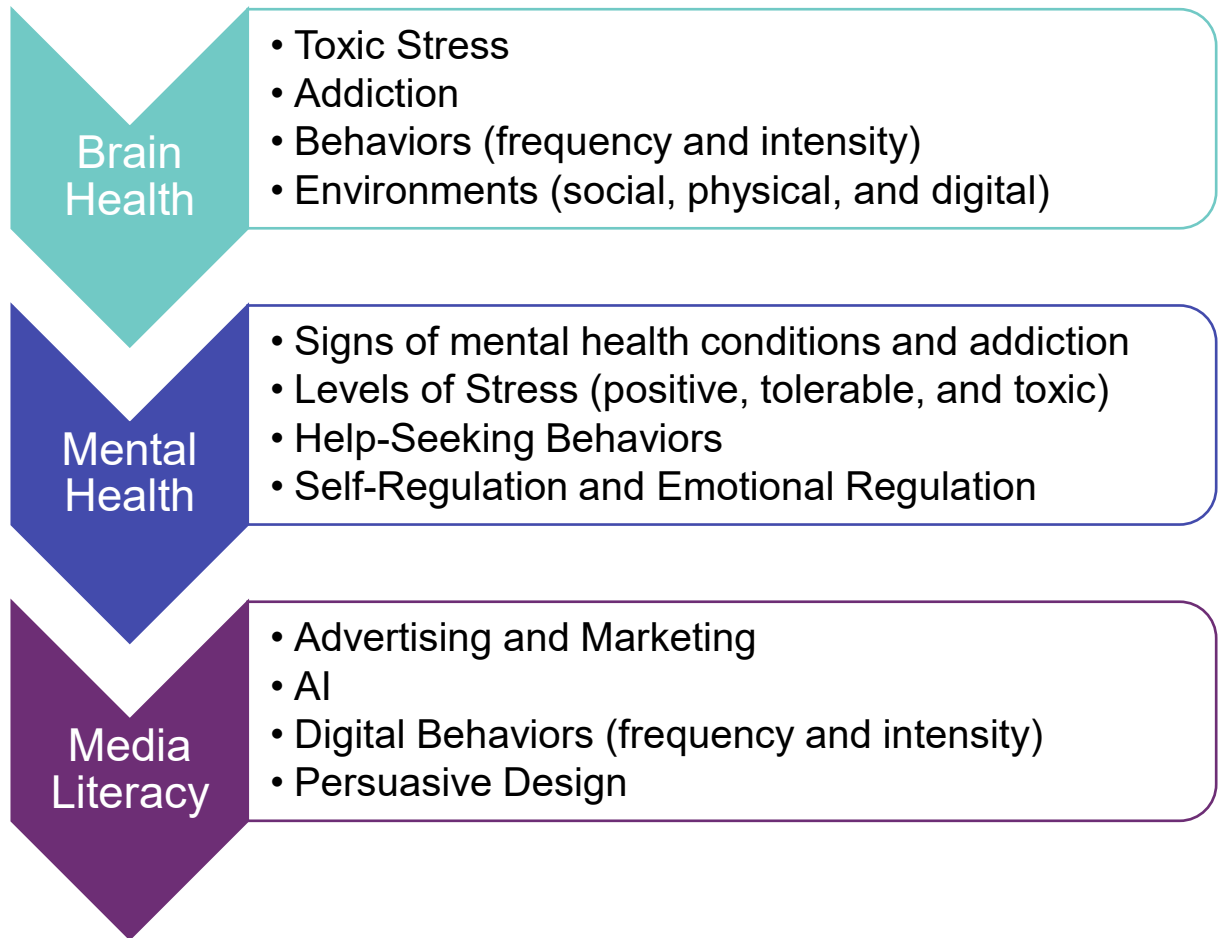
- **Brain Health** refers to a state where all areas of the brain are functioning to help support your ability to move your body, think clearly, label and understand emotions, process sensations in the body, and manage challenges and stressors.
- **Mental Health Literacy** is promoting positive mental health, recognizing mental health conditions, seeking help, and reducing stigma.
- **Media Literacy** is the ability to critically analyze and determine accuracy and credibility of messages and to be responsible when participating in and producing media.

What is the YPE program about?



Why "Sam the Fish?"

Sam serves as our guide through complex topics, making neuroscience and prevention education accessible, engaging, and relevant to your life!

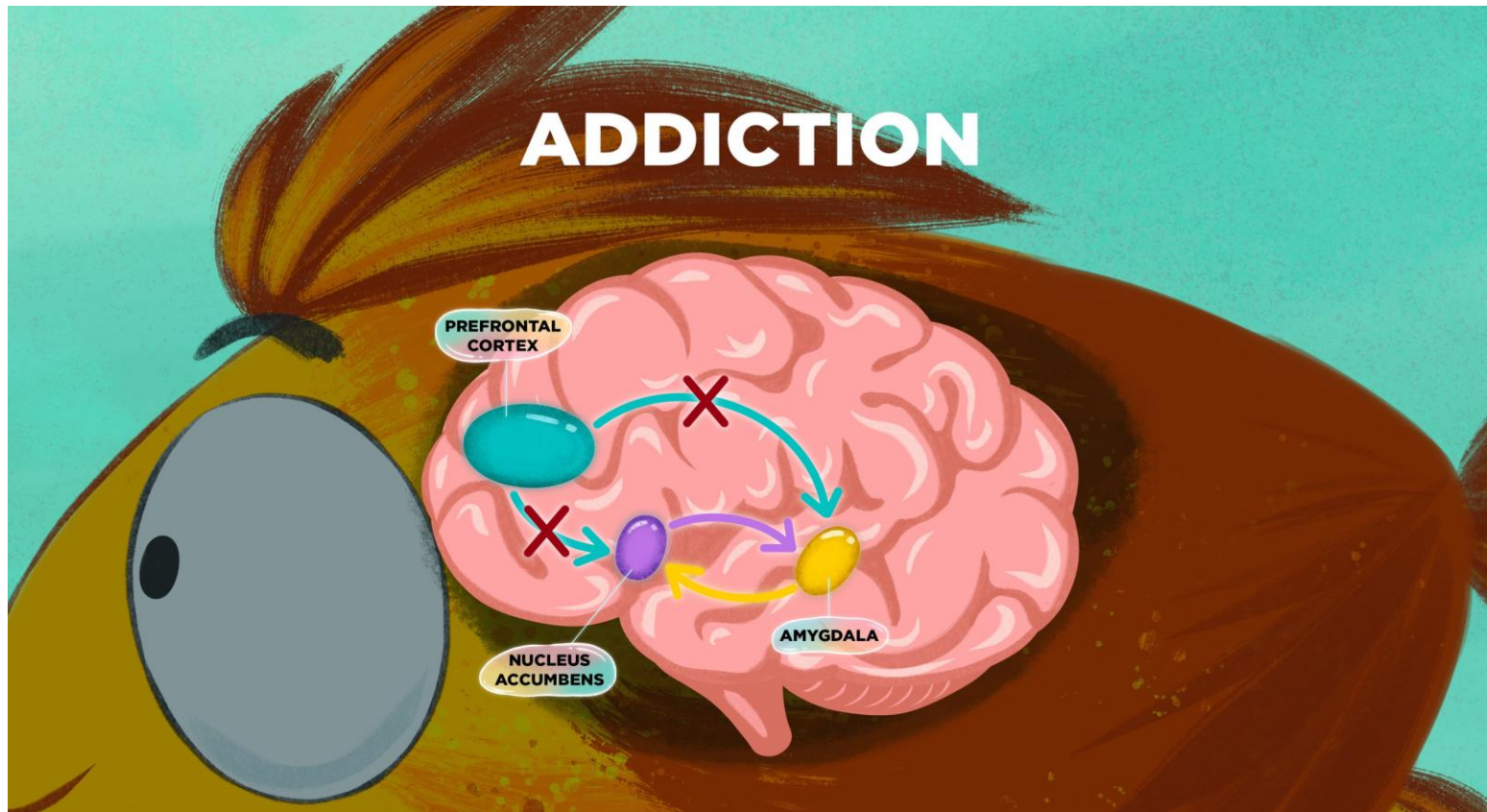


The Neurochemical Imbalance

When someone is stressed, depressed, or experiencing addiction, their brain's neurotransmitter systems are out of balance:

- **Dopamine dysfunction:** Depression and chronic stress deplete dopamine (motivation, pleasure, reward)
- **Serotonin depletion:** Stress and depression lower serotonin (mood regulation, well-being)
- **Cortisol elevation:** Chronic stress keeps cortisol high, creating a dysregulated state
- **Endorphin deficiency:** The brain's natural opioids are depleted

ADDICTION



- ↓ • Decrease in activity in thinking clearly and emotional regulation
- ↑ • Increase in activity to addiction cues in the amygdala
- ↑ ↓ • Decrease in experiencing body sensations with an increase in addiction related cues
- ↑ ↓ • Increase in response to substance or behavior and decrease of dopamine in response to other stimuli like eating healthy or social interaction

What is Brain Health

- Brain health refers to a state where all areas of the brain are functioning to help support your ability to move your body, think clearly, label and understand emotions, process sensations in the body, and manage challenges and stressors.
- An integrated brain has strong connections between important areas of the brain that support you in experiencing sensations, emotions, and thoughts while also being able to connect with those around you and deal with stress in healthy ways.



Supportive Adult Relationships and Toxic Stress



Emotional Co-Regulation

- Supportive Adults



Stress Buffering Effects

- Security
- Cortisol Reduction
- Oxytocin Release



Cognitive Reframing

- Reframing stressful situations
- Perspective, hope, and problem-solving assistance



What should I do to learn more?

- **UNC-Behavioral Health Springboard**

- Asynchronous modules on the prevention and treatment of problematic behaviors in gambling, gaming, and digital media.
- CE's provided
- Take at your own pace
- Interactive modules with different engagement

8 Modules

- Module 1 The Gambling Landscape and Youth Behaviors
- Module 2 Prevention Science
- Module 3 Considerations in Persuasive Design and Impact on Human Behavior
- Module 4 Fundamentals of Digital Media Overuse and Treatment
- Module 5 Considerations in Digital Media Overuse and Gambling in Games
- Module 6 Wanna Bet? Gambling Behaviors Among Young and Treatment Implications
- Module 7 Sports Betting from the Front line
- Module 8 Review and Assessment

Thank you!

Strengthening Community and Re: x +

https://morethanagame.nc.gov/prevention/why-teens-and-young-adults/

Youth Gambling	+
Advances in Technology and Gambling	+
Media Literacy	+
Online Sport Betting	+
Sports Betting Marketing and Advertising	+
Social Media	+
Video Games	+

Resources and Tools

- [What Parents and Teachers Need to Know About Media Literacy and Gambling, Gaming and Digital Media](#)
- [Youth Problem Gambling and Youth Prevention Education: What Communities Need to Know](#)
- [Youth Prevention Education Skills and Strategies: How to Build Awareness in the Community](#)
- [Environmental Assessment of Gambling Products and Activities In Your Community and Online](#)
- [North Carolina Problem Gambling Program Prevention Grant Program](#)
- [Education and Technical Support Provided by the National Council on Problem Gambling](#)

Contact

Please contact Alison Wood, Youth Prevention Coordinator with the North Carolina Problem Gambling Program at alison.wood@dhhs.nc.gov if you have any questions or are interested in consultation or technical assistance.