



Wellness Contagion In Schools: A Data-Driven Strategy



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Our presentation today!



- Overview of Healthy Teen Minds
- Overview of Sources of Strength
- Factors that influence successful implementation
- Continuous quality improvement to achieve fidelity
- Measuring success with data
- Lessons learned and considerations for sustainability

Healthy Teen Minds

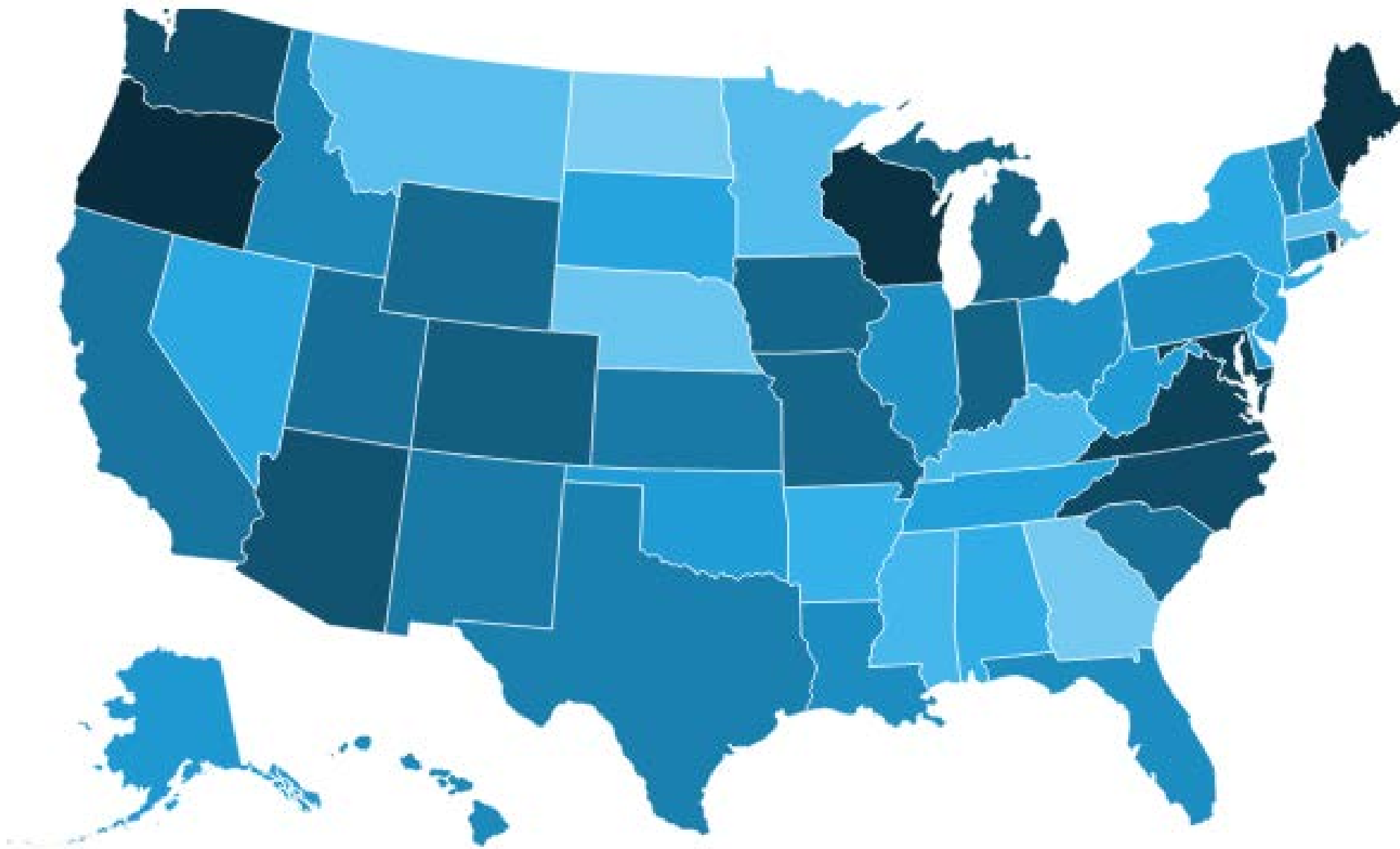
Serving Calumet, Outagamie, and Winnebago counties

Project Goal:

Reduce rates of
teen depression
(ages 12- 18)
in the region



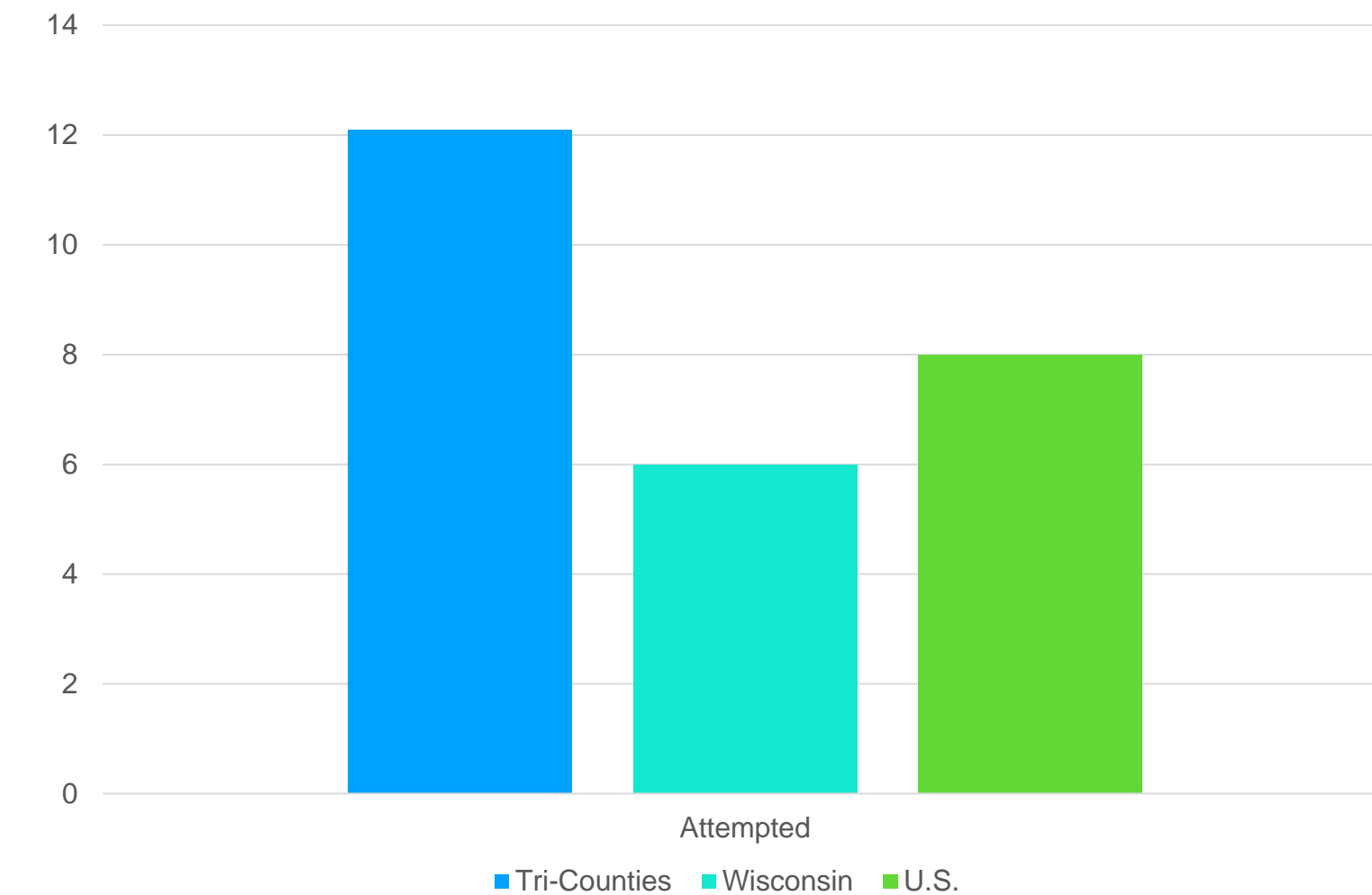
Youth with severe depression:



Wisconsin: 10.5%
United States: 7%

Wisconsin ranks #44 out of 50,
making it the 6th worst state in the
nation for youth depression

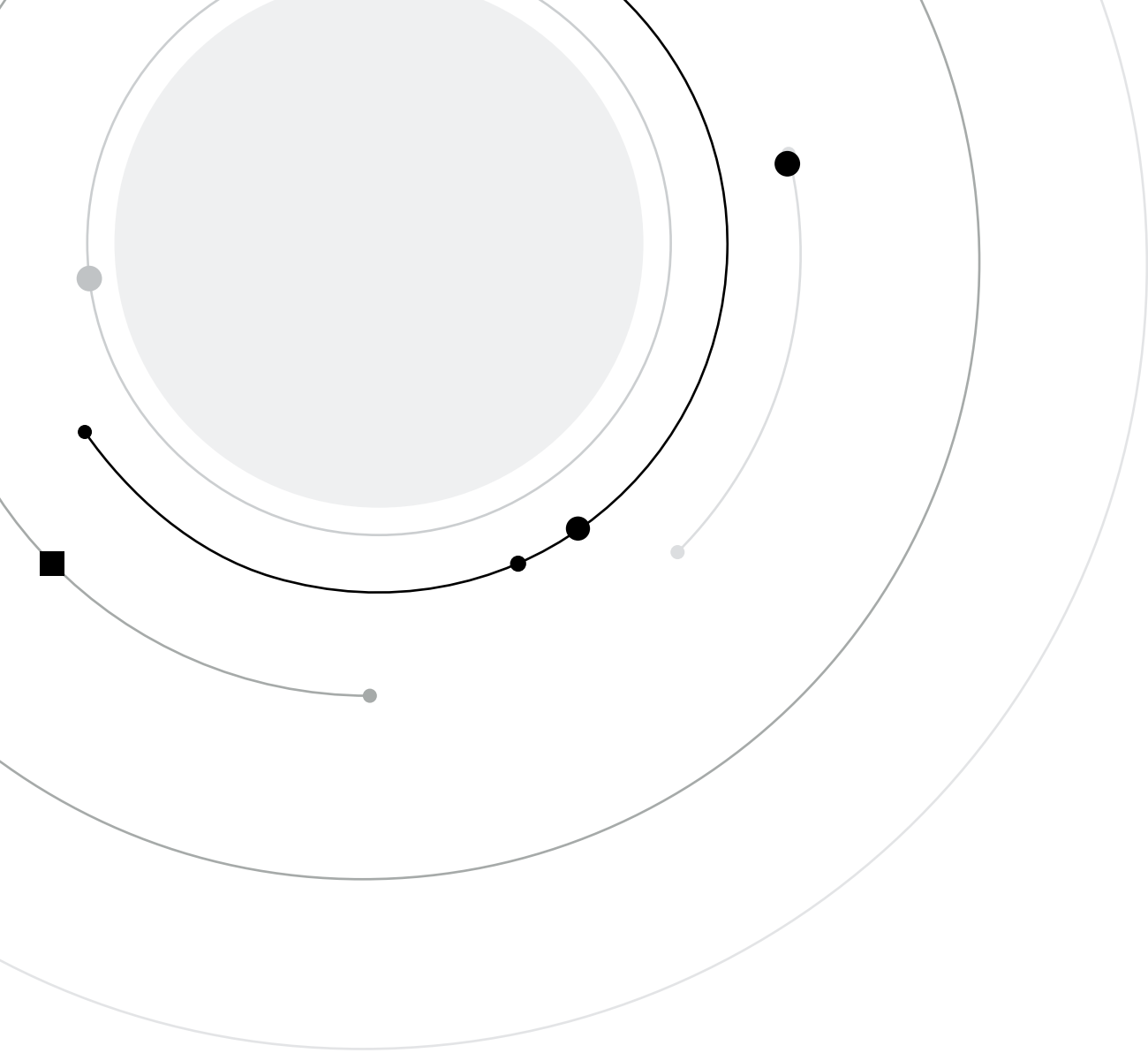
Depression is the No.1 risk factor for suicide



20%
of teens will
experience depression

Mental health disorders start early:





KIDS IN CRISIS

“Wisconsin's youth suicide rate is higher than the national average. It ranks among the top for kids with depression, yet less than half of those children received treatment for major depressive episodes. In 2013, more than half of Wisconsin adolescents surveyed said their mental health was not good at some point in the past month, and one in 10 said they had considered suicide. More than 900 youth 10-17 had to go to the emergency room after hurting themselves that year. And 25 died by suicide.”



**- USA Today Wisconsin
Appleton Post-Crescent
March 2016**

An Outcome Evaluation of the Sources of Strength Suicide Prevention Program Delivered by Adolescent Peer Leaders in High Schools

| Peter A. Wyman, PhD, C. Hendricks Brown, PhD, Mark LoMurray, BA, Karen Schmeelk-Cone, PhD, Mariya Petrova, BA, Qin Yu, PhD, Erin Walsh, MS, Xin Tu, PhD, and Wei Wang, PhD

Conclusions. Sources of Strength is the first suicide prevention program involving peer leaders to enhance protective factors associated with reducing suicide at the school population level. (*Am J Public Health*. Published online ahead of print July 15, 2010: e1–e9. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2009.190025)

evaluated, and only a narrow range of approaches has been used along the continuum of public health interventions.¹

Currently, school-based suicide prevention programs focus primarily on reducing individual-level risk factors by increasing identification and referral for treatment of students at high

suicide, their connectedness to adults, and their school engagement, with the largest gains for those entering with the least adaptive norms. Trained peer leaders in larger schools were 4 times as likely as were untrained peer leaders to refer a suicidal friend to an adult. Among students, the intervention increased perceptions of adult support for suicidal youths and the acceptability of seeking help. Perception of adult support increased most in students with a history of suicidal ideation.

Conclusions. Sources of Strength is the first suicide prevention program

HOPELINE
SMS Emotional Support Line
Text "**HOPELINE**" to **741741**.
A free service provided by: 

QPR
For Suicide
Prevention


**Youth Mental Health
First Aid USA**
FOR ADULTS ASSISTING YOUNG PEOPLE

United Way's
PATH
for students

CRISIS RESPONSE



**Connected
Community**
WELLNESS SCREEN
BWell2Excel


**Safe-Guard
Your Home**
A Guide to Youth Suicide
Prevention at Home

Tier 3:
Targeted

Tier 2: At Risk

Tier 1: Universal





SOURCES OF STRENGTH



Upstream Prevention

Upstream Prevention

Sources of Strength Primary Mission

Intervention

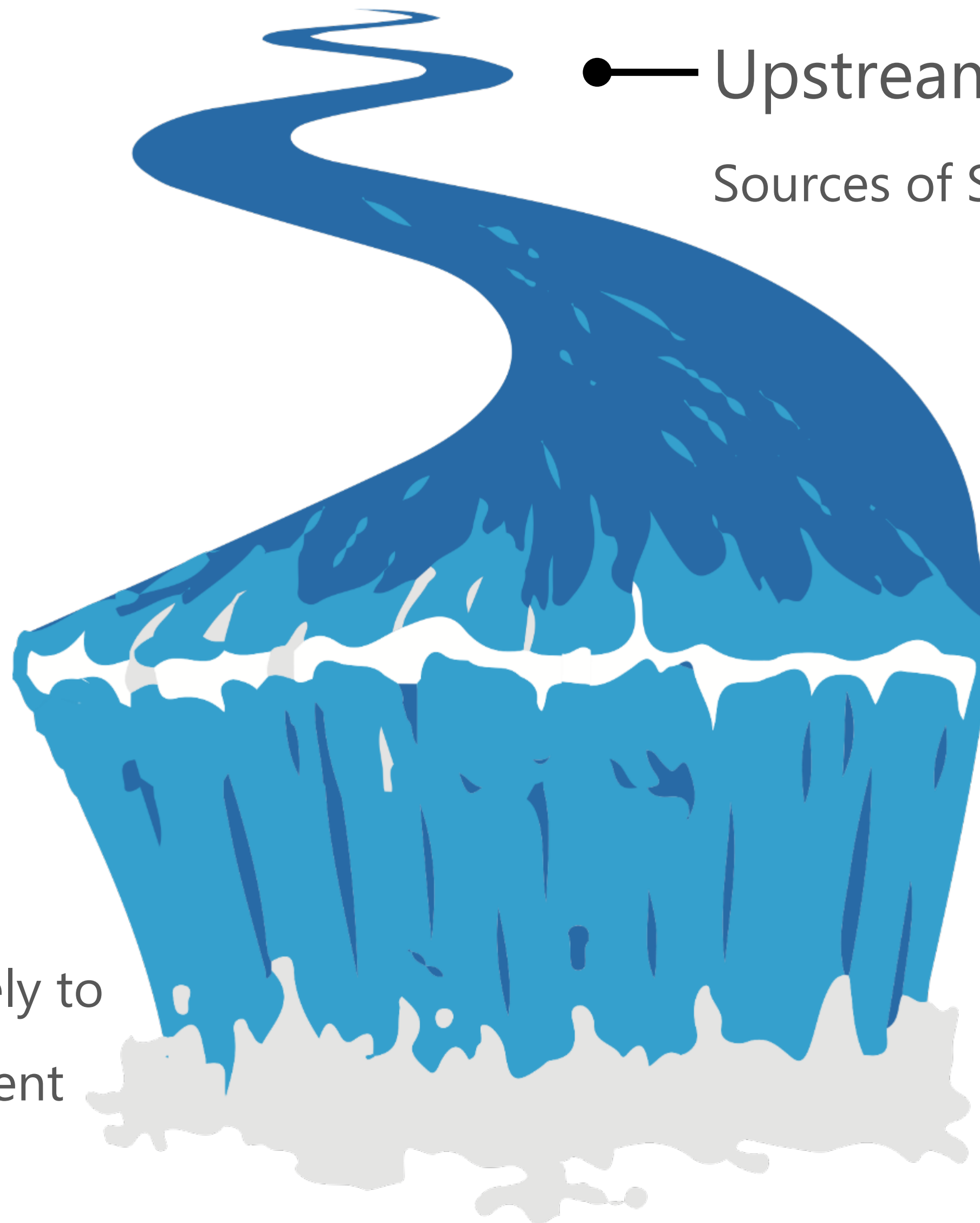
Sources of Strength

Secondary Benefit

- Peer Leaders are 4x more likely to refer a suicidal friend or student

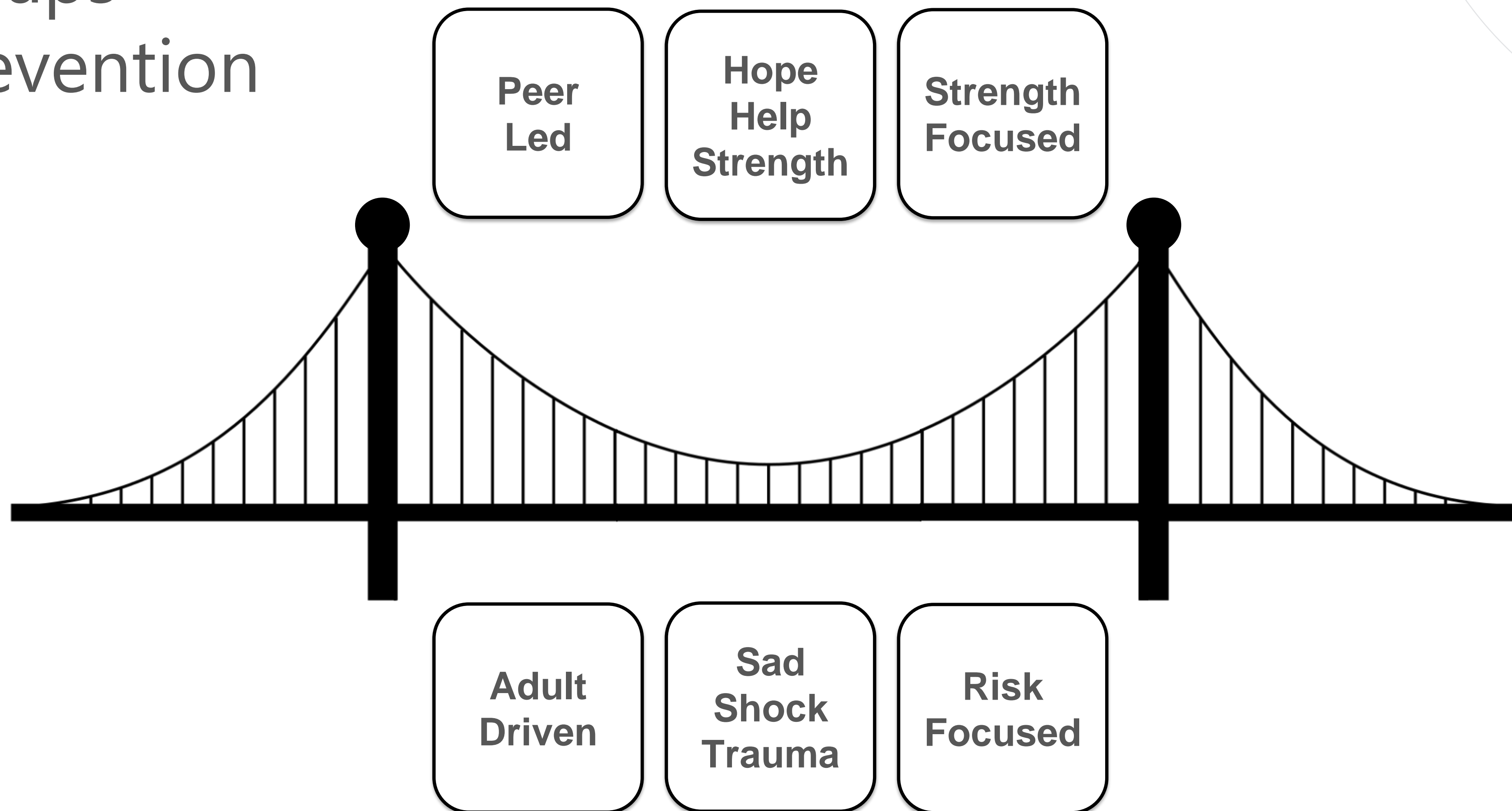
Postvention

Effective Postvention is Effective Prevention





- Bridging the Gaps in Prevention



The 90/10 Rule!

Avoid:

- Shock
- Sadness
- Trauma

The “normalization” of suicide is avoided – Sources of Strength does not use data that normalizes, communicates, or appears to suggest that all or most teens are struggling with suicide (ex. second-leading cause of teen fatalities)

Focus on:

- Help
- Hope
- Strength

The program does not on specific details related to suicide deaths or attempts – Messages are focused on hope, help, and strength and Peer Leaders are trained not to present traumatic stories, but stories of hope and resiliency as they move into their action steps.

Sources of Strength Model

Supportive
Adult
Advisors

+

Diverse
Peer
Leaders

x

Strategic
Messaging
Campaigns

=

Positive
Culture
Change



Caring
Connected
Positive



Influence
within
Social Group



Engage
Interact
Apply



Positive
Social
Norming

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

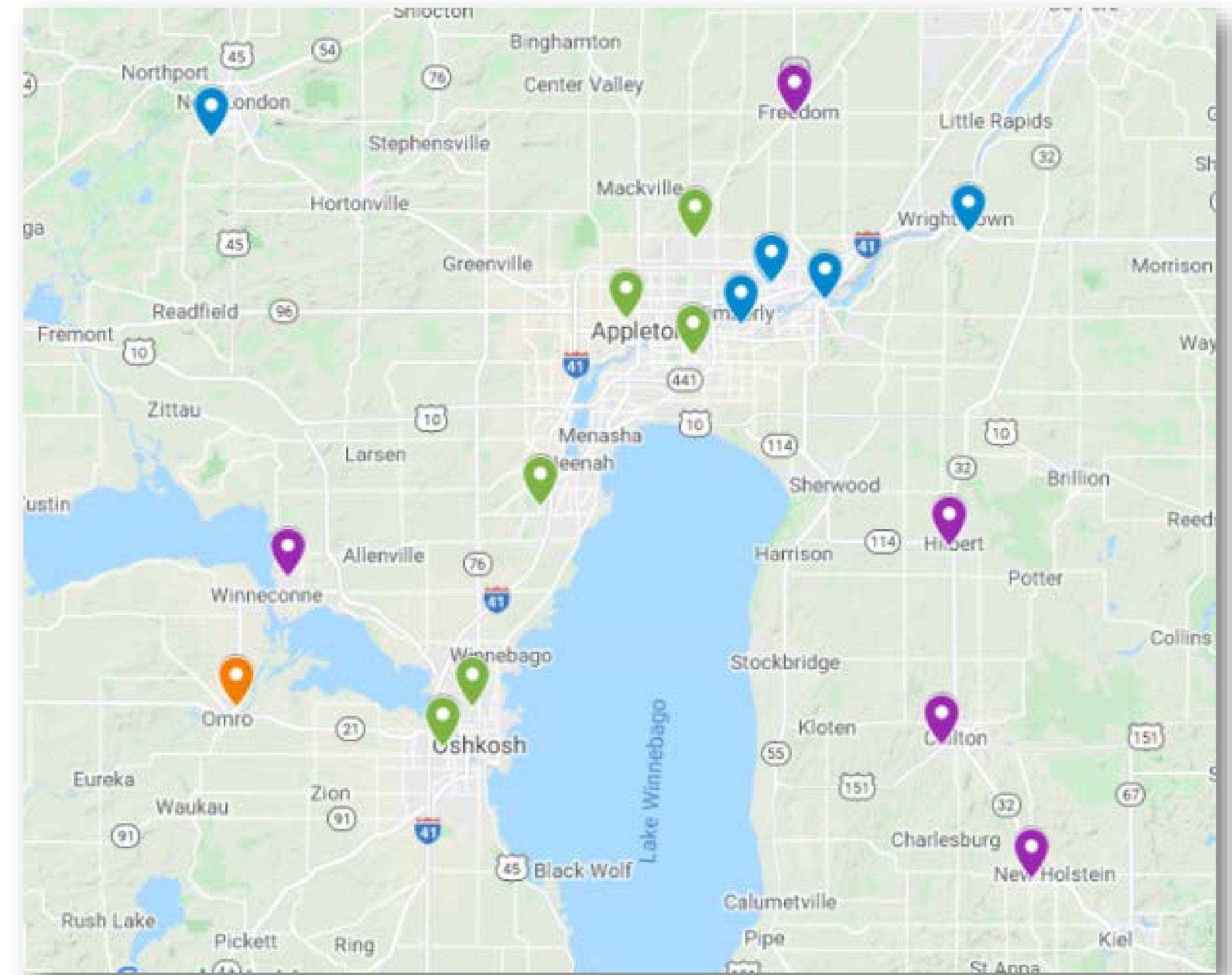
Regional trainers



- Carlyn Andrew, Director of Counseling and Training, Boys & Girls Club of the Fox Valley.



- Mandi Dornfeld, Human Development and Relationships Educator, U-W Extension



GAME



Impact of Sources of Strength

Wyman et al. (2010). *American Journal of Public Health*

Cluster Randomized Control Trial (NIMH, SAMSHA Funding)

18 Schools; 465 Peer Leaders; 2,700 Students

Peer Leaders

- More connections to adults (M + 1 connection)
- 4X more likely to refer peer to adults
- Increased healthy coping attitudes/norms
- Largest Gains for least connected or healthy PL's

School Population

- Increased help-seeking acceptability
- Increased perception that adults help suicidal peers
- Largest gains for students with a history of suicide attempts



Sources Fidelity Checklist

FIDELITY MARKERS (CHECKLIST)

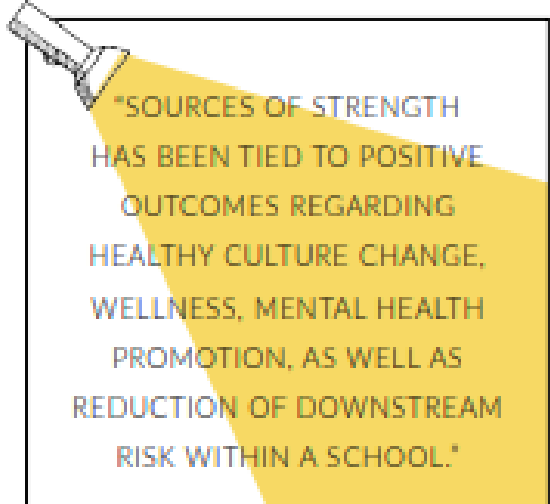
Rationale:

Sources of Strength is an evidence-based, best practice prevention program. As such, there are several important elements that must be present to maintain a fidelity implementation of the program in order to provide the intended impact and outcomes.

These include Fidelity Markers in terms of:

- **Preparation and Planning,**
- **Training,**
- **Follow-Through**
- **Ongoing Implementation.**

This checklist serves as a resource in planning, implementation, and course-correcting to make sure that your Sources of Strength program is within fidelity and delivers the culture change we all hope to see.



Preparation and Planning

- ☐ Someone from our Adult Advisor team spoke with Sources of Strength staff and watched the Implementation Overview Video prior to nomination, recruitment, and training.
- ☐ Administration values the ability of diverse peer leaders to positively change campus culture and time and resources will be available for training, meetings, and messaging campaigns.
- ☐ Safety/suicide protocol is in place and

staff are trained in it. If not, we have reviewed the Sources of Strength protocol and developed our own protocol and referral process for handling suicidal students.

- ☐ Our Adult Advisors are volunteers who are excited to be a part of Sources of Strength and have 4-6 hours per month in their schedules to support the Peer Leader team. Adult Advisors were not assigned or told to participate.

- ☐ Our core Adult Advisor team is made up of people who are caring, connected, and positive; they believe that social change is possible and are excited about empowering a group of students to enact change.

- ☐ Our Adult Advisor team consists of at least a 1-10 Adult to Peer Leader ratio and can include school, staff, parents, or community members.

- ☐ Our Peer Leader team is a diverse and representative sample of the student body and reflects our population in terms of: race, religion, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, grade level, socio-economic status, and social group.

- ☐ Our Peer Leader team consists of at least 5-10% of the student population, keeping in mind that 10% of the school population is the goal by Year Three, as this is a crucial tipping point in peer to peer spread of attitudes, norms, and behaviors.

Training

The room for our training provided:

- ☐ Appropriate space for all Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders to sit in chairs in a circle.

- ☐ Room to play games.
- ☐ Adequate acoustics and ability for the group to hear one another (no loud fans, interruptions, or through traffic, a sound system provided for larger groups over 50, etc.)

Training Participation Checklist

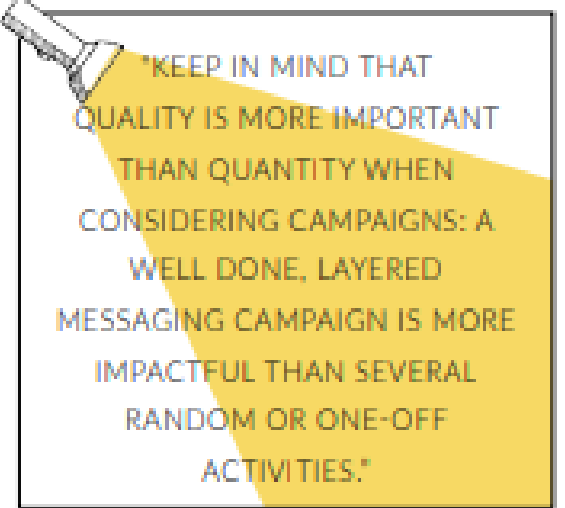
- ☐ We have conducted an Adult Advisor training of at least 3-6 hours.
- ☐ We have conducted a Peer Leader training of at least 4.5-6 hours.
- ☐ Our Adult Advisors participated in both the Adult Advisor and Peer Leader trainings.
- ☐ We received training from a Sources of Strength National Trainer or locally Certified Trainer.
- ☐ Our Adult Advisors were fully engaged in the trainings; they played the games, participated in poster groups, shared and connected with the Peer Leaders.
- ☐ Our Adult Advisors did not engage in power struggles with Peer Leaders through lecturing, shouting, or disciplining during the training.

Follow-Through and Ongoing Implementation Meetings

- ☐ We conducted regular meetings of at least 2x per month with our Adult Advisor and Peer Leader team. If most meetings were held during student free time (before and after school, during lunch, etc.), the school will also invest some school time for Peer Leaders to meet and implement activities.
- ☐ Our Peer Leader meetings over a month included One Part Fun, One Part Sharing, and One Part Planning.
- ☐ At least 70% of our Peer Leader team and 50% of our Adult Advisor team

consistently attended meetings

- ☐ If our meetings were typically 30 - 45 minutes, we met more frequently to reach two hours, especially in the first three to four months to establish peer team identity and complete activities.
- ☐ The first peer meeting was conducted within 10-14 days after training.
- ☐ The first campaign was completed within the first 30 days.
- ☐ Three campaigns were completed within the first four months.



Messaging

- ☐ 100% of Peer Leader campaigns and messaging was Hope, Help, Strength focused and did not use Sad, Shock, or Trauma techniques, statistics, or images.
- ☐ Our Peer Leader campaigns and messaging were engaging and interactive and invited the broader population to apply Sources of Strength principles and content into their own lives.
- ☐ We conducted the recommended minimum number of campaigns or activities:
 - ☐ Year 1: 3-6
 - ☐ Year 2: 4-7

- ☐ Year 3 and beyond: 5-8

- ☐ Our campaigns reached the required percentage of the school population:

- ☐ Year 1: 40%

- ☐ Year 2: 70%

- ☐ Year 3 and beyond: 90%

- ☐ We conducted a Celebration/Recognition event or activity to honor our Peer Leader team.

- ☐ We conducted an Adult Advisor or Peer Leader training every year for at least the first three years of implementation.

- ☐ We learned about the Sources of Strength Train the Trainer model and considered developing a locally certified Trainer. (Optimal for building sustainability)

- ☐ We paid our \$500 ongoing licensing fee to Sources of Strength and have continued to reach out for support and guidance.

For Sustaining Programs (Sources of Strength Teams after initial Implementation)

- ☐ We completed the Fidelity Markers Checklist and Team Assessment (located on page 101) at the end of the year and engaged in a period of reflection and goal setting for the following year.
- ☐ We nominated and recruited new Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders to add to the strength and diversity of our team.

We participated in the Sources of Strength support framework by:

- ☐ Watching the support videos emailed to us.
- ☐ Reading and utilizing the Field Guide.
- ☐ Accessing resources, templates, and content from sourcesofstrength.org.
- ☐ Participating in a support call with Sources of Strength national staff.



Fidelity Core Measures

- Conducting annual training
 - Adult Advisor and Peer Leader groups
- Campaigns
 - 3-5 in first year; more thereafter
 - Meet the “bullseye”: positive, awareness, interactive
 - Plus a year-end celebration!
- Adult Advisors
 - 1:10 ratio of Adult Advisors to Peer Leaders
- Peer Leaders
 - Diverse group representing ~10% of student body



- Great training is just the beginning...



Touchpoints for Fidelity

- Community of Practice meetings
 - 2-3 times per year to connect with folks from other districts
 - Share what works and challenges being faced
 - Trainers offer feedback
- Monthly “coaching” calls
 - Opportunity to connect with a trainer and other Sources schools
 - Optional check-in time with open agenda; lots of sharing
- Annual trainings
 - Reminders of the model
 - Team time to talk through progress

**Support
for fidelity
takes work
& continuous
improvement!**

Measuring success with data

- Surveys each year
 - Based on surveys used to establish evidence base
 - Given to Adult Advisors and Peer Leaders each fall
- Touches on several constructs
 - Trusted adults
 - Peer-to-peer relationships
 - Student-to-adult relationships
 - School climate
- Worked with academic partners at Medical College of Wisconsin
 - Psychometric analytics to identify significant constructs



Sources of Strength: Cohort One Outcomes

NOTE that these are statistically significant.

In their survey responses, Peer Leaders

- reported an improvement in peer-to-peer relationships in their schools
- demonstrated more positive attitudes toward the need to intervene when a friend was suicidal and to do so by seeking help from an adult
- are also feeling stronger connections to trusted adults at school



**In their survey
responses, Peer Leaders
reported an improvement
in peer-to-peer
relationships at their
school**

Based on an index of the following
“At my school...” questions:

- ...I have many friends
- ...I often hang out with other students
- ...I can help make my school a better place
- ...I get along with students who are different from me
- ...students just talk mostly to their friends

In their survey responses, Peer Leaders demonstrated shifts toward being more likely to intervene when a friend was suicidal and to do so by seeking help from an adult

Based on an index of the following “In my opinion...” questions:

- ...I would tell an adult I trusted if I knew a friend was suicidal
- ...I would tell an adult about a suicidal friend, even if that friend asked me to keep it a secret
- ...my friends would try to get help for someone who was suicidal
- ...I know adults who could help a friend thinking
- ...my school has people who can help students going through hard times
- ...I can think of an adult who I trust enough to help a suicidal friend
- ...students with problems can get help from adults at my school

**In their survey
responses, Peer Leaders
are also feeling stronger
connections to trusted
adults at school**

Based on an index of the following
“At my school...” questions:

- ...adults care about people my age
- ...adults push me to do my best
- **...adults respect what people my age think**
- **...there is an adult who listens to what I have to say**
- ...there is an adult who I trust
- ...there is an adult who cares about me
- ...there is an adult who I can talk to about a problem

Sources of Strength: Adult outcomes

NOTE that these are
statistically significant.

In their survey responses,
Adult Advisors have increased
their knowledge and attitudes
regarding:

- suicide prevention resources
- suicide intervention policies
- taking action to intervene with a suicidal student

Based on an index of the following agree/disagree questions:

- There is a specific plan for helping students who are contemplating suicide at my school
- I'm familiar with my school's policies for helping students
- Suicide prevention student education or resource materials (posters, brochures, etc.) are available at my school
- There are adequate referral resources for students
- contemplating
- If a student experiencing thoughts of suicide does not acknowledge to situation, there is very little that I can do to help*
- If a student contemplating suicide does not seek assistance, there is nothing I can do to help*
- I cannot understand why a student would contemplate suicide
- A suicide prevention program in my school will send a message to students that help is available
- I am too busy to participate in suicide prevention activities
- If a student contemplating suicide refuses to seek help, it should not be forced upon him/her*
- The Sources of Strength program will be a useful addition to our school (based on what I know now)

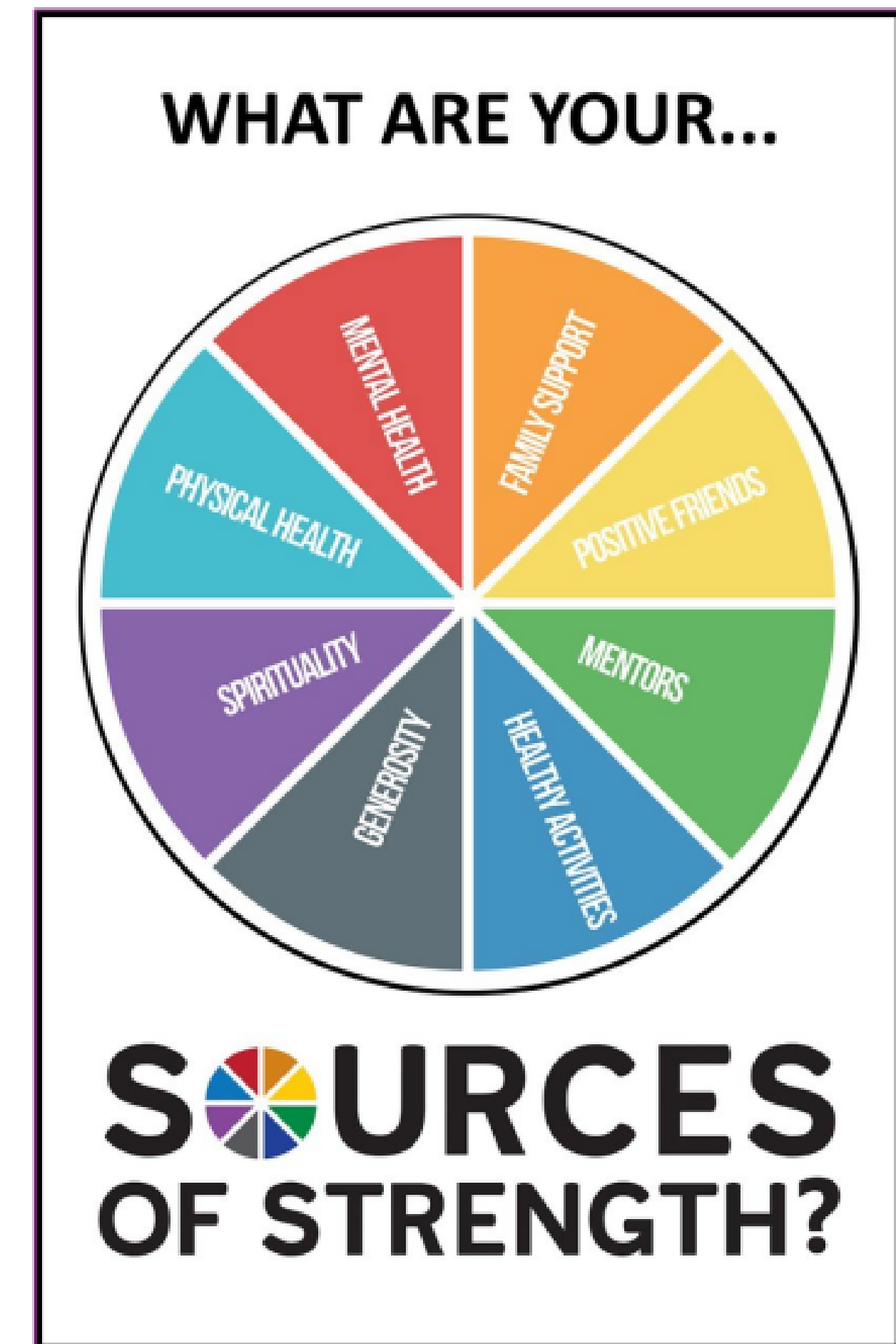
*reverse coded

Sources of Strength is an invaluable tool for teens and educators

"We get lot of kids coming into our (counseling) office who are feeling down and depressed, and we do have kids who talk about suicide. I always go to my Sources of Strength poster and start talking about it right away. And I can find out from that – that brief little talk with them – if they know about Sources of Strength."

"And it's amazing how many times students come into our office, who come with someone. A lot of those students are those network of Sources students who know they need to get them to not just a trusted adult but someone who can help them. We stay very busy."

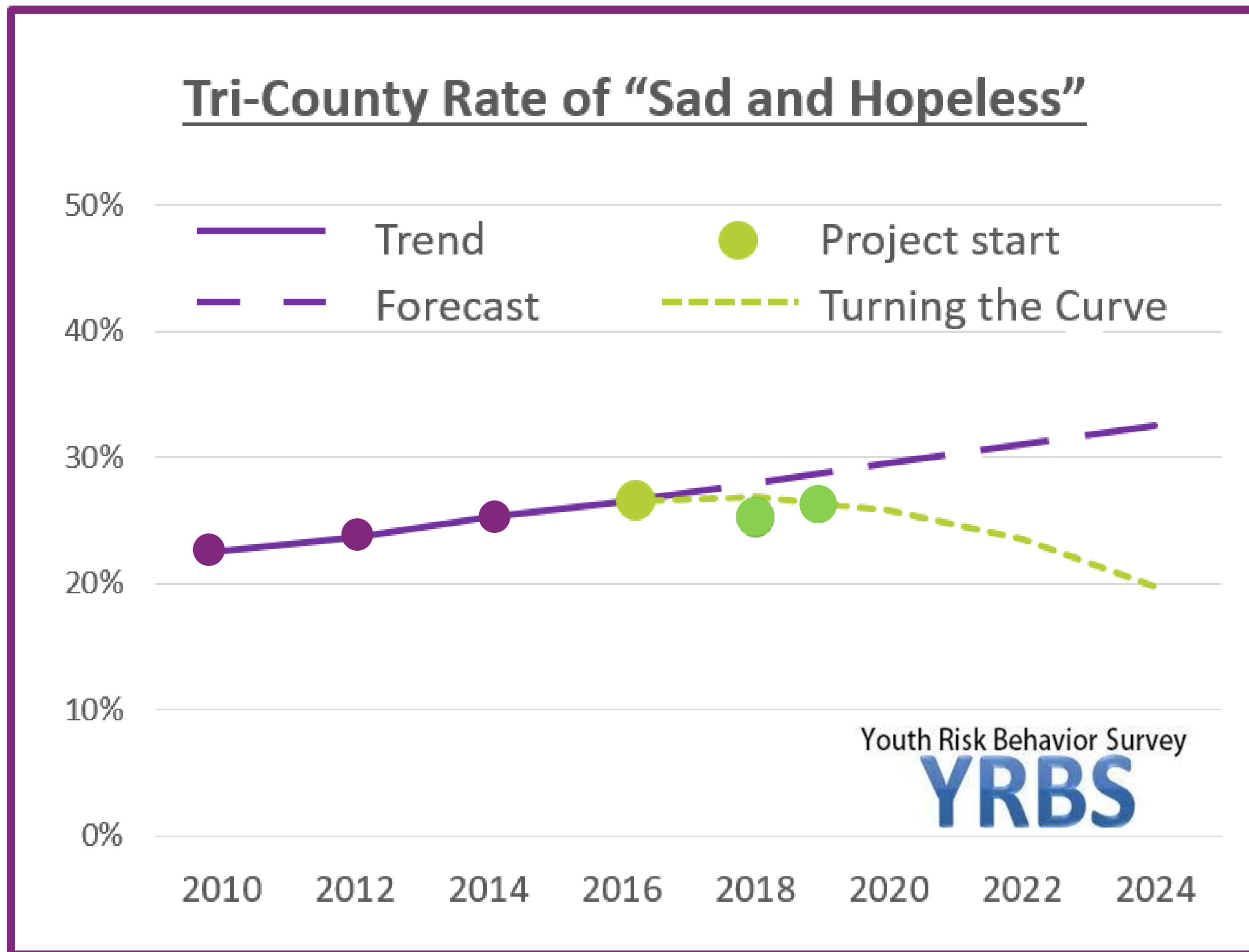
-- Julie Prudom, counselor, Appleton North High school



Population-level Improvement

Indicator: YRBS “Sad and hopeless”

“During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?”



Lesson Learned

- Cultivate program buy-in at all levels prior to implementation
- Check-ins with schools throughout year
- Administer survey of adult advisors and peer leaders ONLINE
- Create a “Learning Community” - Bring Adult Advisors together twice a year to share successes, challenges, etc.
- Provide e-newsletter every other month to share campaign ideas, tips, etc.
- Create private Sources of Strength Facebook page for Adult Advisors
- Offer monthly Zoom support calls for Adult Advisors
- Provide postvention opportunities



Thank You!

For more information:

www.sourcesofstrength.org

www.healthyteenminds.org

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