



*Identifying and Addressing Social
and Emotional At-Risk Behaviors
Resulting from COVID-19*

Susan Vickers, Ed.D.

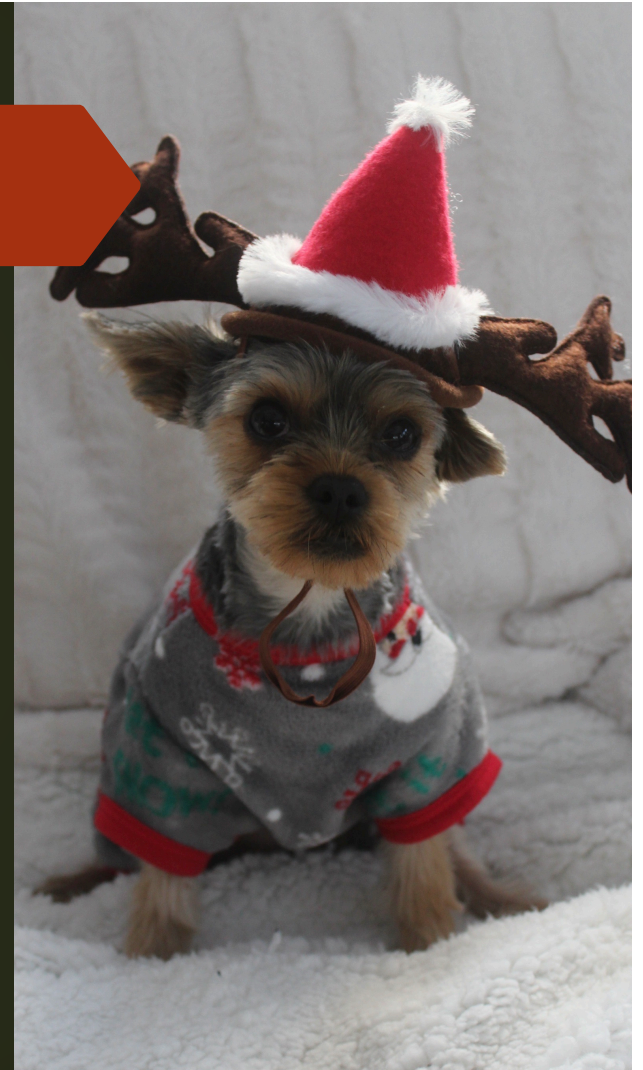


Learning Objectives and Key Take-Aways:

- **Understand how our student's mental health and other criteria affect their overall sense of mental health & what to do if things are awry.**
- **Be able to understand and apply the SADPERSONS acronym (top 10 Risk Factors for behaving dangerously towards oneself & others)**
- **Everyone endures stress in their lives, how we address and help others is critical to ensure their and our personal safety and well-being.**

Susan Vickers, Ed.D.

- **Co-Author of *School Safety: One Cheeseburger at a Time***
- **Retired NYS School Superintendent**
- **31 years of experience in NYS Public education (14 yrs – teacher, 12 yrs bldg administrator, and 5 as a school superintendent)**
- **My stress release...**

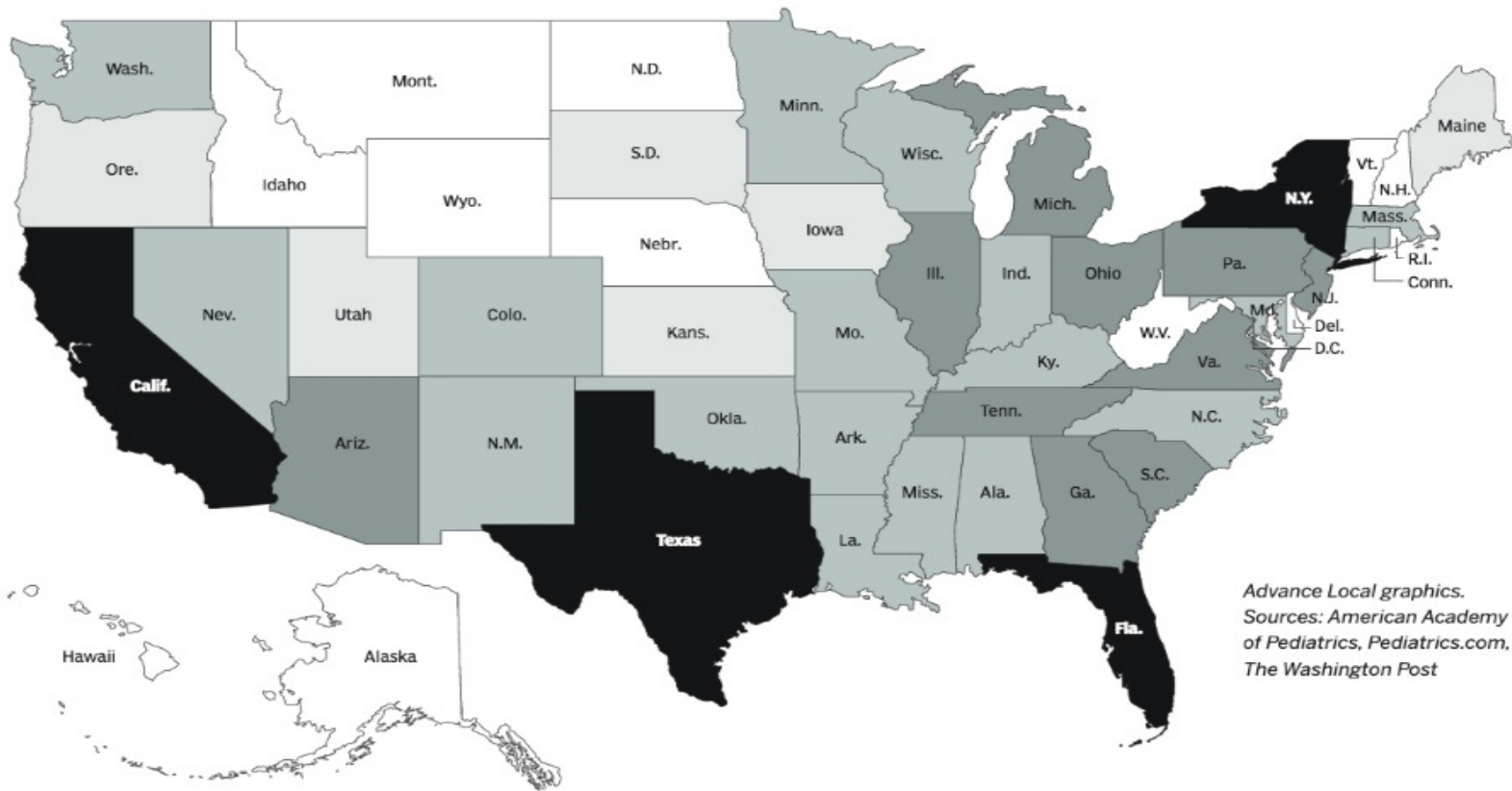
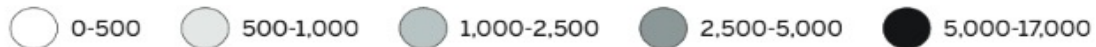




Kevin Smith, M.D.

- **Co-Author**
- **Board Certified General & Forensic Psychiatrist**
- **Worked closely with colleagues at the FBI's BAU**
- **Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association and the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law**
- **Over 40 years experience as a forensic psychiatrist**

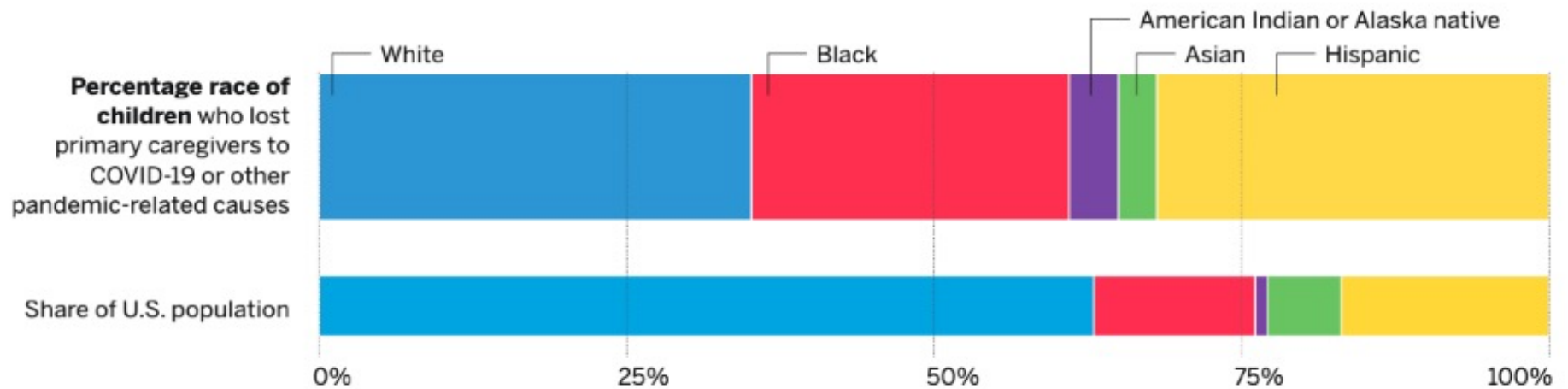
Number of children who have lost a primary caregiver to COVID-19 or other pandemic-related causes, by state



Advance Local graphics.
Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, Pediatrics.com, The Washington Post

Primary caregivers lost to COVID-19 or other pandemic-related causes, as of June 2021

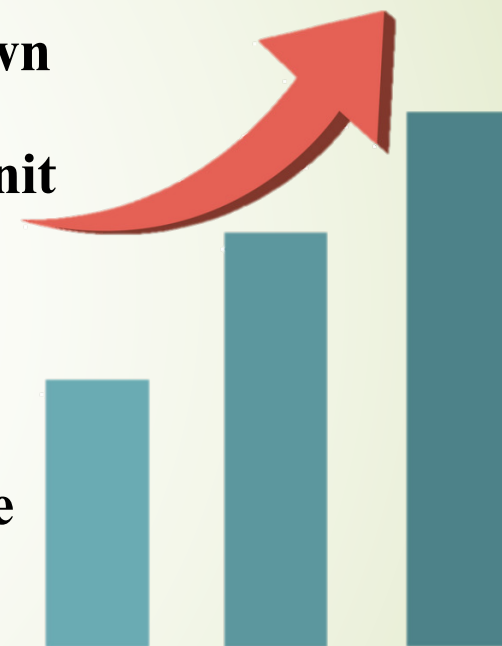
Primary caregivers lost to COVID-19 or other pandemic-related causes, as of June 2021



Their parents or caregivers died from March 2020 to June 2021 due to COVID or other causes classified as pandemic-related. There are vast disparities by race and ethnicity.

Surge in Teen Suicide Attempts & Other Mental Health Crises

- Kids struggled with their whole world shutting down
- Dayton Children's Hospital found mental health unit admissions increase by 30% during COVID-19
- Admission to Wolfson Children's Hospital in Jacksonville Florida for children 13 & younger have been soaring. 4X higher than last year



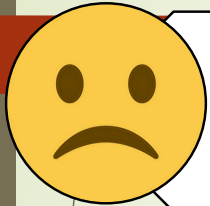
16-yr old ZS

- **Two suicidal crises during the pandemic**
- **Struggled with online education & spent hours playing video games and scrolling the internet**
- **Hospitalized 1-week under psychiatric care**
- **Spent more time isolating, showered less, & lost social skills**

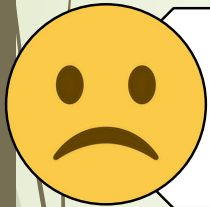
Height of pandemic pause... has ended.

- **The 911 call came in at 12:51pm from Oxford High School**
- **Active Shooter**
- **Four students were killed and seven people were injured, including a teacher**

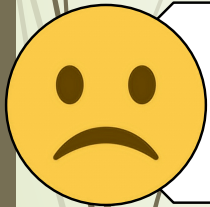
Days leading up to the Oxford High School shooting...



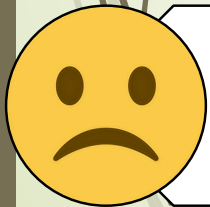
Oxford High School administration received disturbing drawings from a teacher. Sophomore Ethan Crumbley, 15, drew the pictures



Mr. James Crumbley purchased the gun on Black Friday. Mrs. Crumbley went to the shooting range with her son.

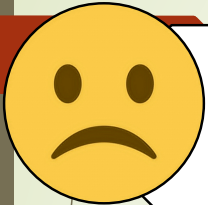


Jennifer Crumbley posted on social media that she bought a gun for her baby for Christmas. Ethan Crumbley subsequently posted pictures of a target & the gun



Two meetings were held with the parents, school administration and Ethan in attendance regarding the postings and drawings. No law enforcement present/notified.

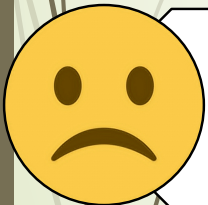
Days leading up to the Oxford High School shooting...



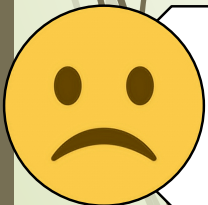
On Nov. 29 Ethan's parents were aware he was searching for ammunition online.



A teacher noticed and submitted to school administration disturbing drawings from Ethan. Clearly depicted acts of threats and violence using a gun.



After meeting with school administration Mrs. Crumbley texted her son: "I'm not mad, just don't get caught next time LOL"



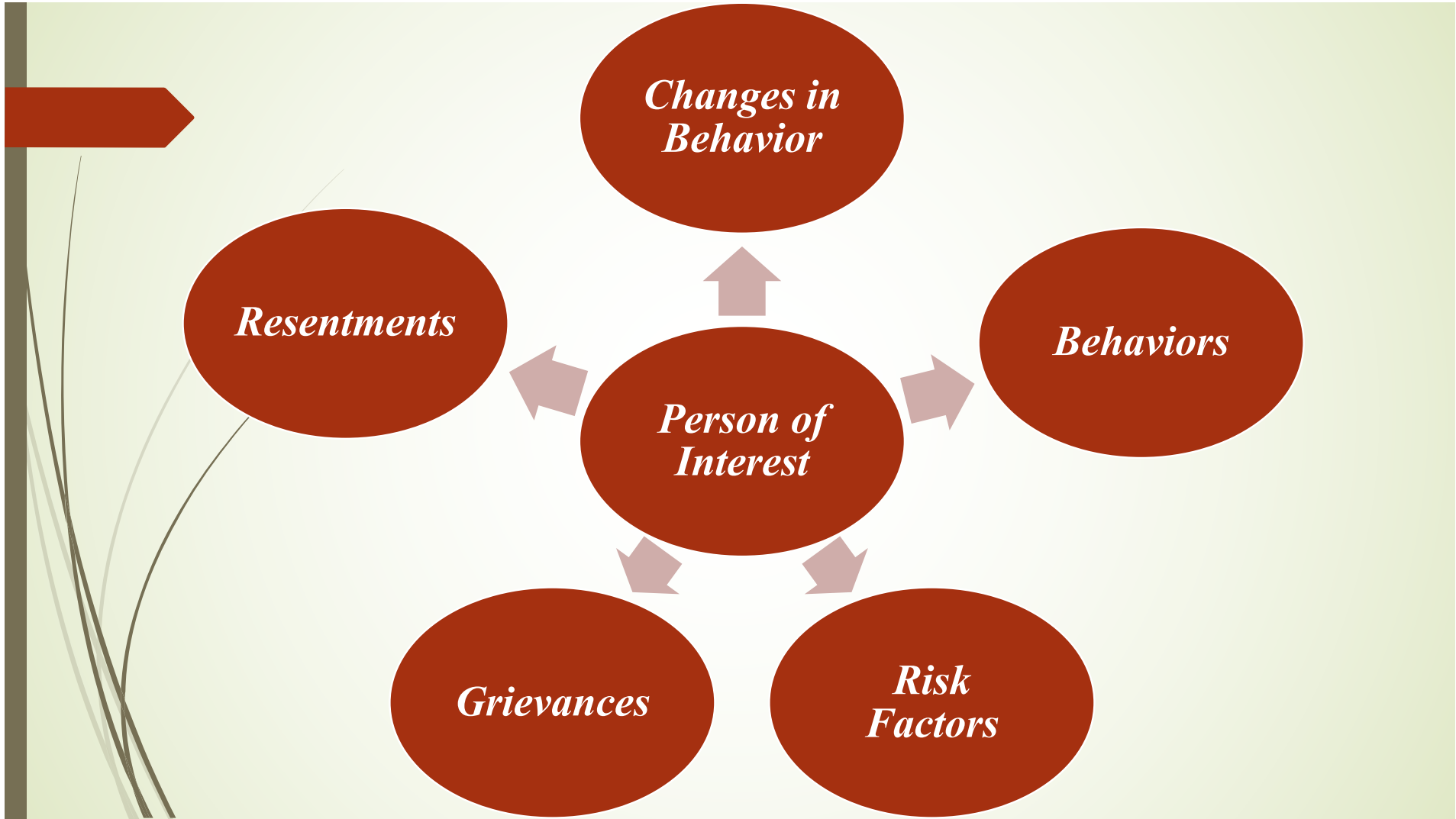
After the active shooting notice went out, Mrs. Crumbley texted Ethan, "Don't do it."

Results...

- **Authorities arrested & charged Ethan Crumbley as an adult for 24 crimes, including murder and terrorism.**
- **Jennifer and James Crumbley, were charged with involuntary manslaughter for failing to secure the handgun used in the shooting. After failing to appear for their arraignment, they were the subject of a manhunt by the U.S. Marshalls and were subsequently caught & arrested in Detroit on Dec. 4.**

Copycats...

- **NJ student charged for threat against high school. The threat came hours after a school shooting in Michigan left four students dead**
- **Rumors that a student had a gun at Liverpool High School flooded social media on Dec. 3 after students alerted their parents of the potential threat.**



Lesson...

**People do not
snap,,,**

**They put their
plan into action**



***2021-2022 School
year has seen a
dramatic
rise/escalation
of violence in
schools, K-12!***





***Dangerousness
Risk***

*Indicates the propensity
of an individual to
commit a dangerous act*

Dangerousness Risk Assessment

- **An ASSESSMENT of an individual's propensity to commit a dangerous act.**
- **Broader concept than either violence or dangerous behavior assessment alone.**
- **Not a diagnosis.**
- **Your critical judgment of a person's propensity to commit a dangerous act based upon combination of known risk factors within the context of their social groups' policies.**
(family, school/work, larger societal context)

Propensity

The 4 Elements of Propensity

➤ **F = Frequency**

➤ **I = Imminence**

➤ **L = Likelihood**

➤ **M = Magnitude**

FILM it!

Why Film It?

Because adolescents & young adults very openly and accurately predict their violence



B

• **Behaviors**

R

• **Risk Factors**

G

• **Grievances**

R

• **Resentments**

Grievance

A grievance is a *real or imagined* wrong or other cause for complaint or protest, especially unfair treatment.



Resentment

A resentment is a *complex, multilayered emotion* that is a mixture of disappointment, disgust, anger, and fear often observed in response to a grievance.

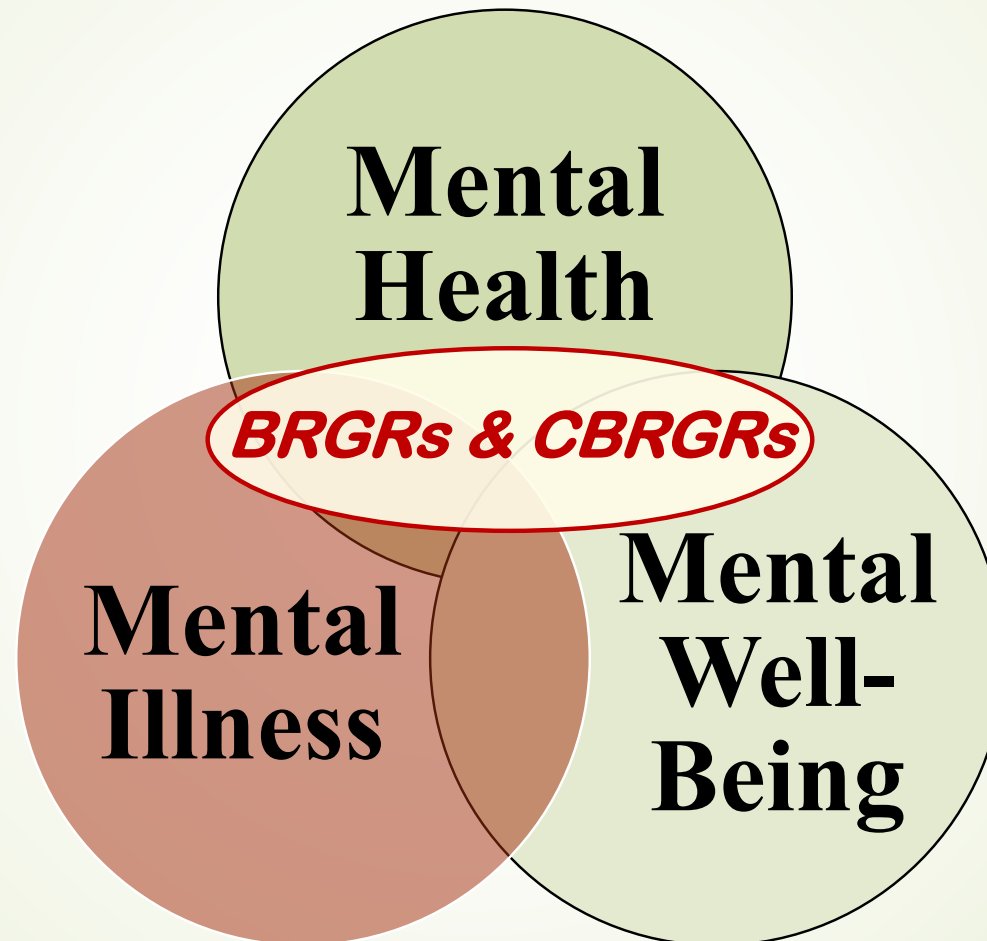


Mental Health...

Behaviors/Risk Factors/Grievances/Resentment: BRGR's

- *The level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental illness*
- *The state of someone who is "functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional & behavioral adjustment"*
- *Includes an individual's ability to enjoy life & to create a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience*
- *The well-being is encompassed in the realization of their abilities, coping with normal stresses of life, productive work, & contribution to their community*

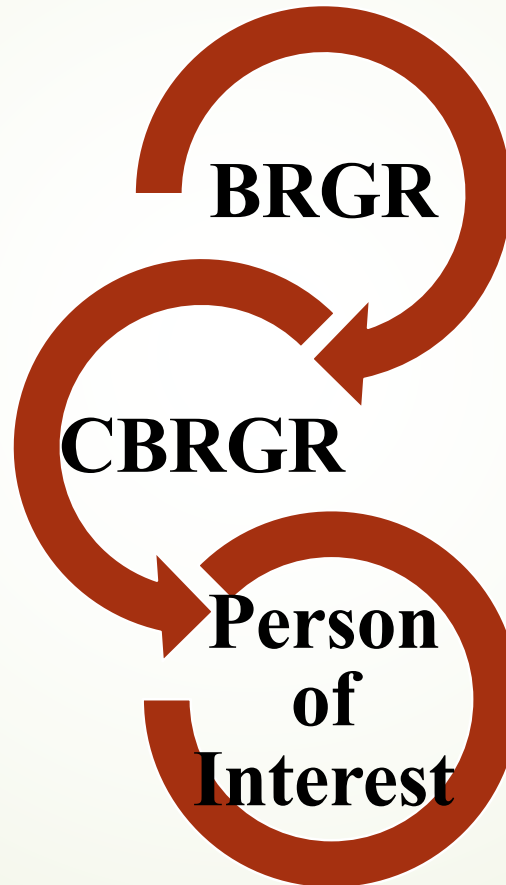
Mental Health & Well-Being



Changes in Behaviors/Risk Factors / Grievances / Resentments:

CBRGRs

- CHANGES in**
- Behaviors
 - Risk Factors
 - Grievances
 - Resentments



- Behaviors
- Risk Factors
- Grievances
- Resentments

Risk Factors & Dynamic Mental Health

*What is the likelihood that the
Person of Interest will indeed
harm themselves or others?*

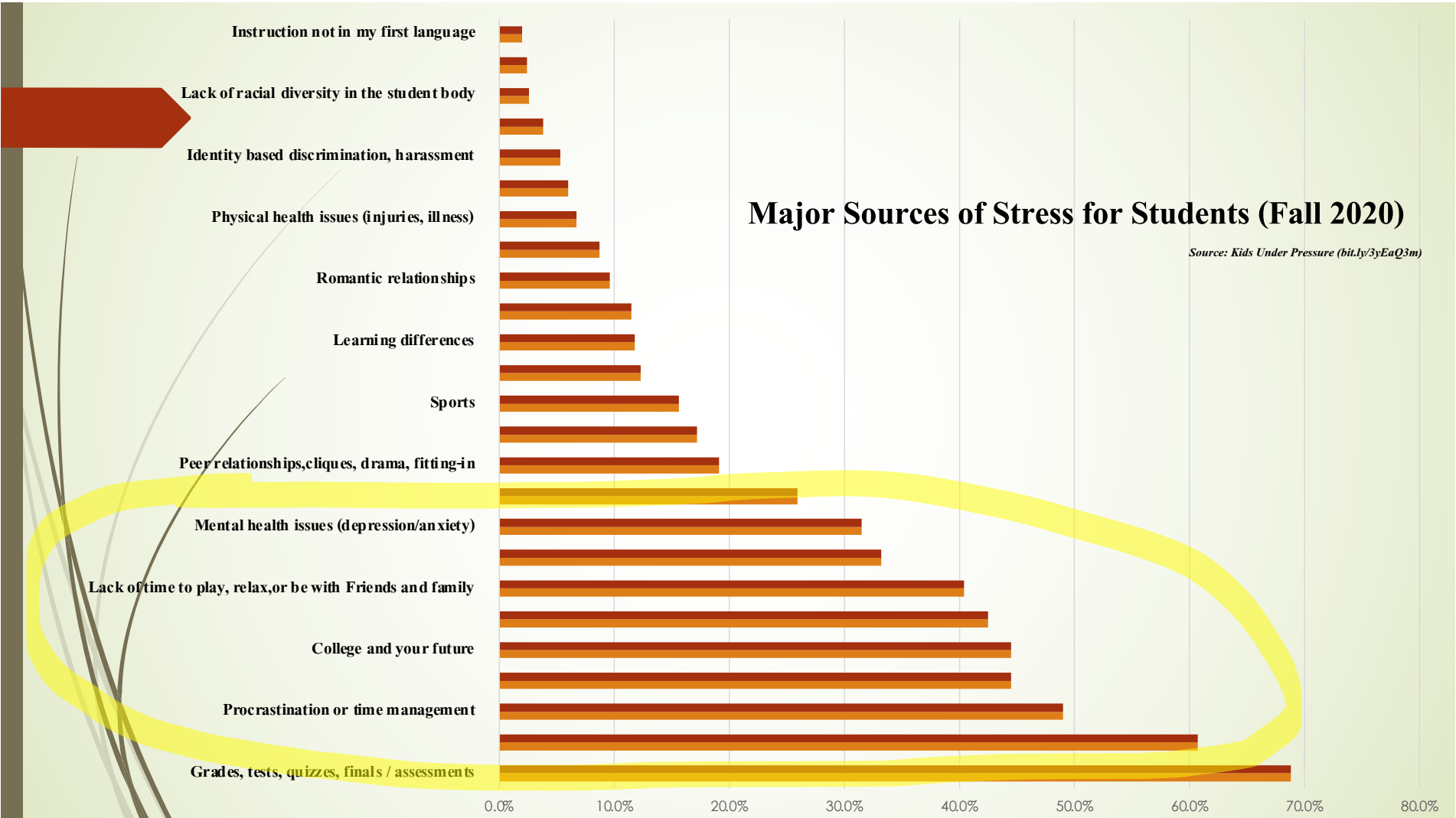
- S** Sex: Males are 10x more likely to behave violently than females
- A** Age: 10-29 year old's, with the peak at ages 16-18
- D** Distressed mentally: which is not limited to diagnosable mental illness
- P** Previous exposure to violence +/- or suicidal thoughts/behaviors +/- or weapons in themselves/others
- E** Ethanol: place holder in one's memory for alcohol &/or drug use
- R** Rational thinking loss from any cause
- S** Social support system lacking or perceived to be lacking, including being bullied
- O** Organized plan, meaning who, what, where, when and +/- or how
- N** No spouse or significant other, no solid attachment to an adult
- S** Serious, chronic, +/- or terminal illness.



Why
HURT
People,
HURT People

Stressors

- ➔ **Death of a loved one**
- ➔ **Divorce/estranged from personal relationships**
- ➔ **Moving – especially during midyear/high school**
- ➔ **Major illness (think COVID pandemic)**
- ➔ **Job loss or financial difficulties – parents/family**
- ➔ **Parent (or family member) that is distressed**




Major Sources of Stress for Students (Fall 2020)

Source: Kids Under Pressure (bit.ly/3yEaQ3m)

Top 5 Stressors for Students/Teens...

1. Grades, tests, quizzes, finals/assessments
2. Procrastination or time management
3. College & your future
4. Lack of time to play, relax, be with friends & family
5. Mental health issues (depression/anxiety)

- **Longitudinal study of 700+ students over more 7 years – repeated psych testing, MRIs, interviews**
- **All chronically bullied kids (36/700) developed observable & measurable losses of brain tissue in left Caudate & Putamen nuclei**
- **36 kids developed hyperactivity, anxiety, depression, learning problems, & difficulty bonding with others (approach-attachment issues)**



*Research on bullying,
real or perceived, has
become a top priority focus
of liability concerns because
of these findings.*

*- J. Brett Caruthers, Director of Risk
Management NYS Insurance Reciprocal*

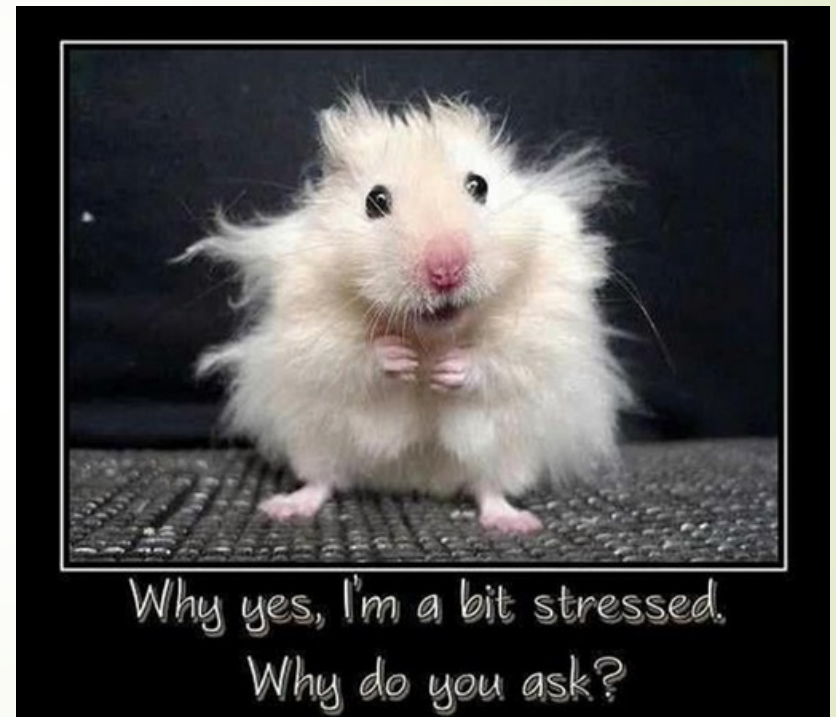


**Everyone endures stress in their lives,
how we address stress and help others is critical to ensure their and our personal safety and well-being.**



**Critical to have activities/opportunities for
working through stressful situations**

- *Who can you talk with?*
- *What activities provide a release for you?*
- *Where do you feel safe?*





Thank you!





School Safety: One Cheeseburger at a Time

Available at: Amazon.com and Barnesandnoble.com

978-1-4758-5313-1 • Hardback

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978-1-4758-5315-5 • eBook

— **Charles S. Dedrick, EdD, Executive Director, New York State Council of School Superintendents**

This book is the next necessary and logical step forward in teacher training and preparedness and should become a mandatory teacher workshop in our teacher preparation, certification and credentialing. I emphatically endorse and strongly recommend this book to all who work in a school setting. My hope is that teachers, teacher's aides, administrators, school security officers—all school personnel—will read this book.

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Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions.