

# **Implementing Adolescent Recovery Supports & Developing Resources in our Communities**

## **Reclaiming Futures**

**Thursday, September 27th 11am PDT  
/ 2pm EDT**

# Common Myths About Drug Abuse...

Drug abuse equates to drug addiction

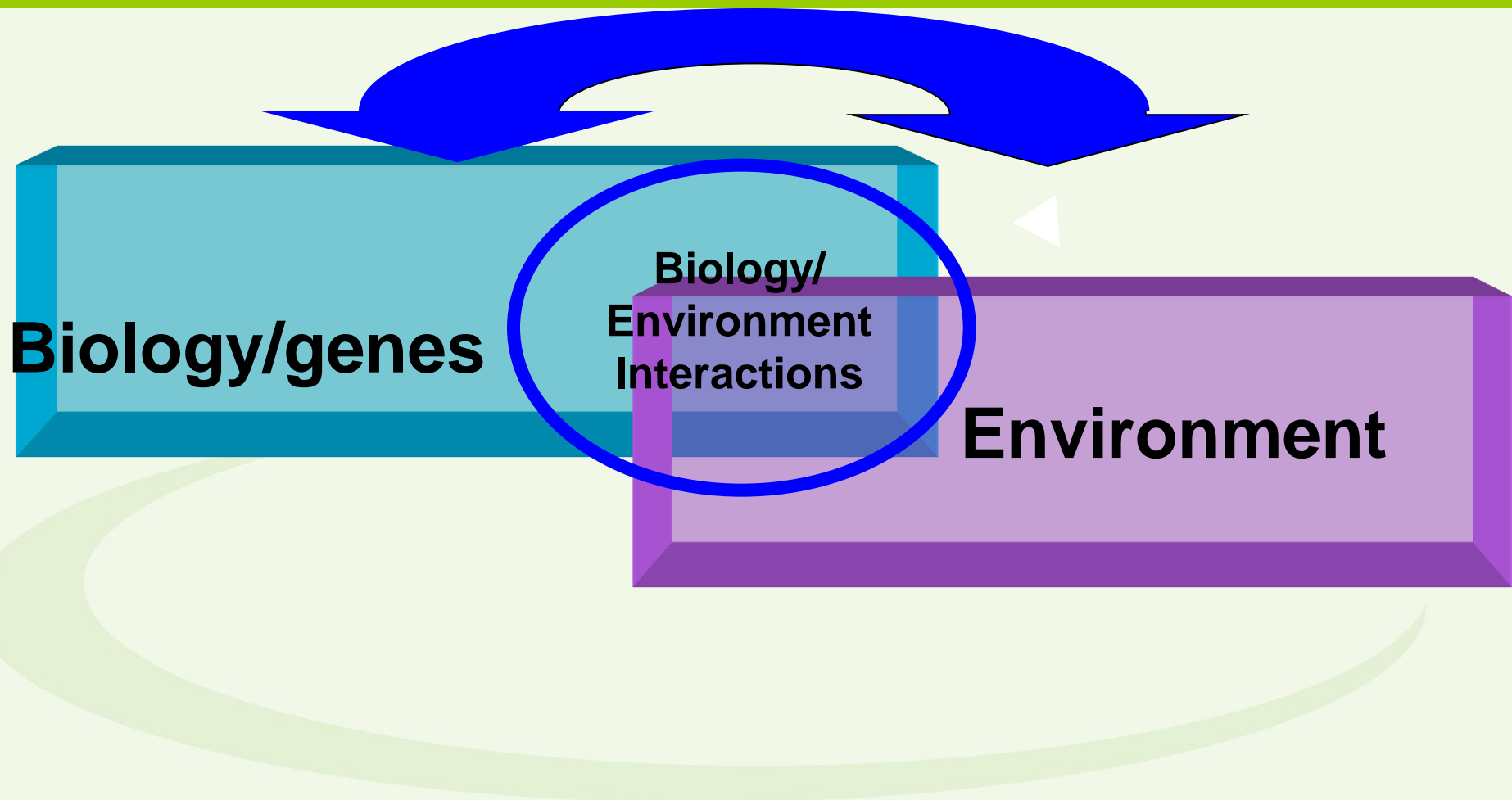
Alcohol is not a drug

Addiction is a moral weakness

You have to hit rock bottom to recover

You have to want treatment for it to be successful

Drug abuse is more common among minorities





Prevent • Treat • Recover • For Life



# How Do Drugs “Work” ???



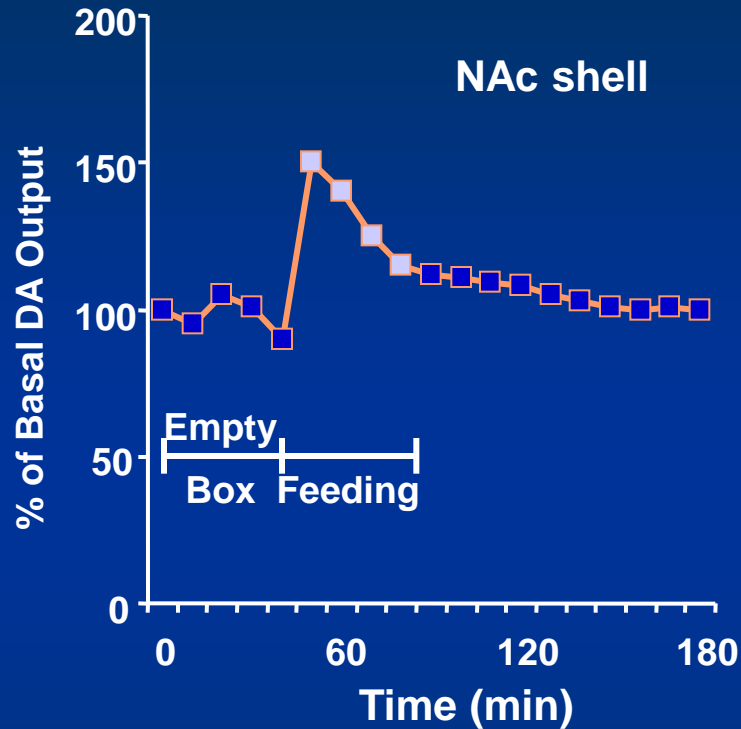
**Initially, a person takes a drug  
hoping to change his or her mood,  
perception, or emotional state  
...hoping to change their brains.**



We know that despite  
their many differences,  
most abused  
substances enhance  
the dopamine and  
serotonin pathways

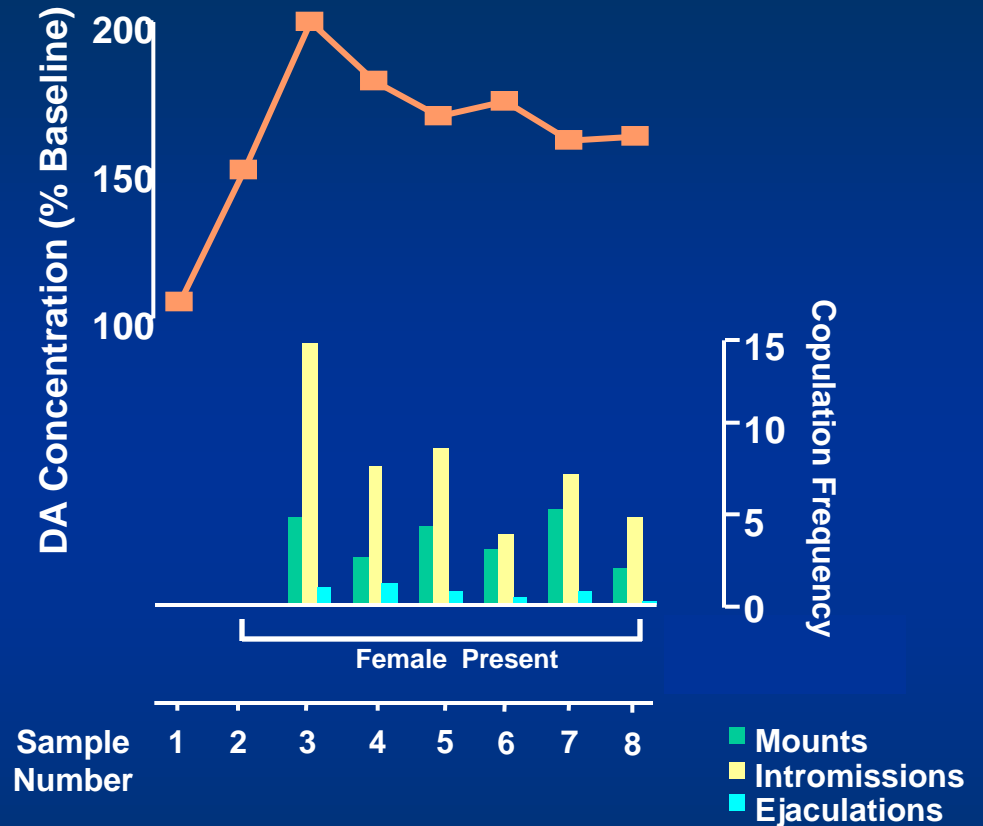
# Natural Rewards Elevate Dopamine Levels

## FOOD



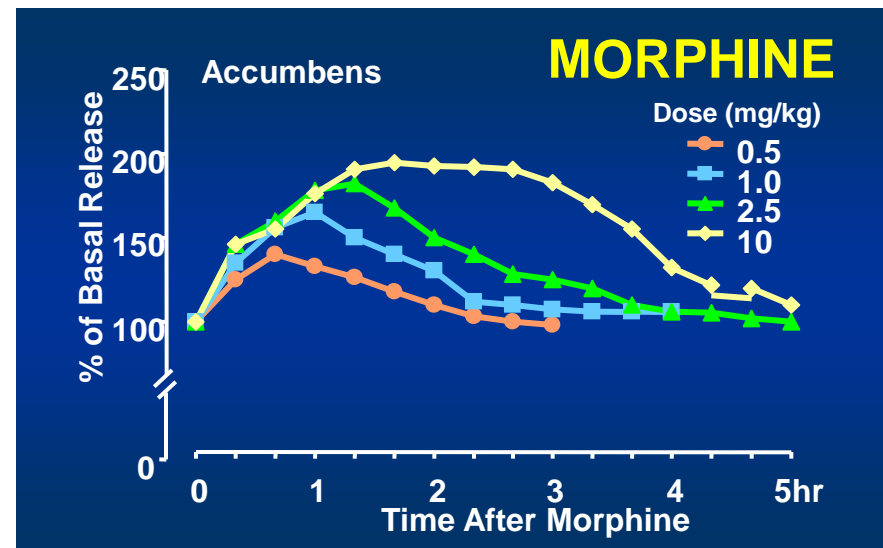
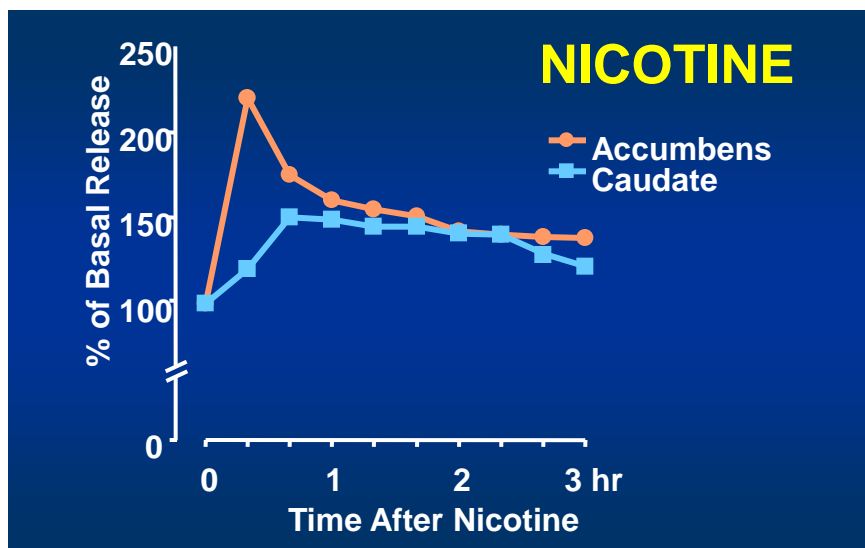
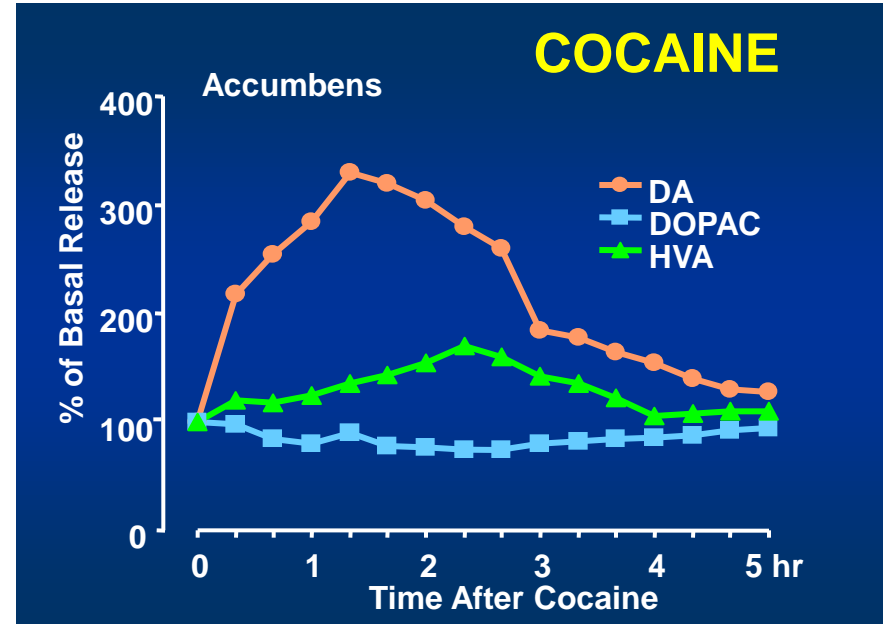
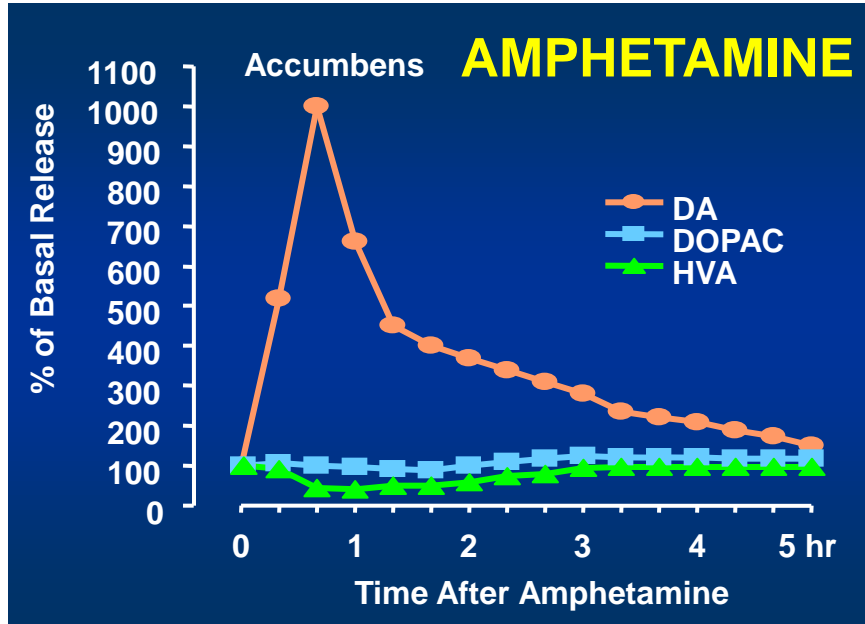
*Di Chiara et al., Neuroscience, 1999.*

## SEX



*Fiorino and Phillips, J. Neuroscience, 1997.*

# Effects of Drugs on Dopamine Release





Science has generated much  
evidence showing that...

**prolonged drug use changes  
the brain in fundamental  
and long-lasting ways**

# Implication:

Brain changes resulting  
from  
prolonged use of drugs  
may compromise  
mental and motor  
functions

# Implications for Behavior

Activities with high reward and low effort  
are preferred

Strong emotions and difficulty regulating  
them

Less able to inhibit impulses

Hard to think about consequences of  
behavior

**This is why addicts can't just quit**

**This is why treatment is essential**

# **Treating a Biobehavioral Disorder Must Go Beyond Just Fixing the Chemistry**

- Pharmacological (medications)
- Behavioral Therapies
- Medical and Social Services



**But, drug addiction is a chronic illness with relapse rates similar to those of hypertension, diabetes, and asthma**

# Northshore Recovery High School

- Created in 2006 under the Northshore Education Consortium (a Special Education Collaborative)
- Funded by DPH and individual tuition reimbursed by the students' districts
- Works with students in all phases of recovery...even during relapse.



# Academic Competency

- Curriculum and assessments aligned to Massachusetts State Frameworks.
- Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System Completion (MCAS)
- Massachusetts State Licensed/Highly Qualified Educators/Counselors
- Continuing Education Planning





# Academic Outcomes

- Increased School Participation
- Improved School Performance
- Enhanced Self-Confidence
- Achieve Clarity on Post-Graduate Plans
- Students Receive District Diploma
- Upon Matriculation, Students are College, Workforce and Military Ready



# Recovery Support

- Individual Contracts
- Mandatory 14 Panel Drug Screening
- Multiple Pathways to Recovery
- Cognitive Behavior Therapy
- Motivational Interviewing/Strength-Based Approach
- Peer Relationships and Networks
- Daily Groups



# Recovery Outcomes

- Decreased Relapse Episodes
- Improved Cognitive Behavior
- Maintain Commitment to Recovery
- Improved Self-Regulation
- Enhanced Social/Emotional Competency
- Enhanced Safe, Secure Relationships



# Community Integration

- Risk Assessment
- Self-Regulation
- Community Service Learning Opportunities
- Use of Community Resources
- Employment Opportunities
- After-School/Out of School Recovery and Academic Enrichment



# Community Outcomes

- Safe Recreation/Socialization
- Safe, Trusting Relationships
- Partnerships With Inpatient and Outpatient Substance Abuse and Mental Health Providers
- Collaterals Include Social Service Providers, Juvenile Justice, Drug Courts, Workforce Boards and Treatment Programs across the Commonwealth and United States.



# Care Management

- Coordination of Multiple Resources
- Behavioral Health Linkage
- Promotion of Health, Safety, Well Being
- Development of Family Relationships



# Care Management Outcomes

- Using Resources to Promote Self-Actualization and Success
- Independent Problem Solving



# School Collaboration

- Annual Transition Plan
- Transfer of Credits
- Collaborative Planning with School Staff
- Update Individualized Education Plan
- Meet the Special Needs of All Students

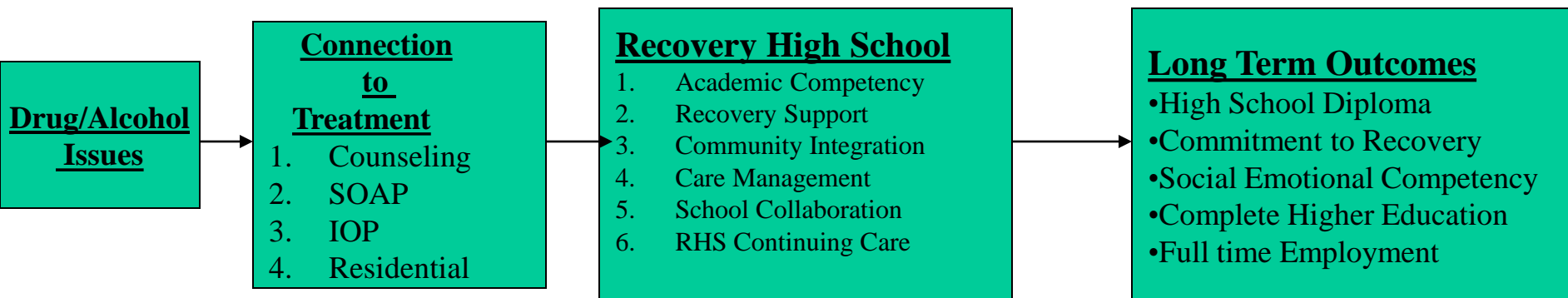
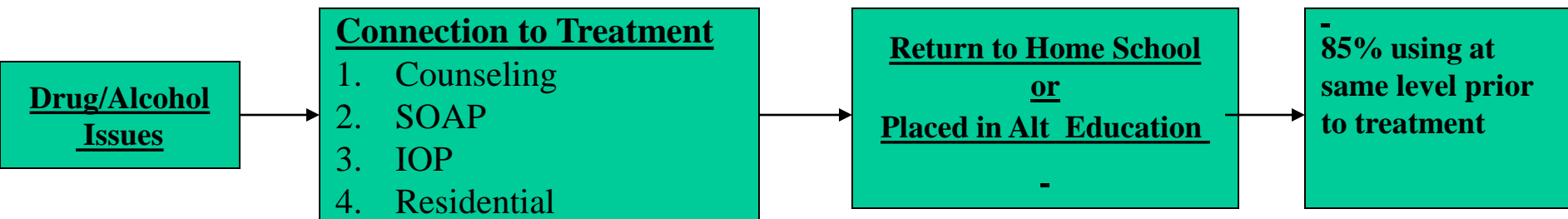


# School Collaboration Outcomes

- Earn Credits for High School Graduation
- Re-Integration in High School When Appropriate
- Receive High School Diploma
- MCAS Success

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# The problem

We are not reaching our youth who need help  
They do not realize they have a problem



They do not believe that **we can help**

# Increasing Your Presence


## Youth awareness and facilitating a conversation

Display icanhelp posters

Examples of posters related to addictive behavior and issues





# icanhelp Website: <http://icanhelp.me>



The banner features the icanhelp logo on the left, which includes the text "understand", "icanhelp", and "am committed". To the right of the logo are four photographs of diverse youth. Overlaid on the bottom right of these photos is the text "linking youth to people who can help".

linking youth to people who can help





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**Solution: Early Intervention**

The icanhelp program increases early identification of young people in our communities who need a "safe, educated person" to help them access the appropriate service essential to their well-being.

The goal of the icanhelp program is to enhance, link and increase engagement in programs and structures such as school psychologists, drug-free communities, special education services, etc, as well as link students and families to appropriate resources that they may not otherwise feel inclined to address. A recent evaluation of the icanhelp program found that 14% of the linkages were the result of the icanhelp program.





# icanhelp Outcomes

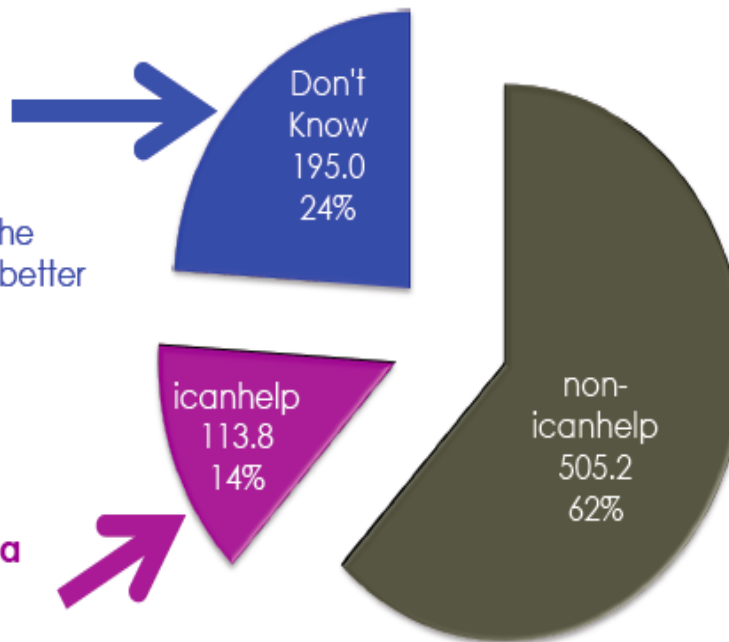
Teachers indicated the largest  
increase in linkages due to icanhelp

## Total Number of Linkages Related to the icanhelp Program

**Unknown percentage  
related to the icanhelp  
program.**

Future work will examine the  
“Don’t Know” linkages to better  
estimate the icanhelp  
contribution.

**Participants reported a  
14% increase in  
linkages due to the  
icanhelp program.**





<http://icanhelp.me>

# icanhelp<sup>SM</sup>

a program for early engagement by  
establishing “safe” places for adolescents to  
develop a trusting rapport with adults in the  
community

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