

FROM URGENCY TO IMPACT:

**ADVANCING PREVENTION SCIENCE
TO ADDRESS GLOBAL CHALLENGES
IN POLYSUBSTANCE USE AND
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH DISPARITIES**



ISSUP 2025 CONFERENCE | BALI, INDONESIA
CARLTON HALL, MHS, PRESIDENT & CEO, CARLTON HALL CONSULTING
– September 18 2025



Inspiring Solutions for a Better World



Be disruptive.



ERICA EDWARDS-O'NEAL
WWW.EEOCONSULTS.COM



1 like

eEOCONSULTS To be disruptive means to prevent something from continuing or operating in a normal way.

#centerequity



What do WE believe?

- The most effective way of addressing a problem is to PREVENT it BEFORE it starts.
- We believe in the full engagement and empowerment of the community in their role to both understand and solve the problem.
- Being guided by science to achieve population-level change.



Prevention is NOT Random!

Our Communities are Perfectly Engineered to Produce
the Results We are Currently Seeing!

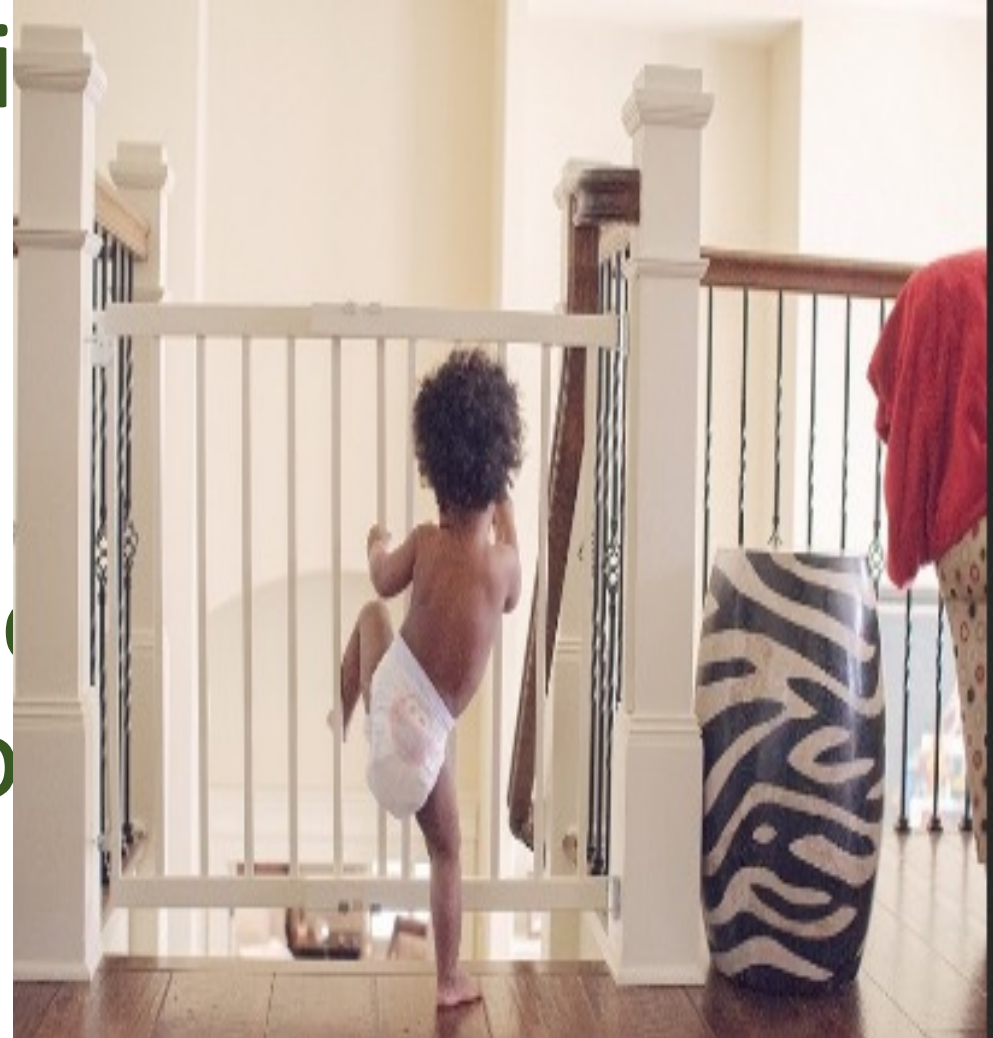
Intentional
Purposeful
Strategic





Prevention Is about i
prioritizing the most
population...

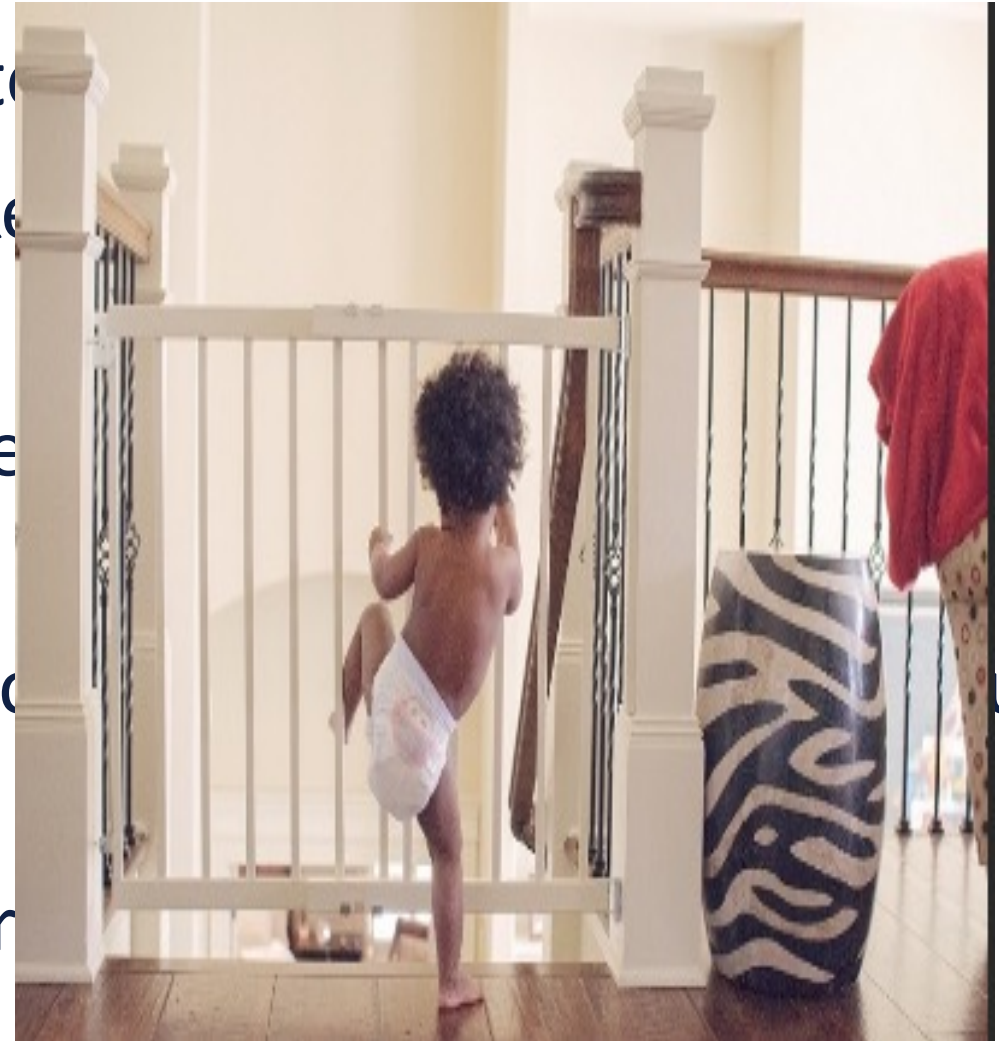
...and identifying who
VULNERABLE (Enviro
Lifespan...



Prevention should be OBVIOUS!

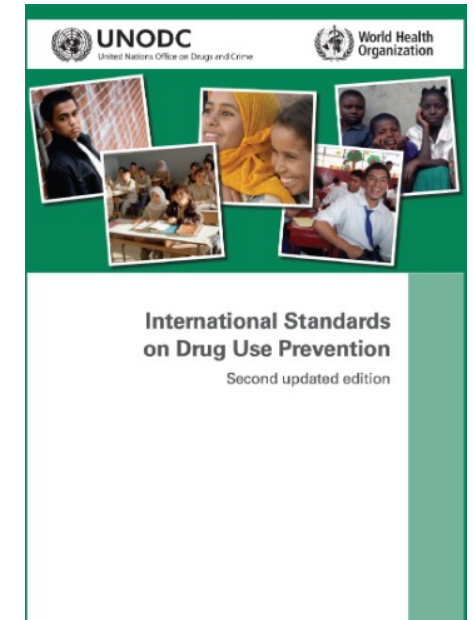
• Prevention Is: Across the Lifespan...

- Infants – FASD, effects of maternal substance use
- Children - second-hand smoke, child abuse, neglect, secondary effects
- Adolescents – onset and exposure to substances, developing brain and bodies
- College-aged and Adults – prevention, substance use, mental health, and dependence
- Older adults – prescription drug use, falls, chronic disease



Prevention standards – this is what works... but how to translate our knowledge into strategy prioritization?

	Prenatal & infancy	Early childhood	Middle childhood	Early adolescence	Adolescence	Adulthood
Family	Prenatal & infancy visitation		Parenting skills			
	Interventions for pregnant women					
School		Early childhood education	Personal & social skills education	Prevention education based on social competence and influence		
			Classroom management		Addressing individual vulnerabilities	
			Policies to keep children in school	School-wide programmes to enhance school attachment		
				School policies on substance use		
				Alcohol & tobacco policies		
Community			Community-based multi-component initiatives			
				Media campaigns		
				Mentoring		
Workplace					Prevention programmes in entertainment venues	
					Workplace prevention programmes	
Health sector	Interventions for pregnant women		Addressing mental health disorders			
				Brief intervention		



Wadih Maalouf, PhD
 Coordinator Prevention Programme,
 Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation
 Section
 Drugs, Laboratory and Scientific Service Branch
 Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs
 UNODC

Clarifying the
Role of
Communities
Applying
Prevention
Science

Translate/ Clarify

Prioritize

Focus Locally (Identify Local
Conditions)

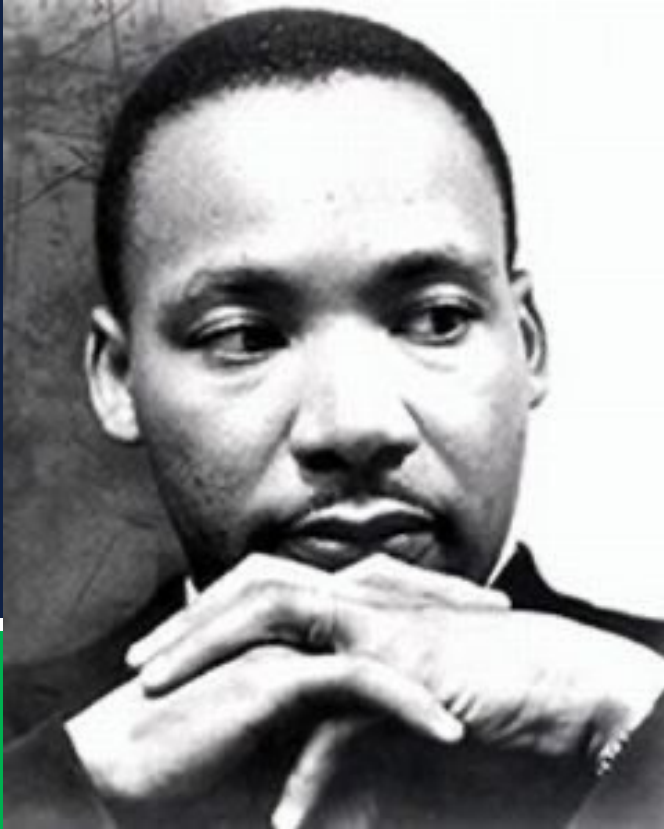
Concretize

Define Strategic Leverage
(Align Strategies)

Strategize

Engage Effectively and
Equitably

Evangelize



The Fierce Urgency of Now

“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with ***the fierce urgency of now***. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.”.

Understanding the Effects of Trauma in

Methamphetamine
increase in Africa

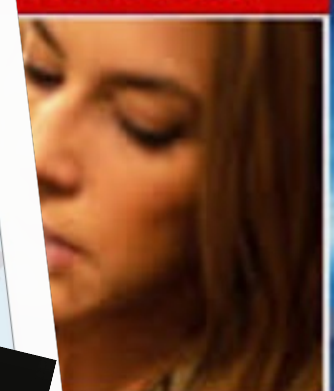
Another non-t
undergoing a
of coun

Soaked
Like a pi
Some a

is on the

MAP 22 Significant individual methamphetamine
seizures in Africa, 2021-2022

CRISIS



dangerous combination
a new U.S. government

recent years is due to

methamphetamines



tances

map do not
al boundary
udan has not yet



DRUG ADDICTION

THE PANDEMIC ONLY A FEW ARE TALKING ABOUT

between the
been determined.

Source: UNODC, Drugs Mon

PTSD
DEAD
PRESCRIPT
MENTAL HEA
OPIOID
PAIN ADDICT
PAINKILLING
TOLERANCE

Dr Bertha Madras



Inspiring Solati

Even before COVID-19 upended life as we knew it in early 2020, too many people were living with the effects of

Invisible Vulnerabilities:

Opioids, Commercialization, Poly Drug Misuse
and The Untapped Potential of Youth Leadership

Global Landscape: The Scale of Urgency

- - 316 million people used drugs in 2023 (record high)
- -- Synthetic drugs expanding rapidly
- - <1 in 12 with drug use disorders receive treatment
- - Instability drives vulnerabilities



• Youth, polysubstance use, and disparities:

1. **Adolescents face heightened vulnerability** because their brains are still developing—early initiation amplifies the risk of long-term substance use disorders and associated life trajectory challenges.
2. **Youth health impacts are severe:** ages 15–19 carry proportionately higher risks of death and healthy years lost than adults 20+, with striking gender disparities (45% higher for young men, 68% higher for young women).
3. **Global trends show both risks and opportunities:** while some high-income countries report declines in youth drug use, risky behaviors may be shifting (e.g., to problematic digital use), and data gaps remain in many regions—underscoring the need for stronger, age-disaggregated data systems.



• Youth Challenges: Americas (U.S. & Latin America)

- ❑- Opioids, especially fentanyl, fueling overdoses
- ❑- Cannabis commercialization → early initiation, myths
- ❑- Vaping (nicotine + THC) as new entry point
- ❑- Inequities: indigenous, rural, and low-income youth
- ❑- Impact: overdose deaths, disrupted education, trauma



The Real Problem: Polysubstance Use

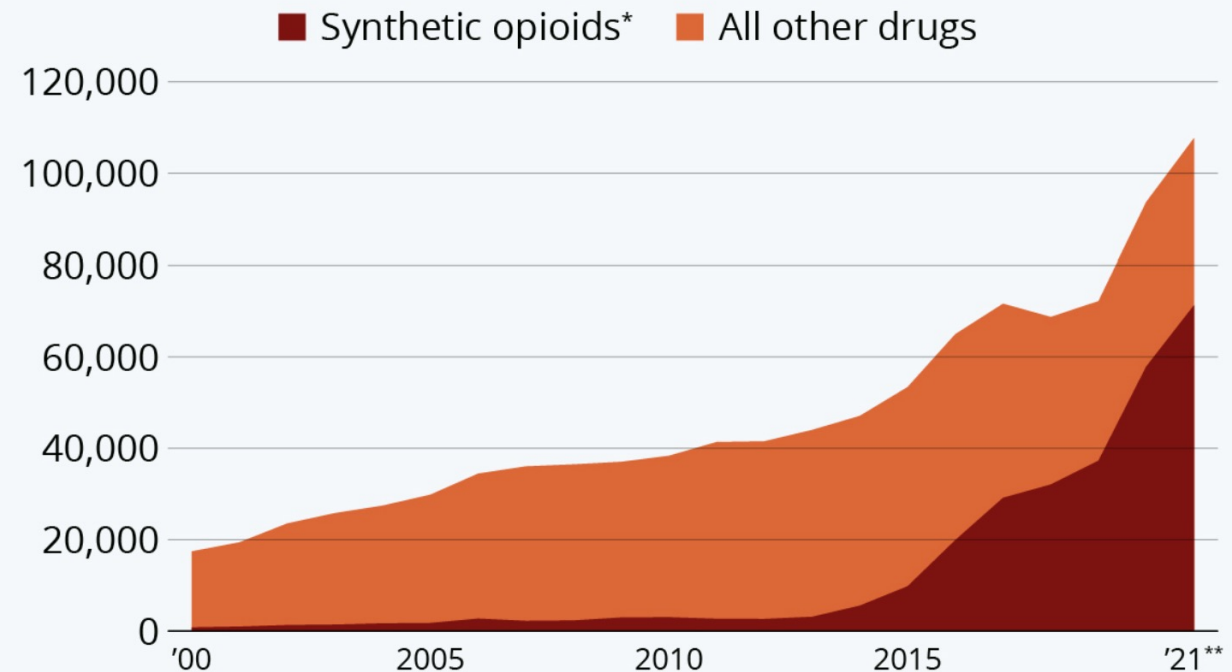
“First, there are virtually no drug overdose deaths where fentanyl is the only drug present. The “fentanyl” problem is 100 percent a polydrug problem.”

- Dr Robert DuPont

In response to The Washington Post's series on fentanyl, IBH President Robert L. DuPont, MD authored a letter to the editor, published on December 16, 2022:

Fentanyl Fuels Surge in U.S. Drug Overdose Deaths

Number of drug overdose deaths in the U.S., by drug class



* mostly fentanyl, excl. methadone

** estimates for 2021 are based on provisional data.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



50%

In 2019,
nearly half of
drug overdose
deaths involved
multiple drugs. ²

<https://www.cdc.gov/stopoverdose/polysubstance-use/index.html>

• Youth Challenges: Africa

- ❑- Largest youth population globally (~60% under 25)
- ❑- Cannabis dominant; growing misuse of tramadol & codeine
- ❑- Dangerous new mixtures and non-traditional innovative misuse like soakaway and 'kush' spreading
- ❑- Minimal treatment coverage; stigma widespread
- ❑- Data limitations, Polysubstance Misuse



The poster features logos for ISSUP (International Society of Substance Use Professionals), UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), and the African Union. The title is "World Drug Report 2025: Key Trends and Policy Challenges for Africa". Below the title are five circular portraits of speakers: Dr. Aseunne Simenon Sasse, Dr. Oluwaseyi Akintola, Dr. Martin Agwagbo, A/Prof. Goodman Sileko, and Rudolf Nartey. Each speaker's name and title are listed below their portrait. At the bottom, the date and time are given as "Thursday, 28th August 2025" and "2:00 PM London | 4:00 PM EAT", along with a registration link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2957636150157574489>.

ISSUP INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF SUBSTANCE USE PROFESSIONALS

UNODC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

African Union

World Drug Report 2025: Key Trends and Policy Challenges for Africa

Dr. Aseunne Simenon Sasse
Lead, Health and Drug Demand Reduction Unit, West and Central Africa - UNODC

Dr. Oluwaseyi Akintola
Head, Social Welfare, Drug Control and Crime Prevention Division - ECJ

Dr. Martin Agwagbo
Director ISSUP Nigeria Chapter, Founder, Global Initiative on Substance Abuse (GISA)

A/Prof. Goodman Sileko
Moderator, ISSUP Scientific Advisor

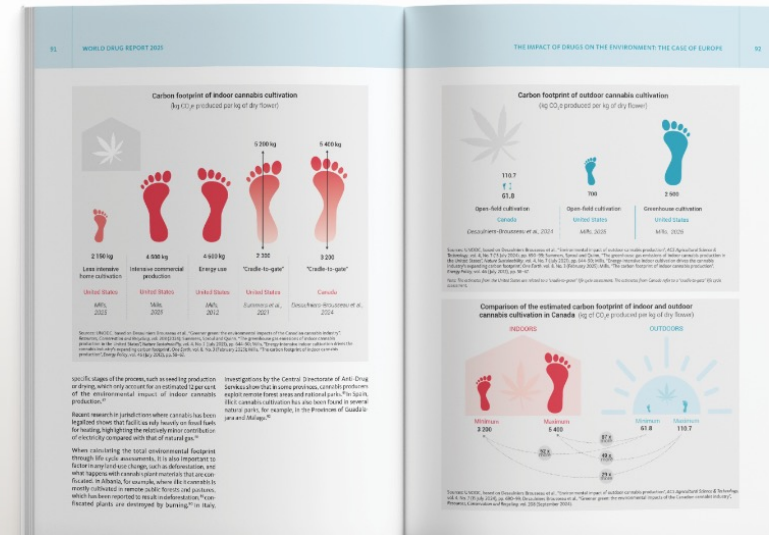
Rudolf Nartey
Moderator, ISSUP National Chapters Coordinator, African Region

Thursday, 28th August 2025 **2:00 PM London | 4:00 PM EAT**

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2957636150157574489>

❖ Youth Challenges: Asia (South & Southeast)

- ❑- Epicenter of synthetic stimulant expansion
- ❑- Cheap, potent meth targeting youth
- ❑- Law enforcement focus → health prevention underfunded



Comparative Insights Across Regions

- ❑- Accessibility: Cheap synthetics/commercialized products
- ❑- Polysubstance risks: fentanyl, tramadol, meth
- ❑- Behavioral health disparities: marginalized youth underserved
- ❑- Cultural stigma limits prevention + treatment
- ❑- Data gaps: limited age-disaggregated youth data





Marijuana industry could be worth \$50 billion annually by 2026

By Trey Williams

Published: Apr 22, 2017 9:51 a.m. ET



Aa

Weed companies are hoping the U.S. government will not disrupt a sector that is raising valuable tax revenue for states



Commercialized Recreational Pharmacology

From 2016-2019 915,000 more with Marijuana Use Disorder



Dr Bertha Madras

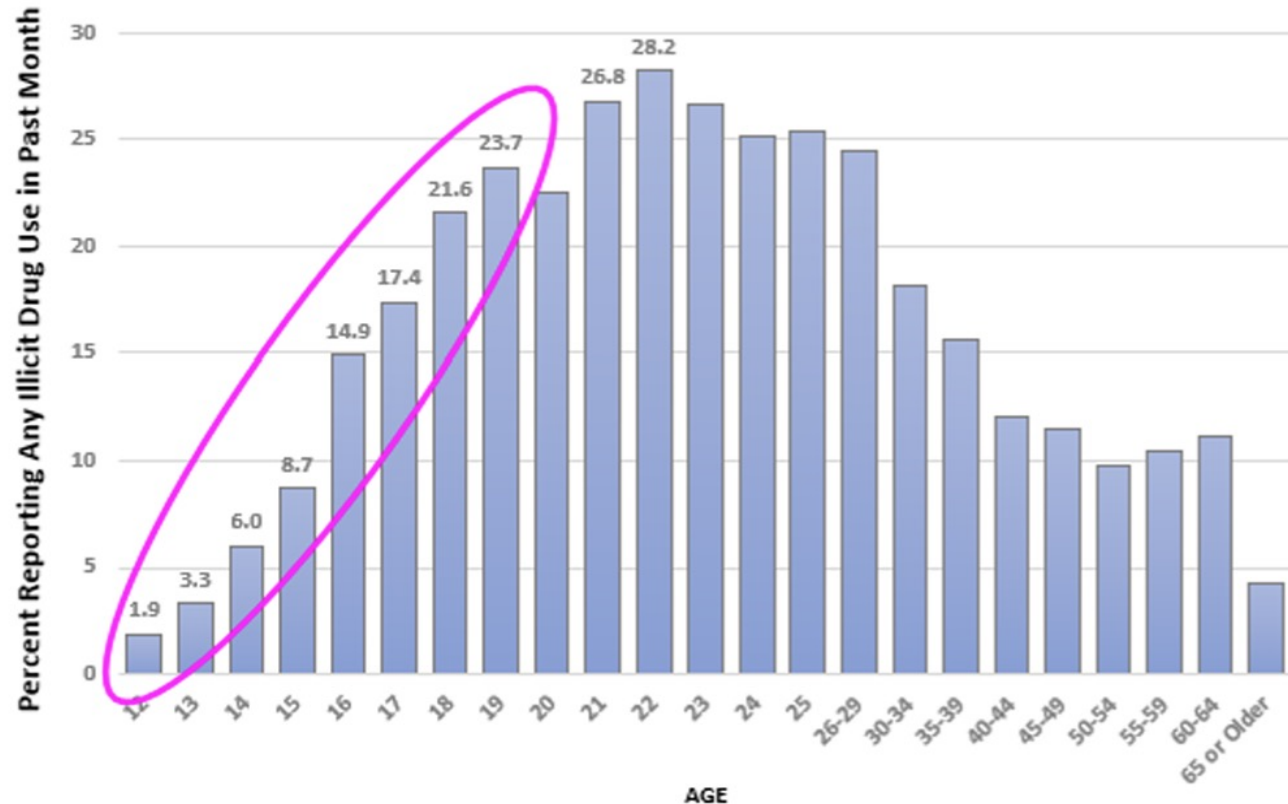
+ Difference between this estimate and the 2019 estimate is statistically significant at the .05 level.

The Vulnerable Adolescent Brain

Adolescence is a critical risk period for substance use initiation and adverse outcomes related to substance use.

This trajectory speaks to the need to understand what drives youth drug use, identify current and emerging trends, and match programs and policies with local conditions so as to effectively reduce youth substance use.

Escalation of Drug Use During the Teen Years



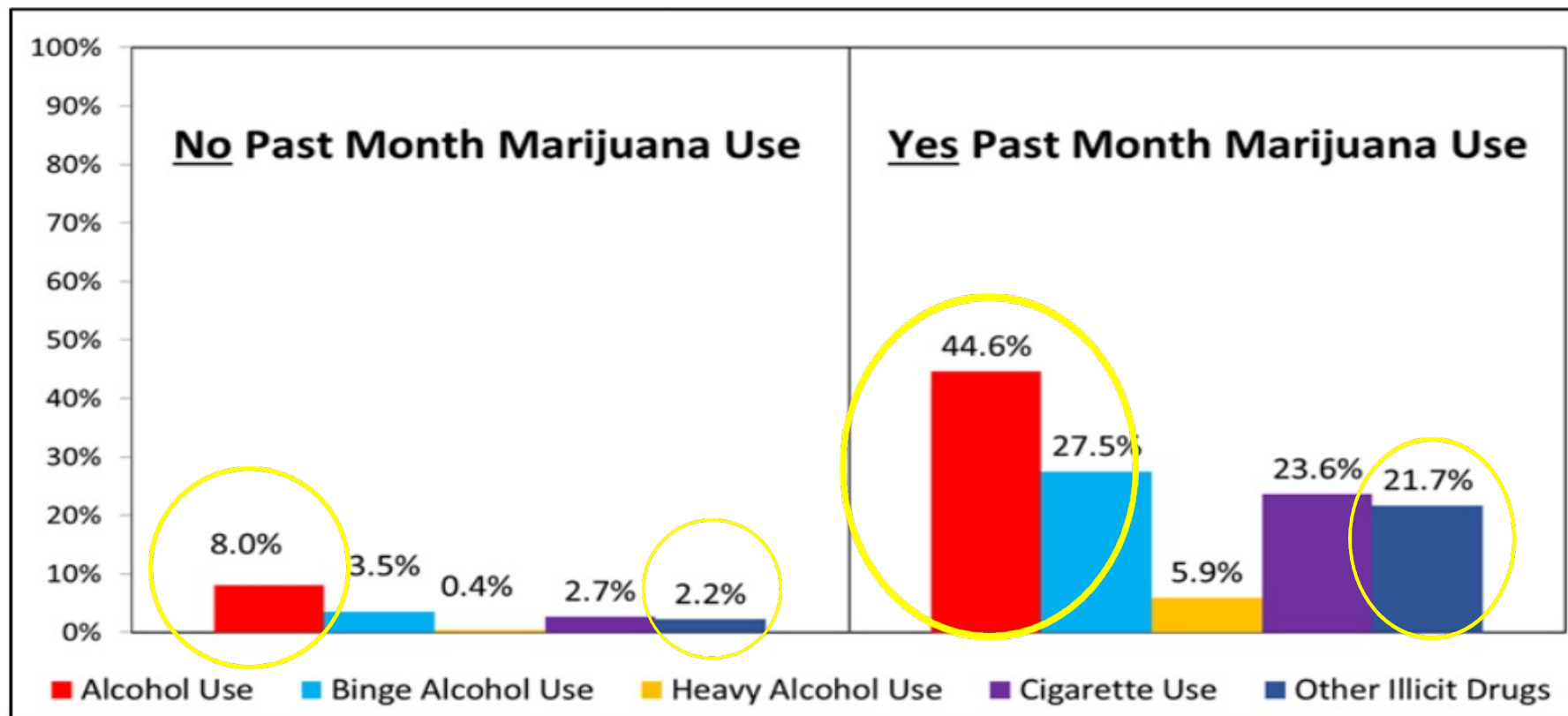
Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2019*. Unpublished Special Tabulation by the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics & Quality (June 2021).

7/2021

Research Questions

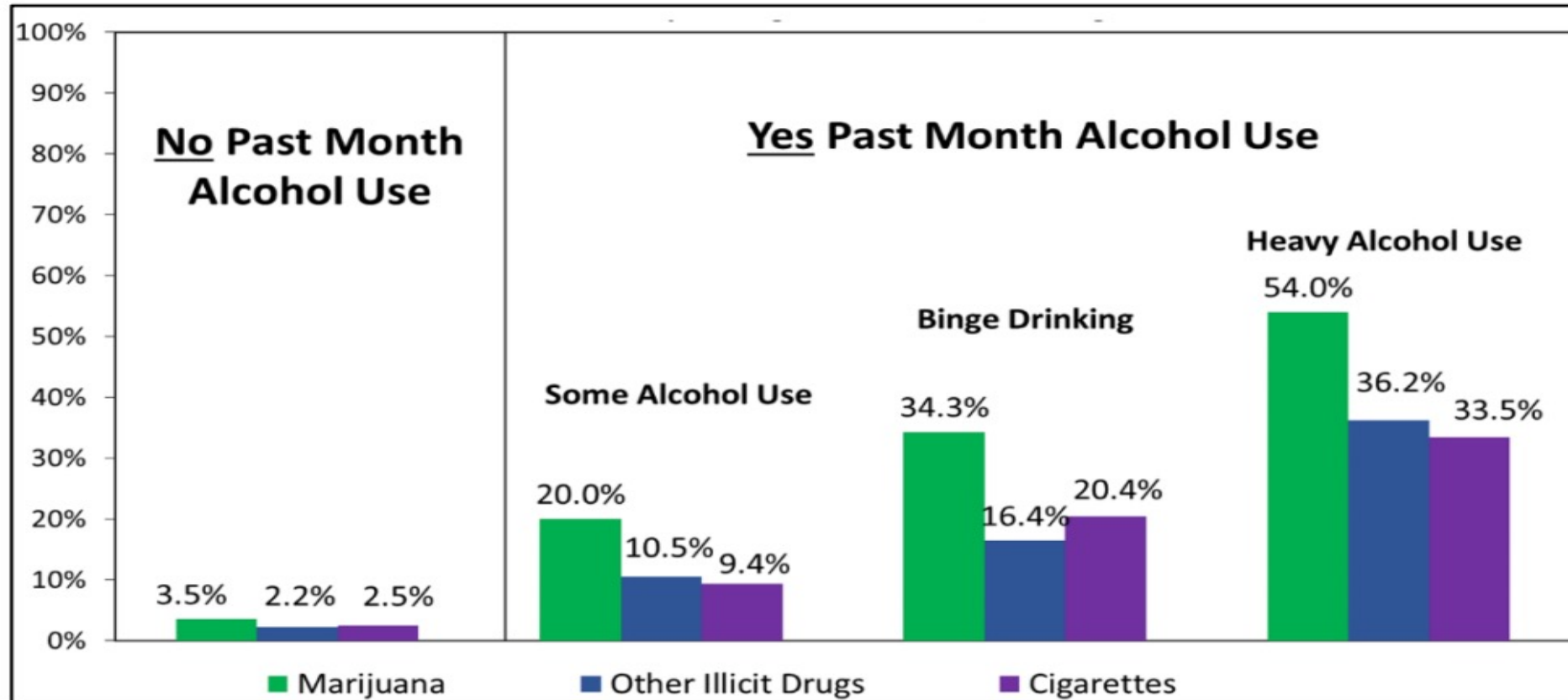
1. Is the use of one substance by adolescents associated with increased risk for using any other substance, regardless of use sequences?
2. Is non-use of one substance associated with decreased risk for using other substances?

Figure 2. Past Month Marijuana Use is Associated with Higher Use of Other Drugs Among Youth Aged 12-17



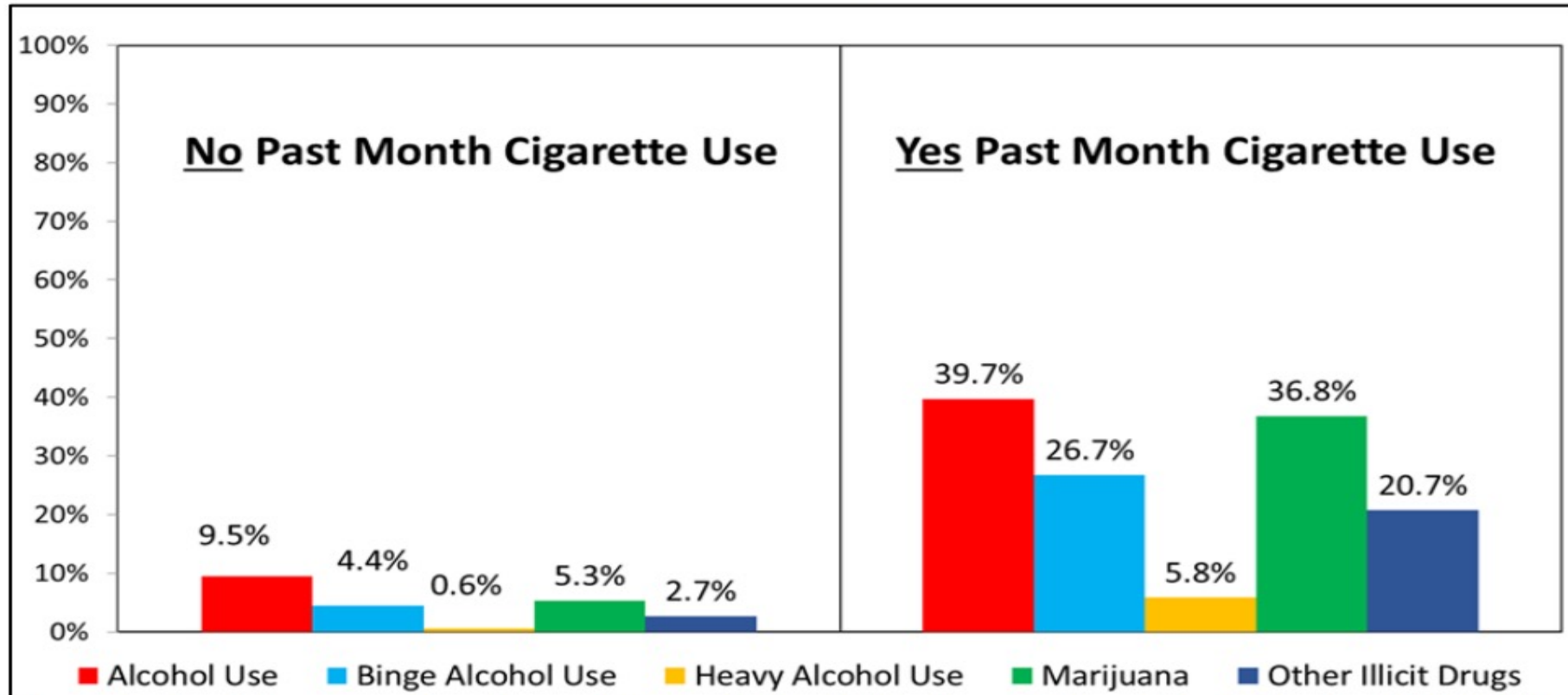
Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health; DuPont, R. L., Han, B., Shea, C. L., & Madras, B. K. (2018). Drug use among youth: national survey data support a common liability of all drug use. *Preventive Medicine*, 113, 68-73.

Figure 1. Past Month Alcohol Use is Associated with Higher Use of Other Drugs Among Youth Aged 12-17



Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health; DuPont, R. L., Han, B., Shea, C. L., & Madras, B. K. (2018). Drug use among youth: national survey data support a common liability of all drug use. *Preventive Medicine*, 113, 68-73.

Figure 3. Past Month Cigarette Use is Associated with Higher Use of Other Drugs Among Youth Aged 12-17



Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health; DuPont, R. L., Han, B., Shea, C. L., & Madras, B. K. (2018). Drug use among youth: national survey data support a common liability of all drug use. *Preventive Medicine*, 113, 68-73.

Marijuana contains serious risk for poly substance misuse.



Youth Drug Use is Not Inevitable

IBH has conducted original analyses of national data sets on youth substance use behaviors with two critical findings:

- For teens, all substance use is related. The use of any one substance increases the likelihood of using others; similarly, not using any one substance decreases the risk of using others.
- More than ever, American youth are choosing to not use any



**THE GOAL OF YOUTH DRUG PREVENTION IS ONE
CHOICE**

No use of any alcohol, nicotine, marijuana or other drugs for health.

Why is it important to engage youth as transformational leaders/
Prevention Influencers in community change efforts?

I AM A LEADER





SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CULTURALLY RELEVANT PREVENTION

ELIZABETH M. VERA ■ MAUREEN E. KENNY

Endorsed by the Prevention Section of Division 17 of the American Psychological Association



FOURTH WAVE FOUNDATION @United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, (UNODC), VIENNA

So-Y! (So Why I Engage!),
Fourth Wave Foundation's
Youth Engagement Platform,
speaking on

**BUILDING TOMORROW'S
LEADERS!**

Advocacy, Professional
Development, Capacity
Strengthening among Youth



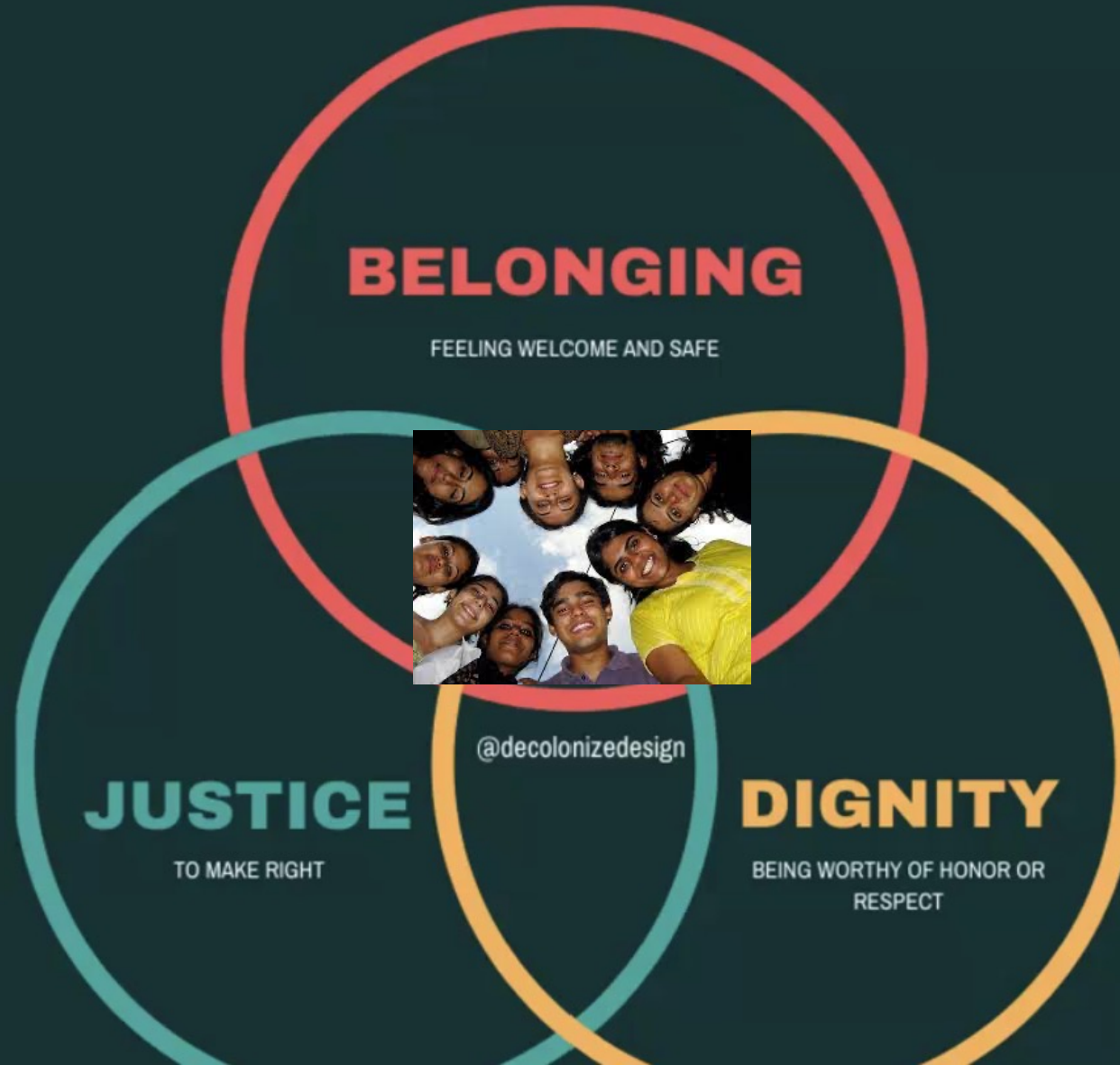
Thurston O'Neal

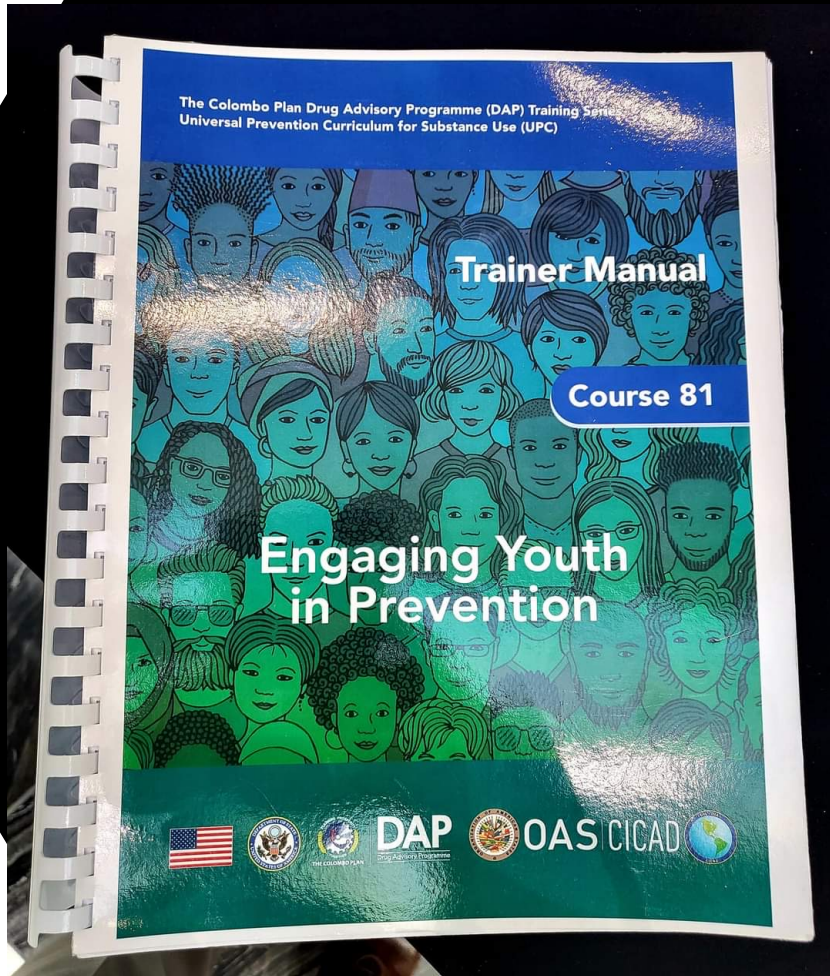


Voice



Equity = Belonging





Getting Into Good Trouble!

- Prevent use of any/all drugs during adolescence. One Choice!
- Challenge myths and educate the relationship & realities of commercialized polysubstance misuse.
- Build upon and expand post-overdose response capacity & engagement .
- Apply pressure emphasizing Equitable questioning and SDOH considerations
- Make Prevention Obvious!

Be
disruptive.



ERICA EDWARDS-O'NEAL
WWW.EEOCONSULTS.COM



1 like

eeoconsults To be disruptive means to prevent something from continuing or operating in a normal way.

#centerequity



THANK YOU!

*Presentation by CHC LLC ©2020
All Rights Reserved*



Inspiring Solutions for a Better World