



Iowa Center for Behavioral Health Excellence

Collaboration in Prevention

**BRINGING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PARTNERS
TOGETHER**

July 25, 2025



Disclaimer

This training is hosted by Iowa's Center of Excellence (CEBH) for Behavioral Health. While Iowa CEBH is partly sponsored by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS), please note that the views, opinions, and content shared in today's training are those of our trainers and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of Iowa HHS.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the value of multi-sector partnerships in behavioral health prevention.
- Identify potential partners and stakeholders across diverse community sectors.
- Apply strategies to initiate and sustain effective partnerships.
- Build shared goals and mutual accountability with community collaborators.

Benefits of Collaboration

- **Expands capacity** for engaging in services
- Allows greater sharing of data and knowledge
- Provides **access to wider array of skills**
- Increases **stakeholder buy-in** of services
- Promotes opportunities for **diverse perspectives**
- **Improves reach** of services and programs

Collaboration Matters.

Principles of Collaboration

Successful collaboration is intentional.

Collaboration requires flexibility.

For collaboration to thrive, all parties must benefit.

Every collaboration is different.

Collaboration takes time.

Collaboration is a journey.

Risk and Protection: Individual



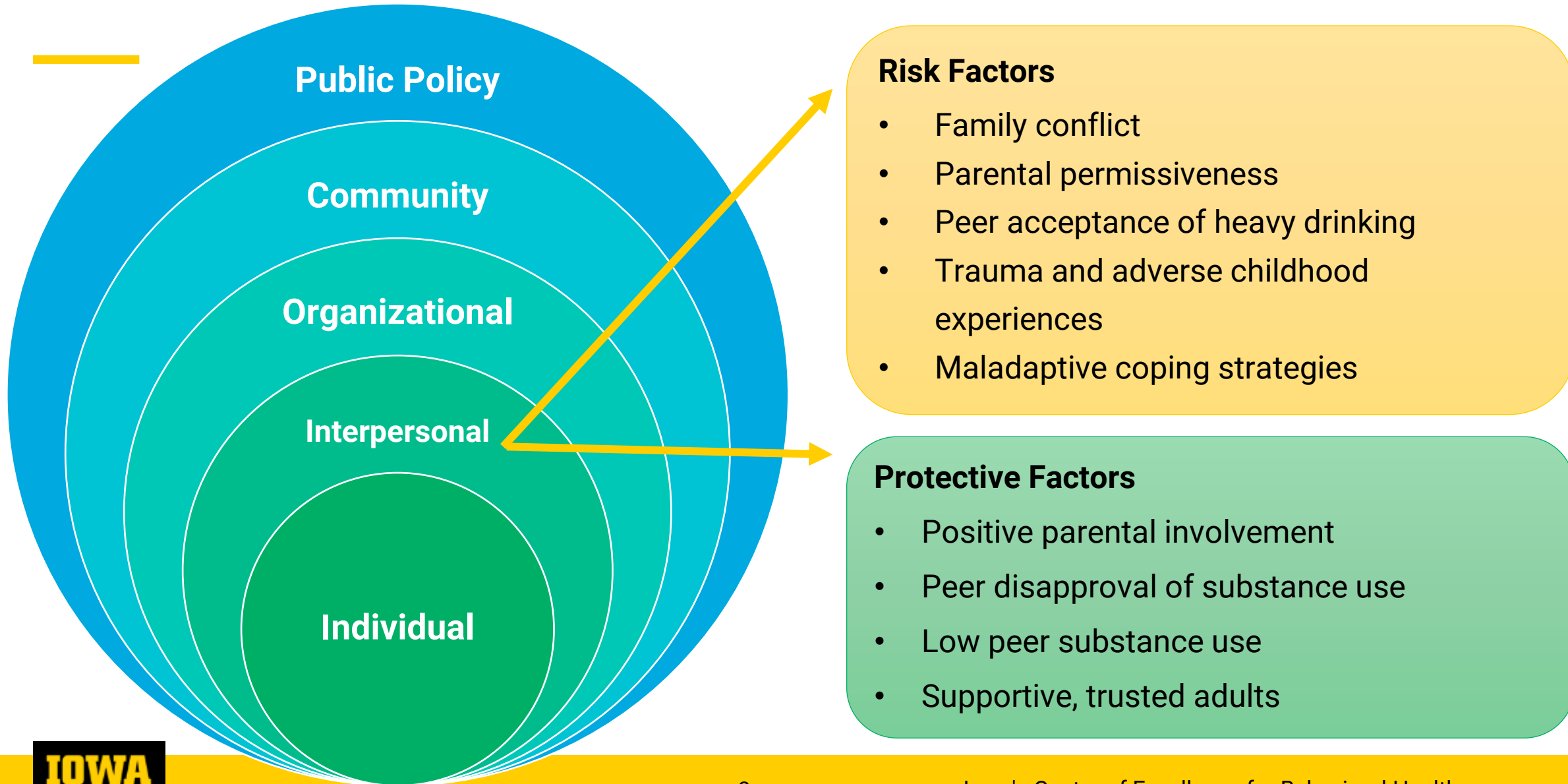
Risk Factors

- Low commitment to school
- Low educational achievement
- Family history of substance use
- Mental or physical illness

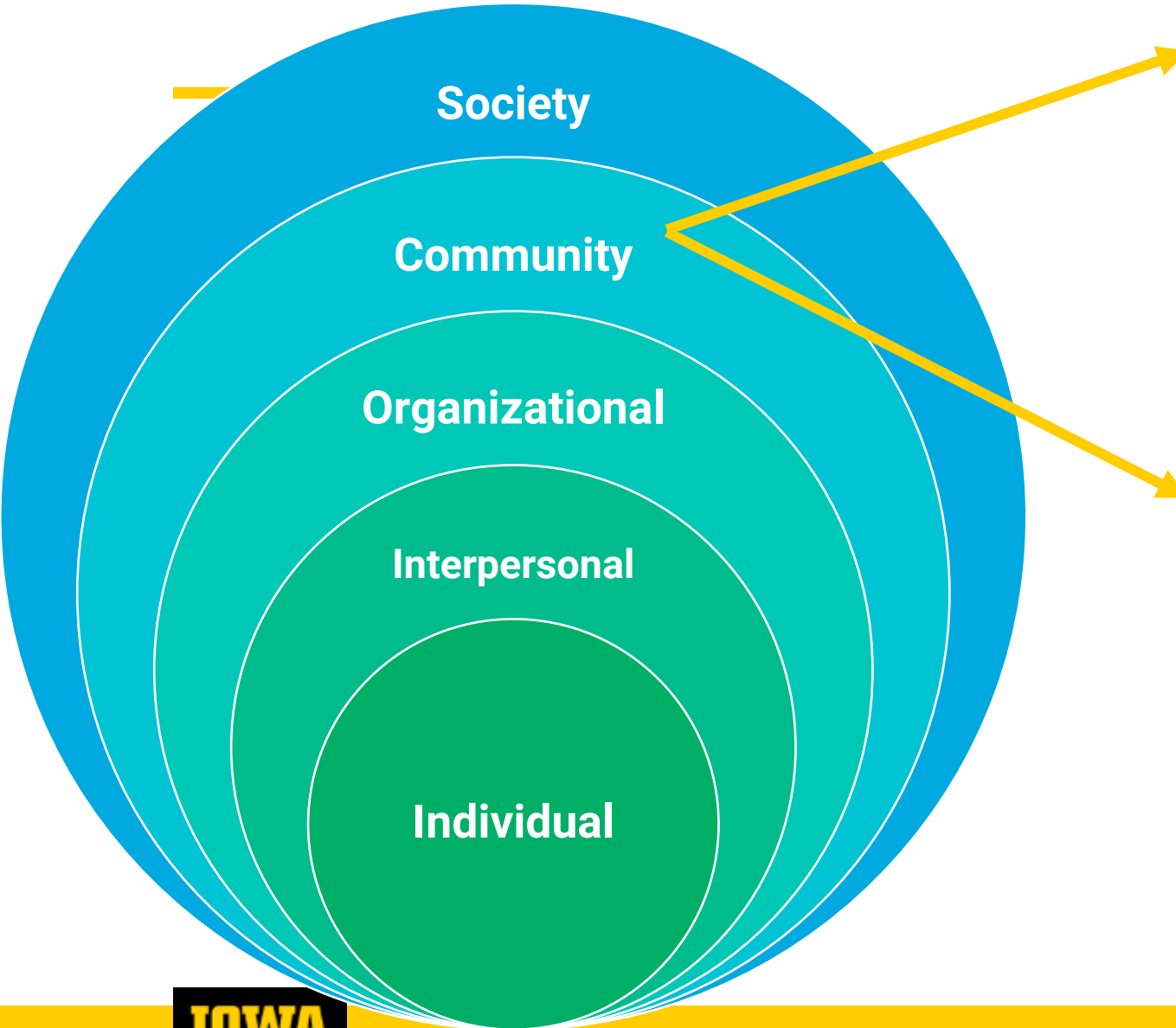
Protective Factors

- Positive self-image
- Self-regulation and control
- Social competence
- Coping and problem-solving skills

Risk and Protection: Interpersonal



Risk and Protection: Community/Society



Risk Factors

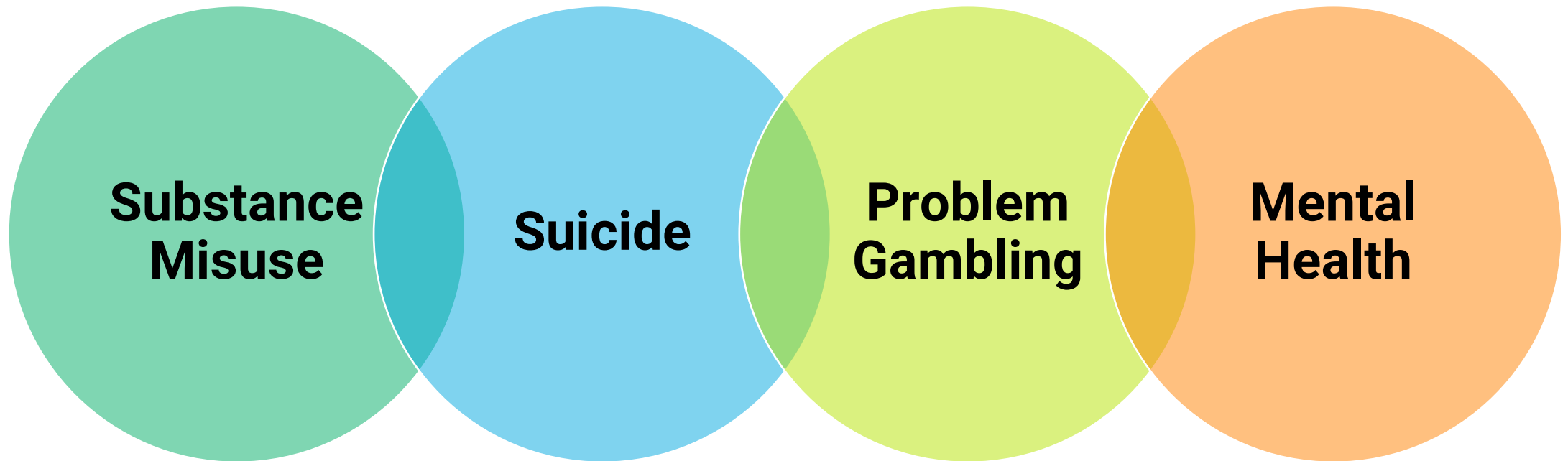
- Poor neighborhood safety
- Low neighborhood attachment
- Law enforcement permissive of underage substance use
- Laws favorable to substance use

Protective Factors

- Availability of after-school activities
- Community connectedness
- Low perceptions of peer alcohol use
- Limited availability of substances
- Positive school engagement and connectedness
- Involvement in community activities

Prevention Requires Collaboration

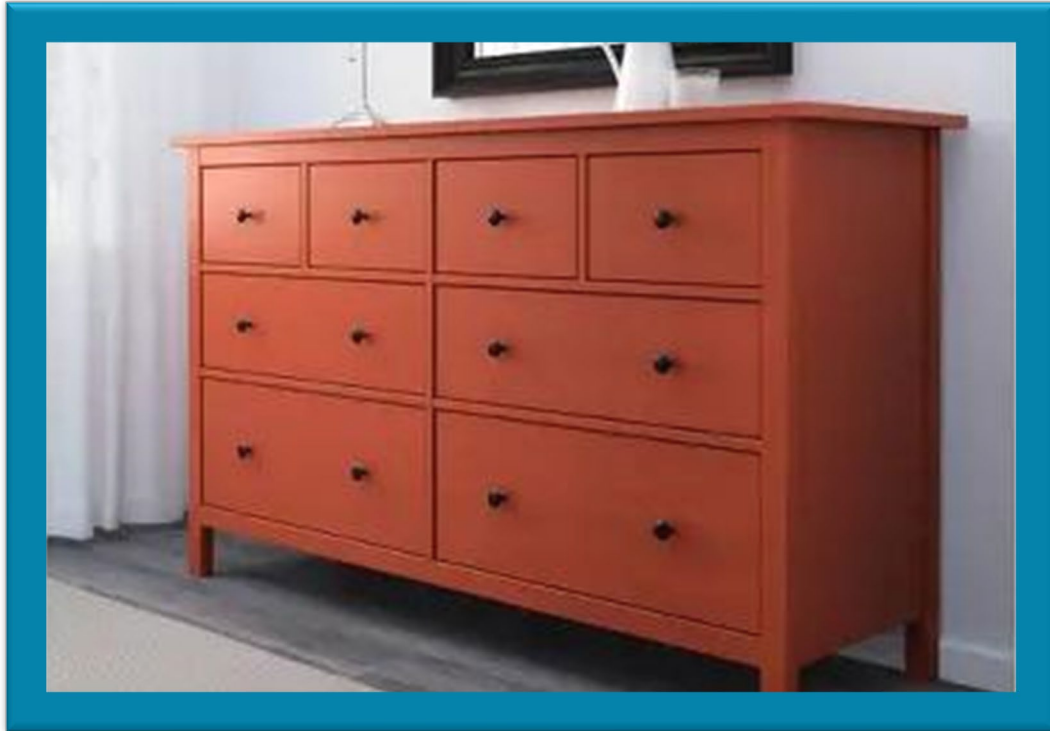
Collaborative Prevention



Building Lasting Collaborations

Unpacking Collaboration

Ideal in Theory



Messy in Practice



Depth of Collaboration

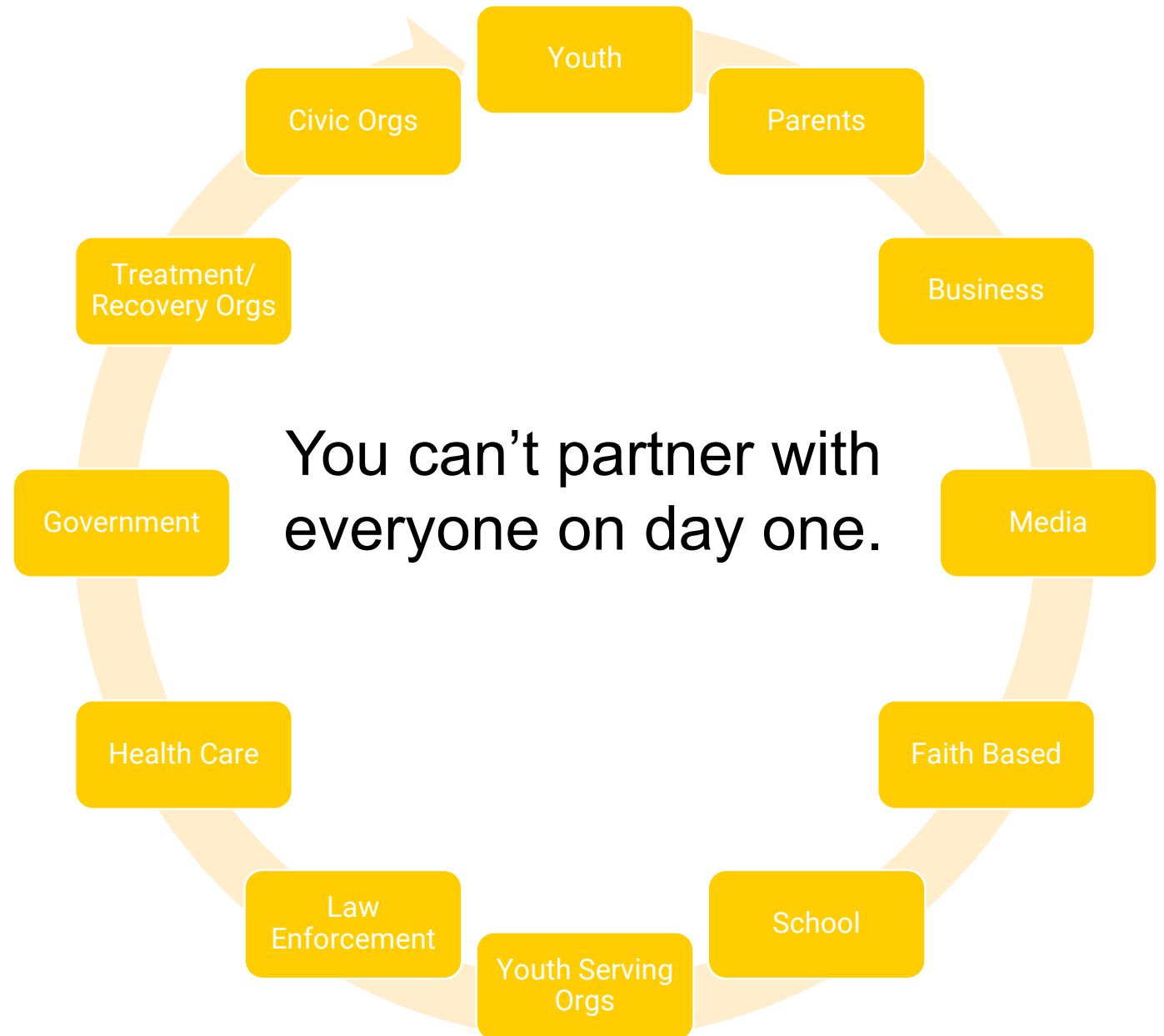


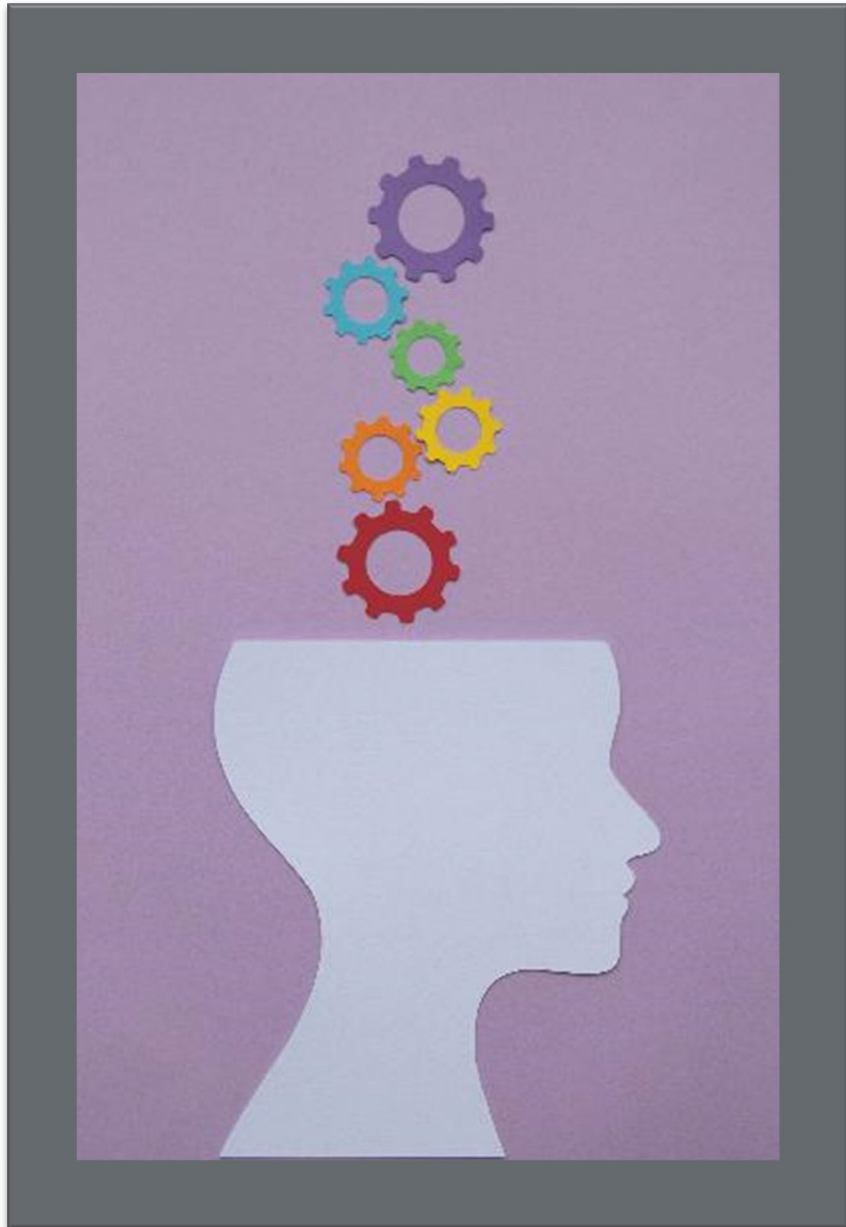
Simple



Complex

Smart Collaboration is Focused and Strategic





Share Your Thoughts...

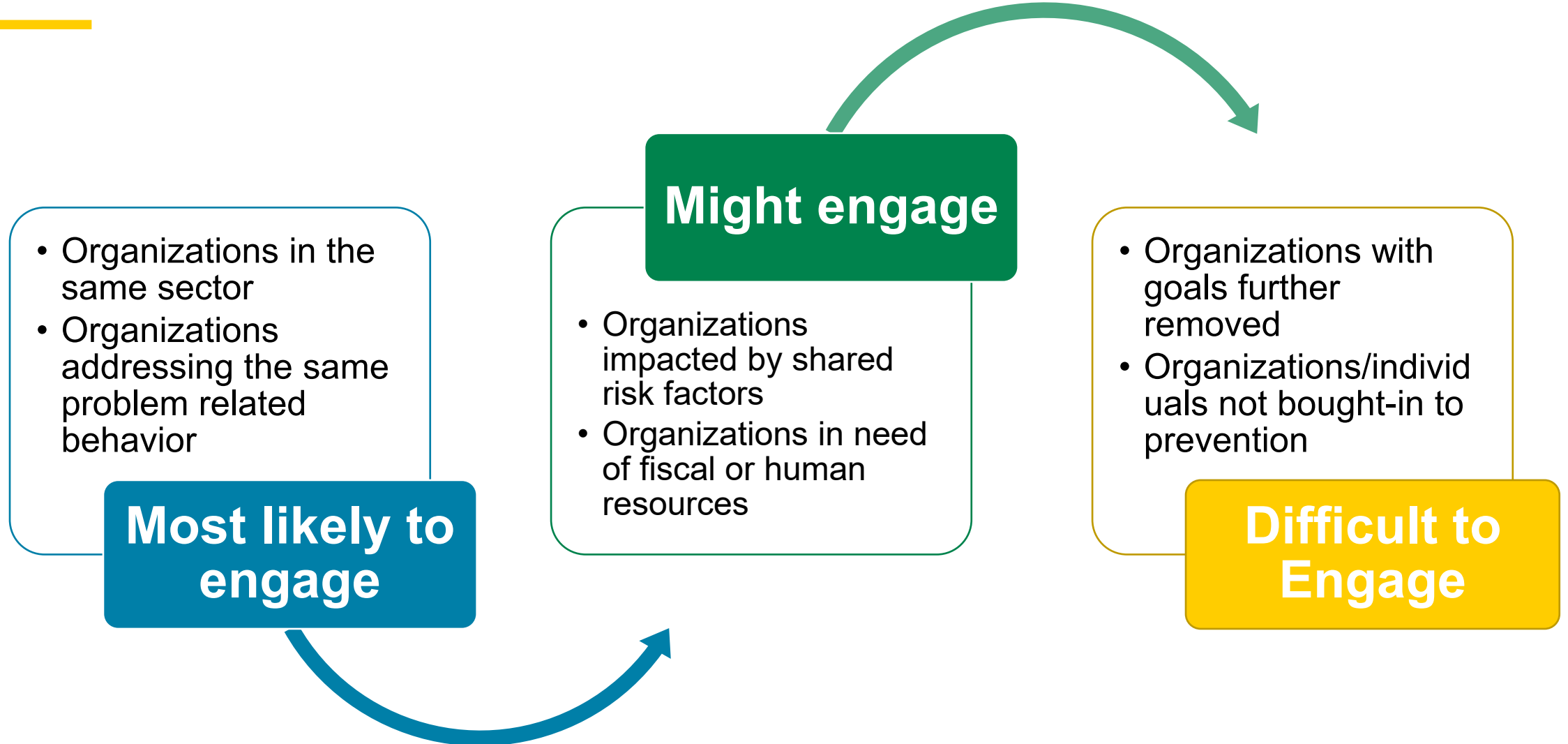
Which of the following sectors have you worked partnered/ collaborated with in the past?

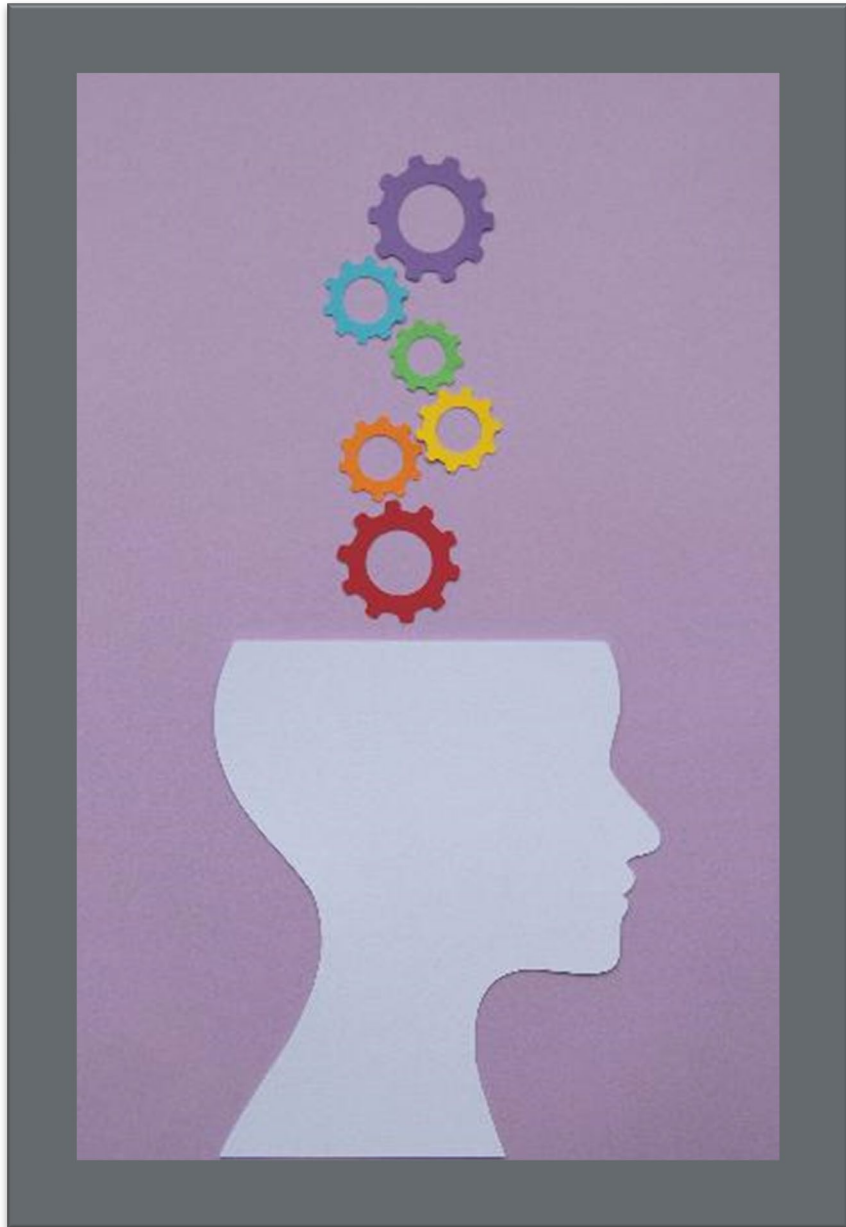
1. Law Enforcement
2. Faith based organization
3. Schools
4. Health care
5. Other, tell us in the chat.

Partnership Considerations: Needed Skills

SPF Step	Possible Partner Assistance
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to data• Data interpretation
Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase readiness of resources• Increase community awareness• Access to specific communities, sectors, and populations
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current resources and resource gaps• Buy-in for planning and decision-making regarding priorities and approach
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning and implementing specific, evidence-based programs, practices, and policies• Sustainability planning

Partnership Considerations: Levels of Interest





Share Your Thoughts...

Which organization or sector do you anticipate will be, or has been, difficult to engage?

1. Hospitals/Health Care
2. Treatment or recovery organizations
3. Government/Elected officials
4. Media
5. Other, share in the chat.

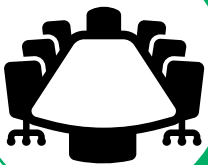
Partnership Consideration: Type of Relationship



One-on-One Relationships



Partnerships Between/ Among
Organizations



Coalition Membership

Levels of Involvement

No involvement

Networking

Cooperation

Collaboration

Full Collaboration

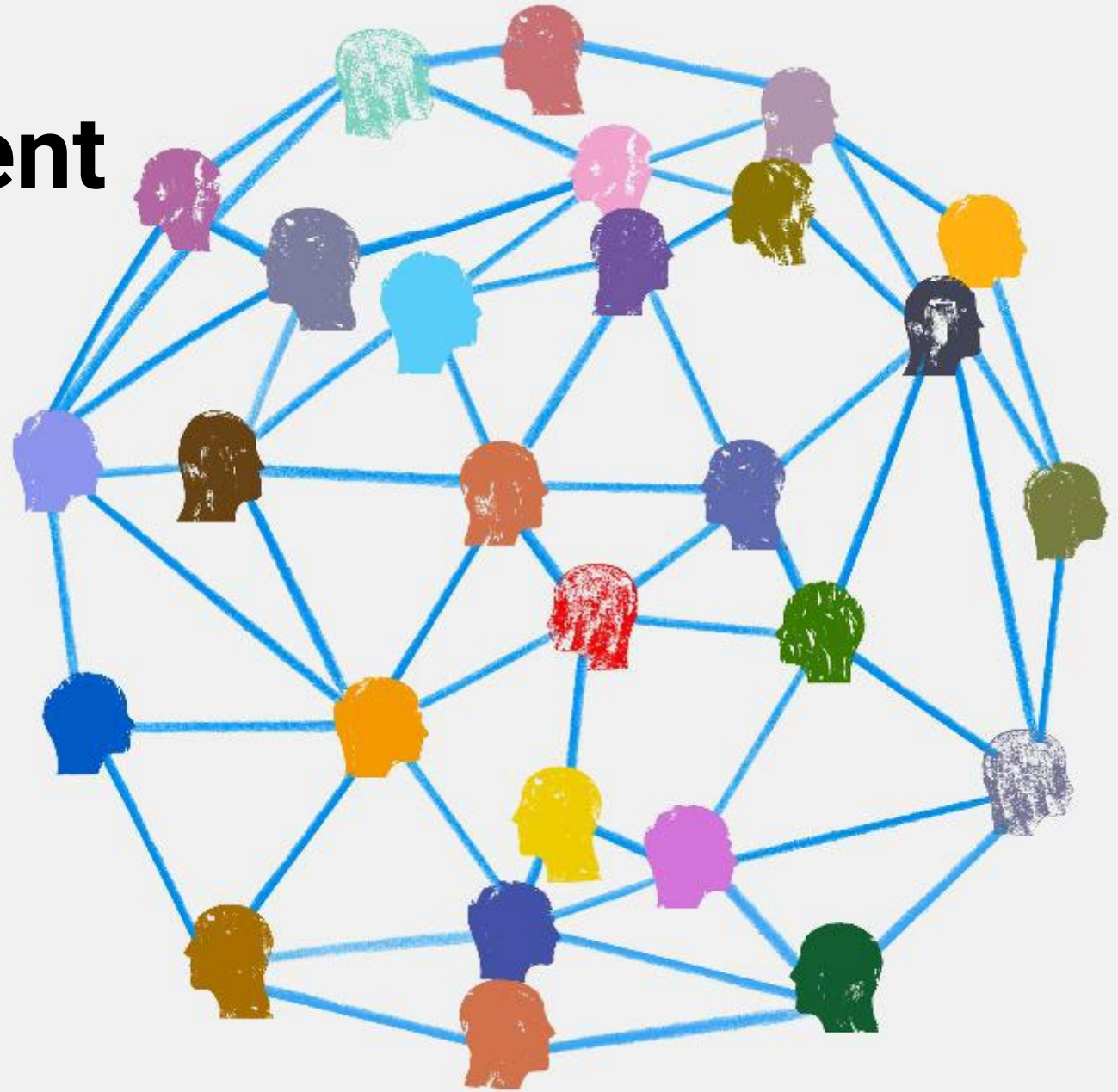


Levels of Involvement Definitions

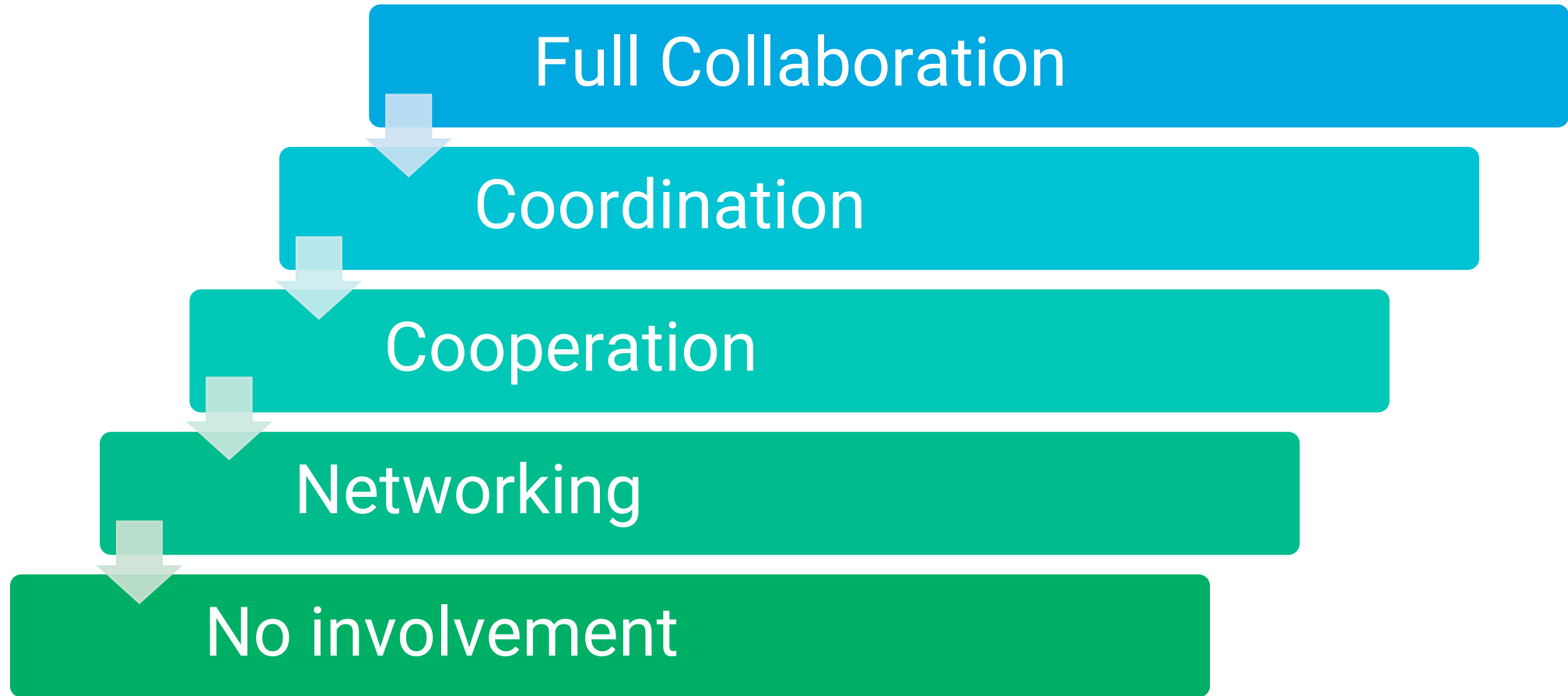
Networking	Cooperation	Coordination	Full Collaboration
Partners share information and talk with one another for their mutual benefit.	Partners support one another's prevention activities but have no formal agreement in place.	Partners are engaged in mutual projects and initiatives, modifying their own activities to benefit the whole.	With a formal agreement in place, partners work toward developing enhanced capacity to achieve a shared vision.

Components of Partners Involvement

- Roles
- Relationships
- Communication
- Decision making
- Level of Risk
- Resource Sharing

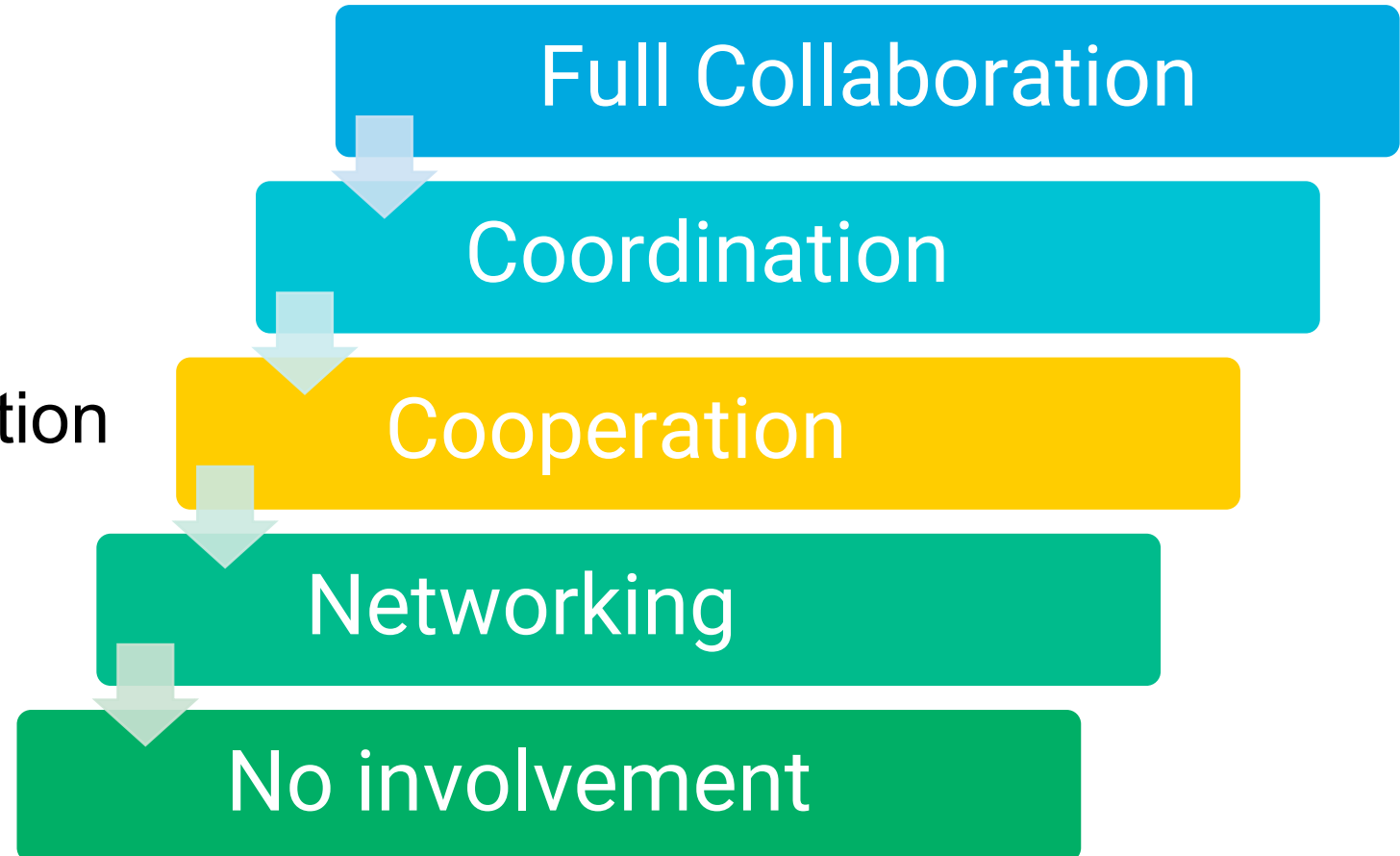


Components of Involvement by Level



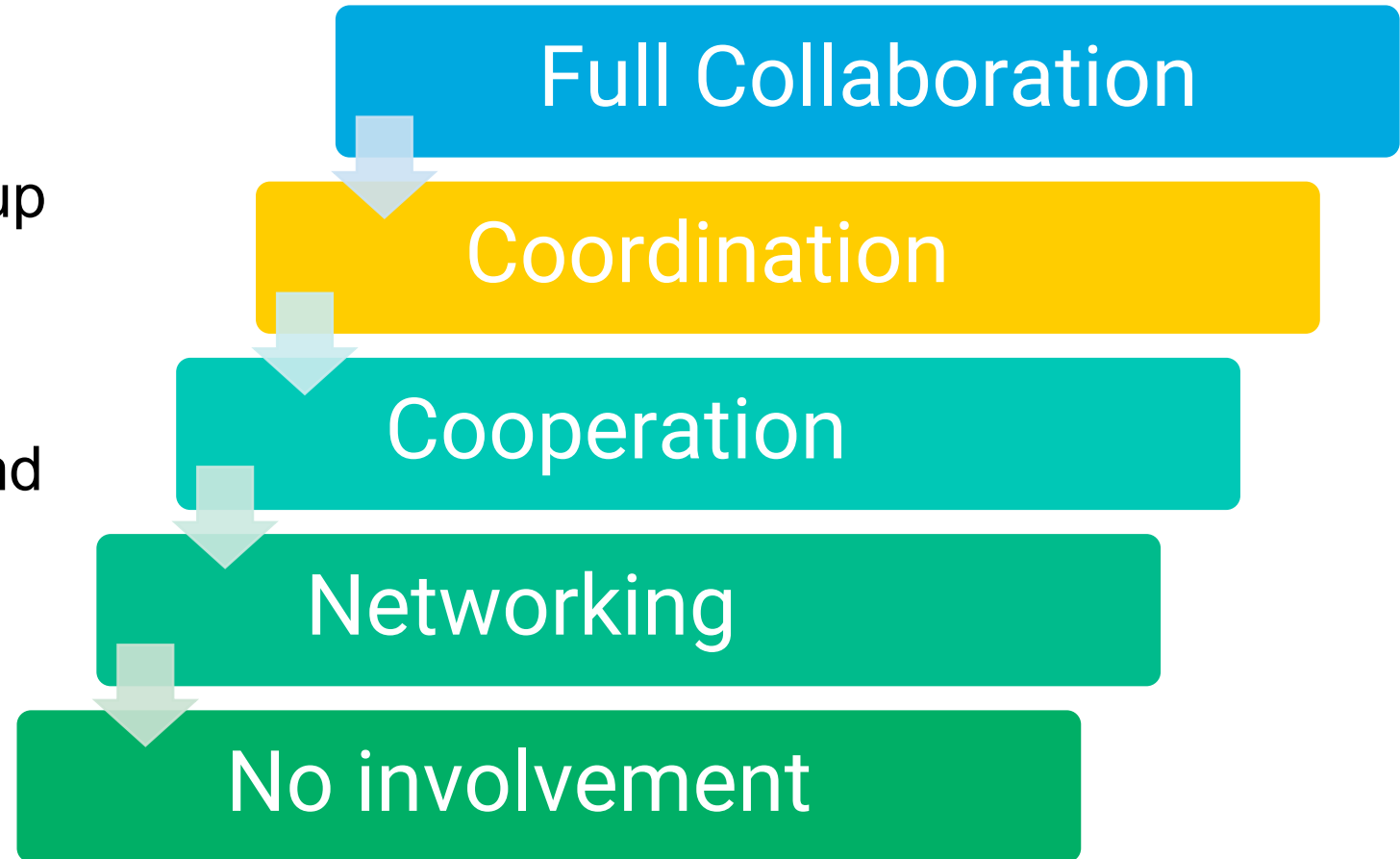
Cooperation

- Somewhat defined roles
- Informal and supportive relationships
- More frequent communication
- Limited decision-making
- Little to no risk



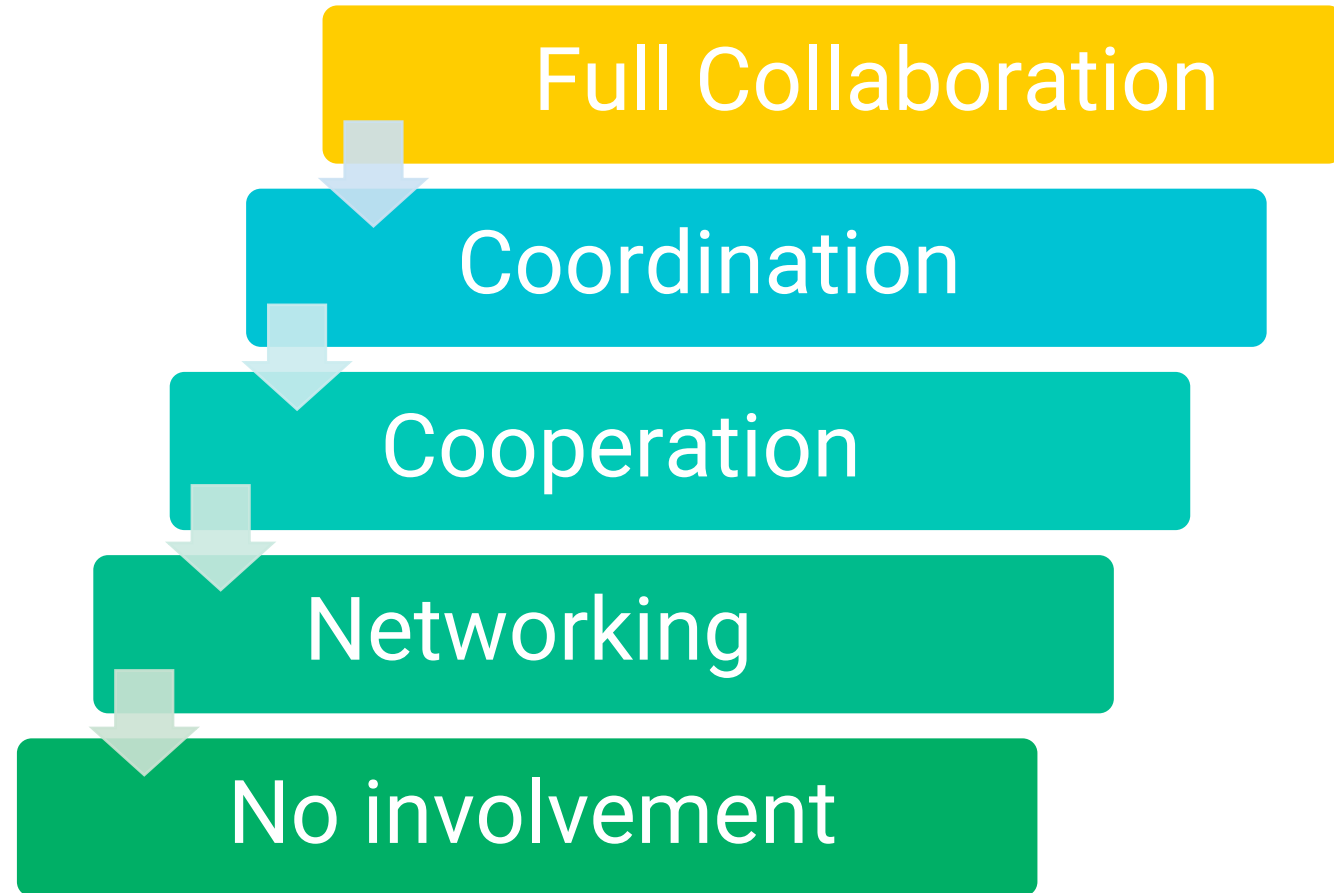
Coordination

- Defined roles
- Formalized links but each group retains autonomy
- Regular communication
- Shared decision-making around joint work
- Low to moderate risk
- Share some resources



Full Collaboration

- Formalized roles
- Formal links, which are written in an agreement
- Frequent communication
- Equally shared ideas and decision-making
- High risk but also high trust
- Pooled resources



Partnership Considerations: Commitment Level



Partnership Outreach Approach



Do your homework



Establish a Relationship



Develop Your Pitch



Choose a Delivery Approach

Do Your Homework

Learn everything you can about your potential partner:

- Find out “who’s who” in the organization,
- With whom do they currently partner?
- What populations do they currently work with?
- What is their history addressing substance use and misuse or related behaviors?

Tips:

- *Be judicious about who you connect first. Start with someone who can help you get the lay of the land, who has decision-making authority, or who has positive experiences collaborating in the past.*
- *Review the organization’s past media presence to learn which issues matter most to them and who their key players are.*

Any information you gather will help you when you’re ready to craft your pitch.



Establish a Relationship

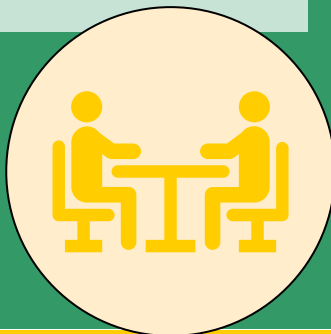
- Take your time.
- Attend meetings/events they host.
- Get on their mailing list.
- Add them to your mailing list.
- Make a personal connection.
- Use your “natural networkers” to reach out.

Tips:

- *Find a mutual contact to make a connection.*
- *Keep it causal, invite your potential partner for coffee or lunch.*
- *Connect on social media.*

Collaboration, like any relationship, has to start slow and be built on mutual trust.

“Move at the speed of trust”



Develop Your Pitch

- Write a short convincing message
- Describe you and your organization
- Clearly describe your hopes for partnership
- Highlight the benefits of working together

Tips:

- *Be concert.*
- *Be prepared with next steps once your partner says, “yes”*
- *Tailor your pitch to each potential partner.*
- *Use the marketing skills on your team to help develop you pitch.*



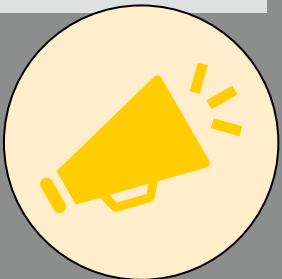
Choose Your Delivery Approach

Decide how you will make your “ask”:

- Send an email.
- Set up a meeting.
- Identify the best person to reach out.
- Select the delivery approach based on what learned from your homework.

Tips:

- *Face-to-face meetings are the best way to make a personal connection.*
- *Consider using a variety of approaches to increase the likelihood of a response.*
- *Include a mutual friend/partner in your initial meeting.*



How to Identify Potential Partners

Identify those who can address the needs stated in the previous slide

- What roles are currently unfilled?
- Who in the community has the capacity?
- Who in the community has that specific talent/gift?



Initial Partner Analysis Worksheet

Instructions:

Brainstorm a list of potential stakeholders and rank their priority/importance to your success
Complete a ‘stakeholder analysis worksheet’ for each stakeholder in the table below
Designate team members to pursue next steps to secure key stakeholders for your initiative

Organization or individual	What is their motivation (political will) to engage and support the work?	What is their biggest concern?	What do we need to do to get their support?	Next steps	Person responsible

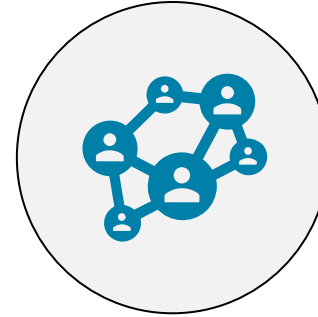
Example: Recruitment Action Plan

Potential Partner	Connection	Skills Needed	Outreach Approach	Commitment Level	Level of Engagement
<i>Who do you want to recruit?</i>	<i>Who will do the recruiting and why?</i>	<i>What do you want your potential partner to do?</i>	<i>What actions will you take to recruit?</i>	<i>What type of partner do you need – champions/affiliates, leader, program level?</i>	<i>How engaged do you ultimately need/want this partner to commit to?</i>

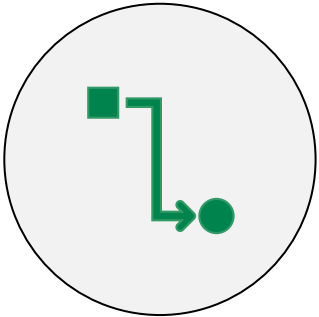
Building and Maintaining Partnerships



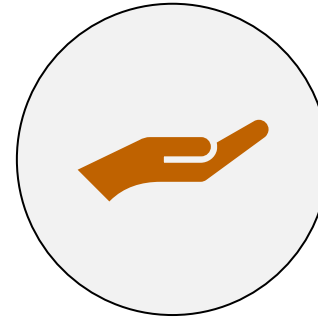
Focus on mutual benefit opportunities



Understand your organizational group dynamics



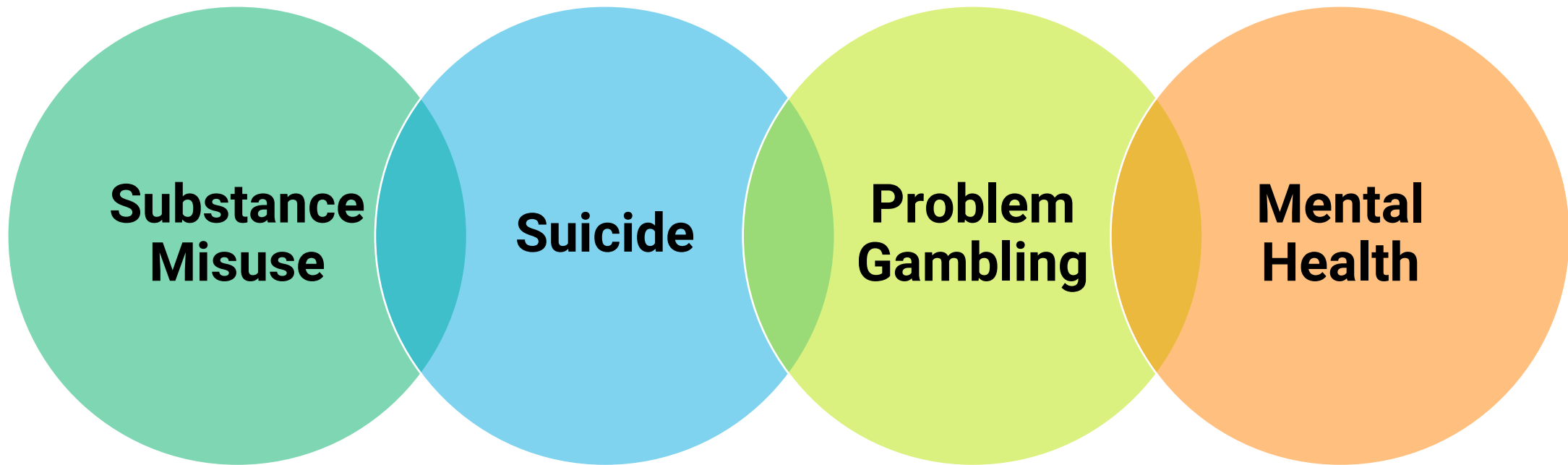
Pay attention to partnership onboarding



Extend additional outreach during the beginning phase of the relationship

Collaboration Across Behavioral Health:

SUBSTANCE MISUSE



Shared Risk Factors Chart

This table gives **examples** of risk factors for specific substances and behavioral health issues, by socio-ecological domain. This is only a **sampling** of possible risk factors.

	Risk Factor	Alcohol	Tobacco	Marijuana	Other Drugs	Suicide	School Dropout	Youth Violence	Bullying	Depression/ Anxiety
Community/ Society	High Alcohol Outlet Density	x				x		x		
	Low Neighborhood Attachment	x	x	x	x	x		x		
	Extreme Economic Deprivation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Interpersonal	Family Conflict	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Friends Who Engage in Problem Behavior	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	
Individual	Lack of Commitment to School	x	x	x	x		x			
	Low Educational Achievement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Areas of Collaboration with Substance Misuse

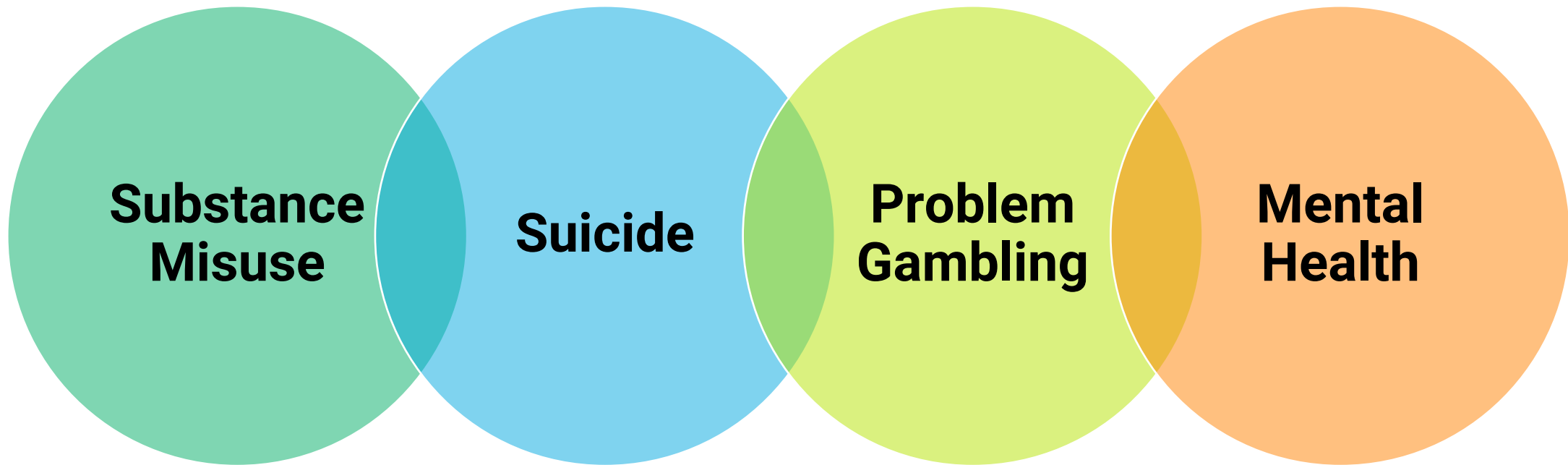
- Data collection and analyzing
- Sector engagement and partnerships
- Planning
- Strategies alignment
- Language and stigma

Collaboration Strategies with Substance Misuse Prevention

- Leverage work in key settings such as schools
- Collaborate on community policies such as alcohol outlet density
- Collaborate on community education campaigns on behavioral health
- Exchange data to identify overlaps in your community's needs

Collaboration Across Behavioral Health:

SUICIDE PREVENTION



Suicide Prevention

- Activities include early identification and support for those at risk, and postvention efforts
- Suicide prevention is done across the lifespan, although funding is focused on youth and young adults



Areas of Collaboration with Suicide Prevention

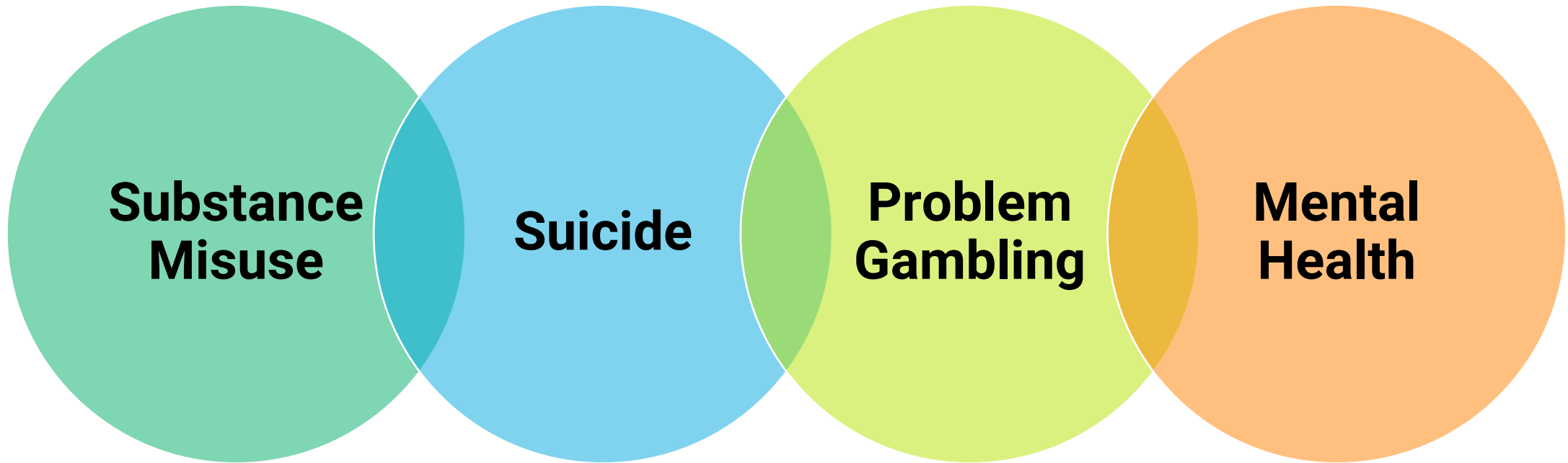
- Identifying the problem
- Sector engagement and partnerships
- Planning
- Strategies
- Language and stigma

Collaboration Strategies with Suicide Prevention

- Leverage work in key settings such as schools
- Collaborate on community policies such as alcohol outlet density
- Exchange data to identify overlaps in your community's needs

Collaboration Across Behavioral Health:

PROBLEM GAMBLING



Youth Problem Gambling Risk Factors

Individual	Interpersonal	Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Poor impulse control✓ Attitude favorable to problem gambling✓ Low self-esteem✓ Sensation seeking✓ Early onset✓ Behavioral problems✓ Depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Peer gambling behaviors✓ Family history of addiction/illegal activity✓ Lack of parental objection✓ Lack of parental knowledge✓ Familial attitudes and involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Social acceptance✓ Gambling accessibility✓ Lack of community awareness of the problem✓ Media-lottery ads

Protective Factors

- Social bonding
 - Social support
 - **Parental supervision**
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Adaptive coping strategies
 - Well-being
 - Self-monitoring
 - Personal competence
 - **Resilience**
- Interpersonal skills
 - Social competence
 - **School connectedness**



**Problem
Gambling**

Challenges to Collaboration with Problem Gambling

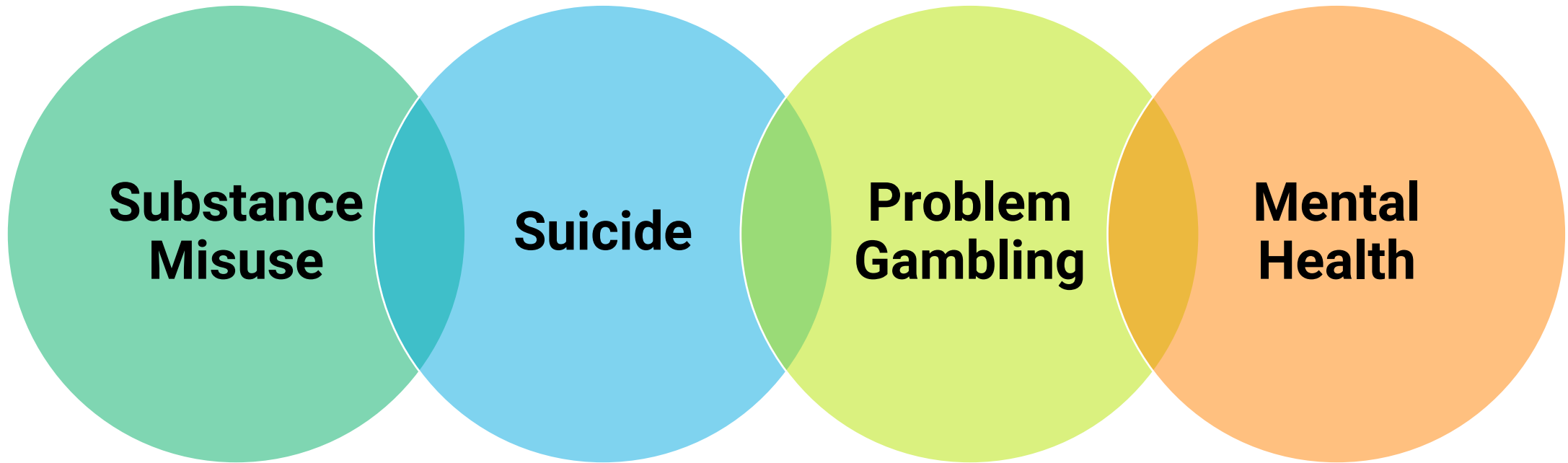
- Different funding sources
- Lack of prevention funding for problem gambling prevention
- Lack of evidence-based interventions/strategies to address problem gambling
- Lack of knowledge and awareness about the relationship between behaviors

Collaboration Strategies with Problem Gambling

- Identify and develop partners you can collaborate with
- Build awareness about the intersection of the behaviors.
- Add underage problem gambling questions to existing surveys
- Develop uniform prevention messaging so shared risk factors to increase efficiency
- Build capacity to understand both behaviors

Collaboration Across Behavioral Health:

MENTAL HEALTH



Mental Health Risk and Protective Factors

Risk Factors

- Poverty
- Violence
- Inequality
- Harsh parenting
- Bullying
- Genetic predisposition to mental health disorders
- Substance use

Protective Factors

- Social and emotional skills
- Quality education
- Safe neighborhoods
- Community connectedness

Each single risk and protective factor has only limited predictive strength

Challenges to Collaboration with Mental Health

- Understanding the difference in promotion and prevention
- Complex set of risk and protective factors
- Different settings: Coalitions vs. health care agencies
- Different training: Public health vs. clinical/individual health

Strategies for Collaboration with Mental Health

- Explore and learn the difference in promotion and prevention
- Learn about the promotion work happening in your community
- Focus on shared goals and areas of potential collaboration
- Help mental health understand prevention through clear messaging and communication with partners

Key Takeaways for Behavioral Health Collaboration



**Address shared risk
and protective
factors**



**Focus on shared
outcomes**



**Collaboration
is key**

Measuring the Impact of Collaboration

Key Domains to Measure

Collaboration Quality and Functioning

- Helps you understand *how well* the collaboration is working

Collaborative Capacity and Sustainability

- Focuses on the infrastructure and resilience of the collaboration over time

Community- or Systems-Level Changes

- Includes the indirect outcomes influenced by collaboration

Collaboration Quality and Functioning

Indicators

Level of trust among partners
Frequency and quality of communication
Shared goals and vision
Role clarity and decision-making processes
Member participation and satisfaction

Tools

Collaboration Factors Inventory
Collaboration Assessment Tool (CADCA)
Coalition Effectiveness Inventory

Ongoing Partner Analysis Worksheet

Instructions:

Brainstorm a list of existing partners and rank their priority/importance to your success

Complete a ‘partnership analysis worksheet’ for each current partner in the table below

Designate team members to pursue next steps to secure key stakeholders for your initiative

Organization or individual	What is their current level of engagement? Is this level we need moving forward?	What is the barrier to their support/ participation?	What do we need to do to increase or maintain their engagement?	Next steps	Person responsible

Collaborative Capacity and Sustainability

- Resource sharing (e.g., funds, data, personnel)
- New partnerships formed
- In-kind support received
- Joint funding applications or grants secured
- Integration of prevention into partner systems (e.g., school curricula, healthcare protocols)

Community-Level or Systems-Level Changes

- Policy or systems change (e.g., smoke-free zones, SBIRT integration)
- Increased service coordination across agencies
- New programs implemented as a result of joint decision-making
- Community readiness and/or capacity assessments

Conclusion

- Collaboration is needed to address the complex behavioral health landscape of our communities.
- Intention, planning, and attention to impact is essential.
- Partners – individuals and organizations – across the behavioral health spectrum may vary, but a thoughtful approach to working toward collaboration remains essential.

Next Steps

In the next days and weeks, what can you do to working toward collaboration in your community?

- Share the workshop materials with your colleagues and partners.
- Identify needs/gaps that can be filled by new collaborators.
- Begin filling out a partnership analysis worksheet with your colleagues.
- Other ideas?

Iowa's Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health

Questions and Evaluation Link



Iowa's Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health

Thank you

→ iowacebh.org/prevention

Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health

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