



Supporting the Resilience of Youth Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Trauma-Informed Approaches for Summer Program Providers



Presenters



Beth Farmer,
Director, Safety,
Education & Wellness



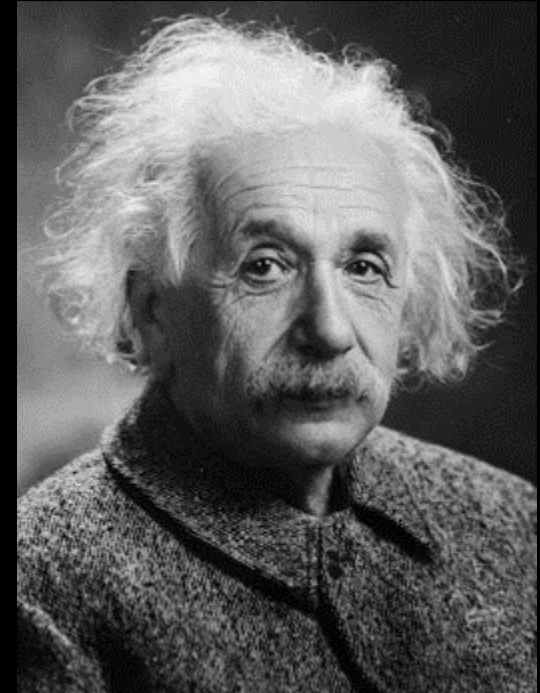
Rachel Kurz,
IRC Seattle Youth &
Education Program
Manager



Sara Rowbottom,
Education & Youth
Technical Advisor

Introductions

International Rescue Committee (IRC)



Introductions

IRC Washington

Seattle

- Welcomed over **25,000** refugees from **35+** countries since **1976**
- Projected to serve **~3,500+** community members in 2022

Spokane

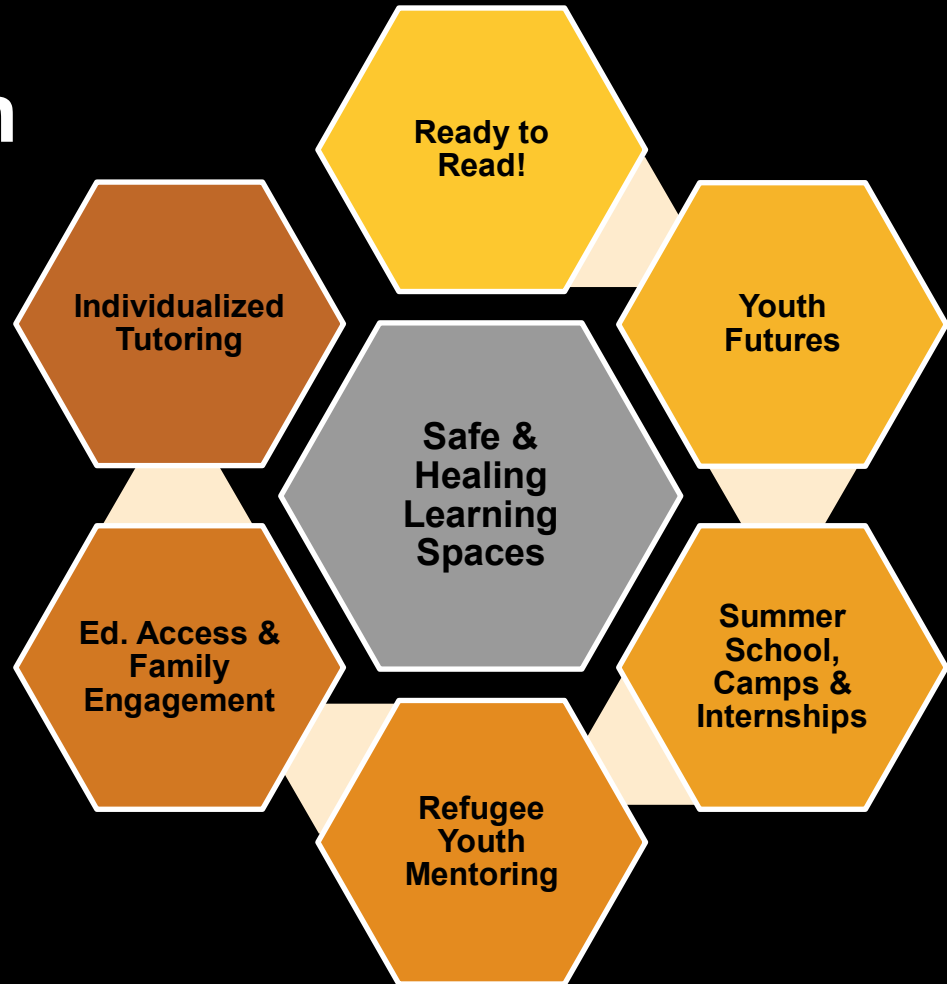
- Opening in **2022!**
- Expecting to serve **~130** community members in FY22



Introductions

IRC Washington

We serve an average of **400-500 students annually** and seek to accomplish our overarching vision through a large portfolio of programs



Objectives:

*Participants will be able to

- 1 Describe how the pandemic has impacted the mental health of youth
- 2 Identify resources and strategies for mitigating those mental health impacts
- 3 Describe ways that providers can improve their own mental well-being

Agenda

Part 1: The pandemic's impacts on youth mental health

Part 2: Healing Learning Space Strategies to support youth resilience

Part 3: Strategies for provider well-being

Who's here with us?

- Your name & role
- Your summer program name & type of program, e.g.
 - District or CBO?
 - Youth served (age, etc.)
 - Content?



Part 1: The pandemic's impact on youth mental health

Mental Health

What comes to mind when you hear the word 'mental health'?

What about 'health'?

"I have just been a little down the last couple of days"

"I have always struggled with anxiety."

"Ever since the accident, he has had trouble sleeping."

"When I think about what happened to me as a child, I start to shake and can't stop."

"I just feel numb. I want to connect but I don't know how."

"I can't remember the last time I felt joy."

"Sometimes I wonder, 'Why go on?'"

"The year after my husband died, I could barely get out of bed."

"I want to stop, but I don't know how."

Positive mood and optimal functioning

Persistent and severe condition with significant impact on functioning

Intensity

Frequency

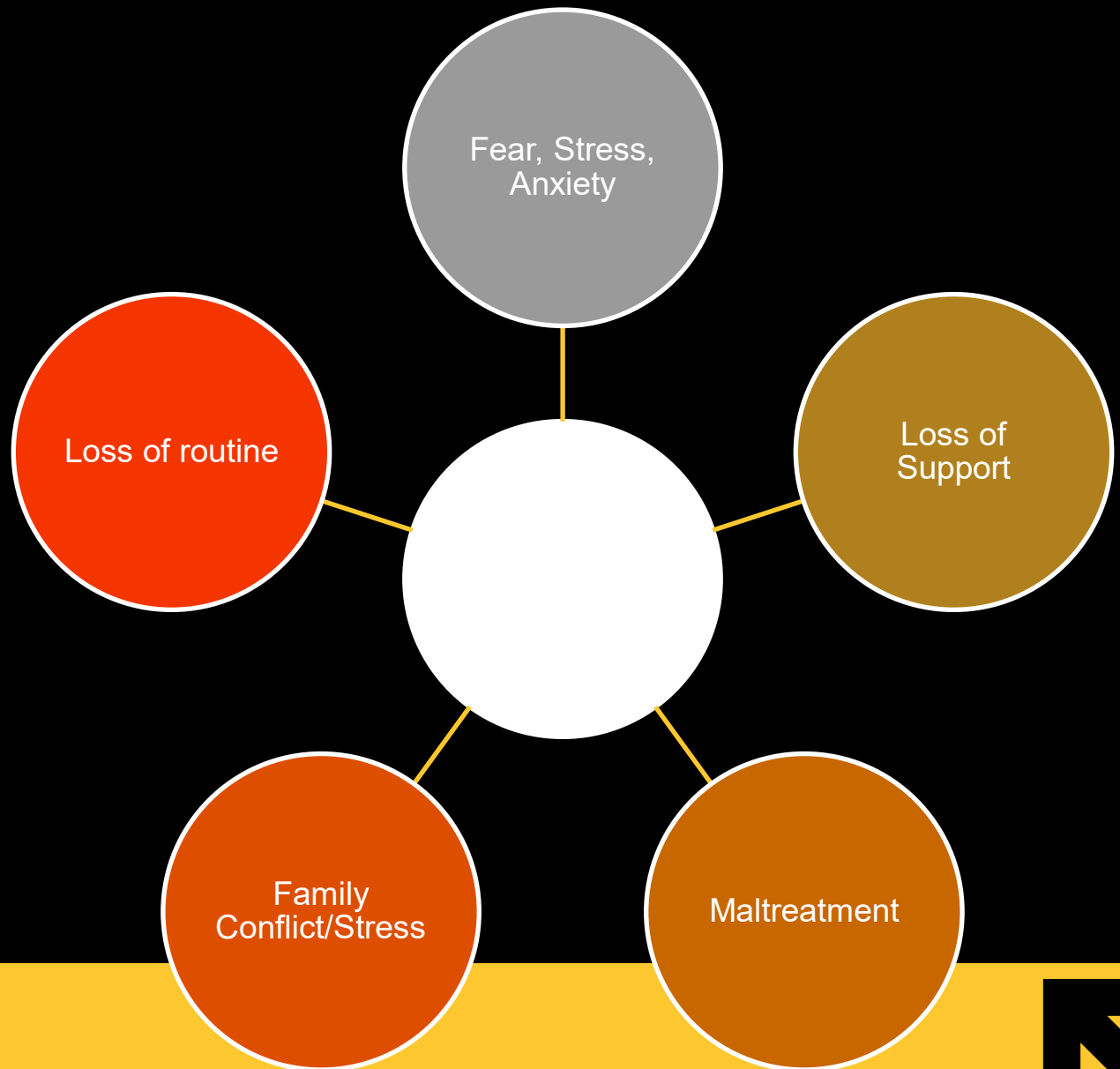
Duration

Child and Youth Mental Health in U.S.

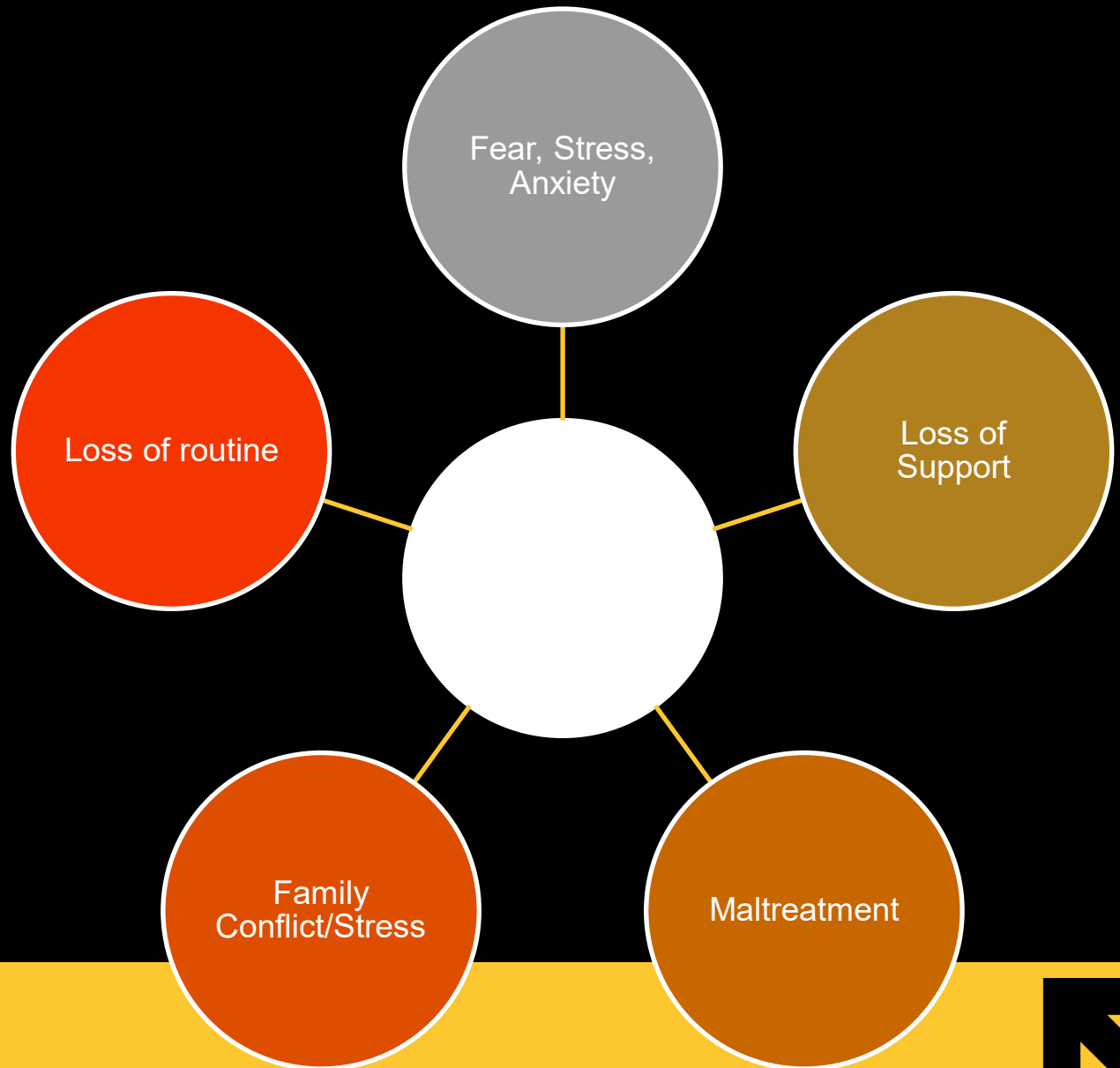


- 2011-2017, 30.5% increase in diagnosis
- 2012-2016, 55% increased in mental health related Emergency Department visits
- 2014, suicide surpassed homicide as second leading cause of deaths in teenagers

General Risk Factors



Under Covid

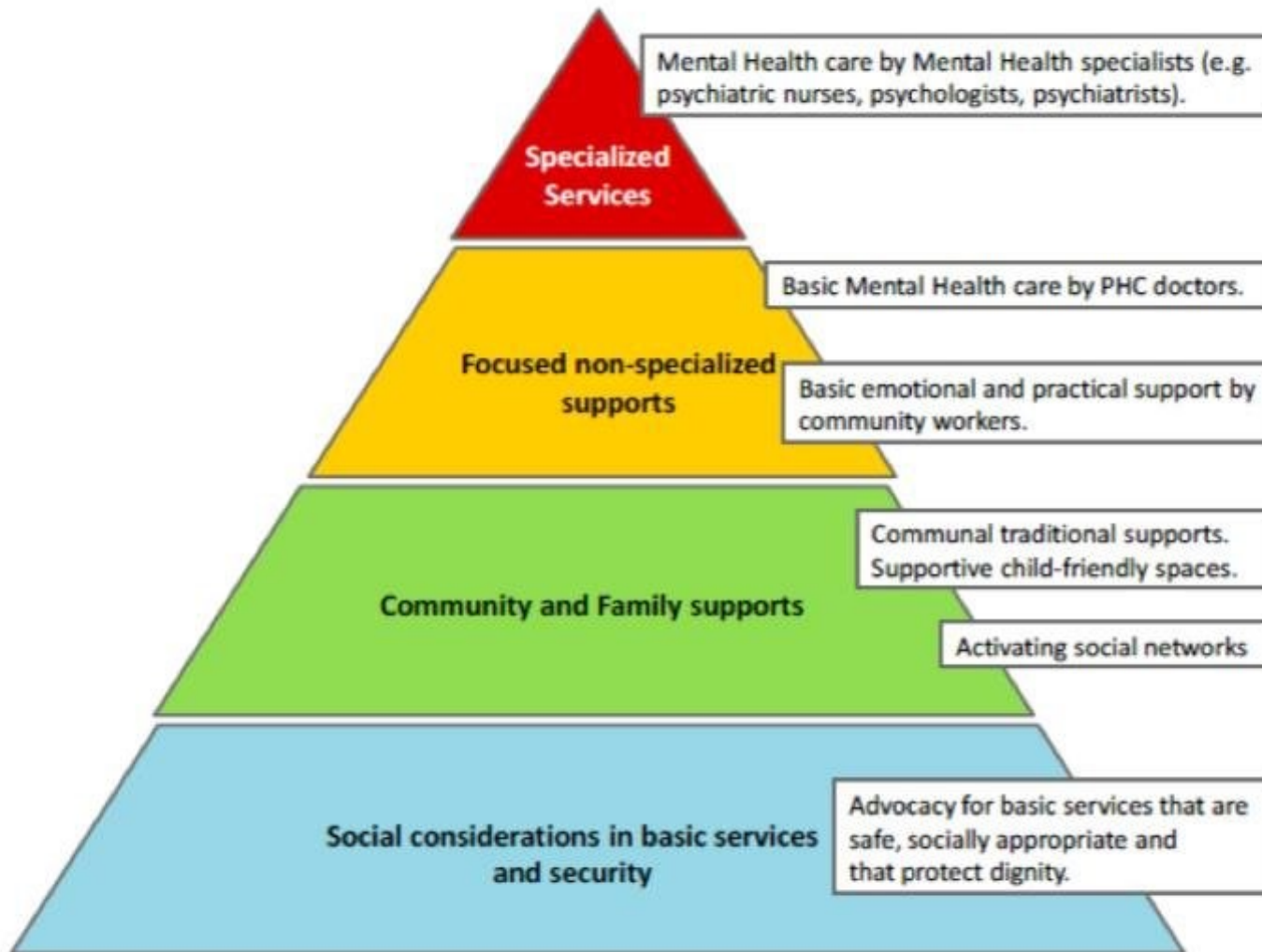


Adolescent Girls

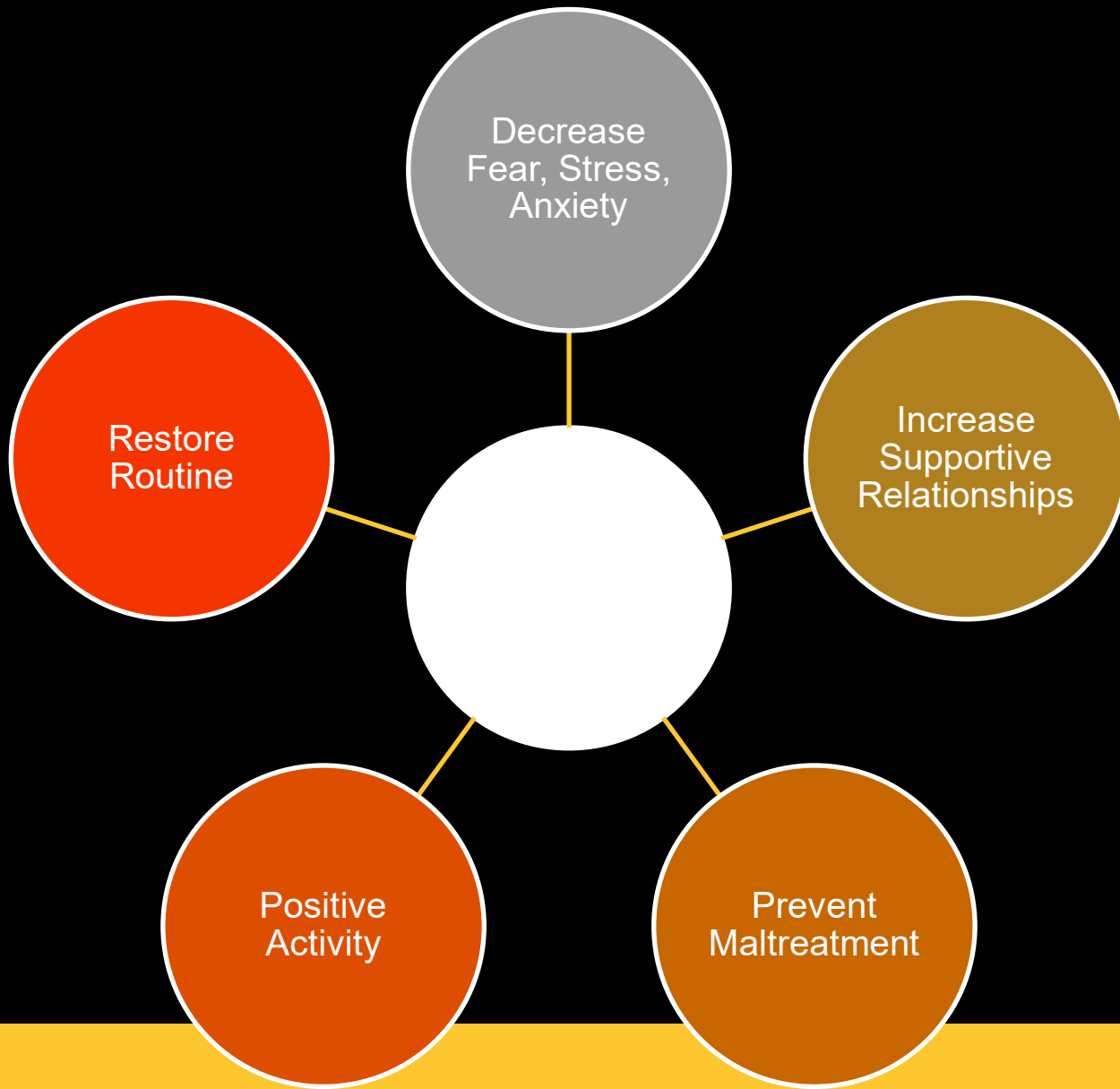
Low-Income Children & Youth

Some Good News

- **Increases in distress common during disasters but most people do not develop mental health conditions**
- **Several measures of distress increased early in the pandemic seemed to have returned to their pre-pandemic levels by the summer of 2020**



Establish

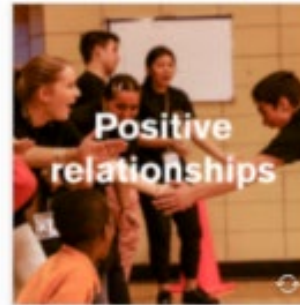
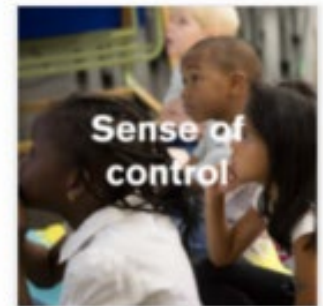
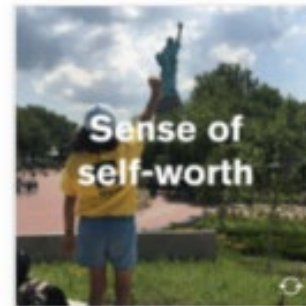


Empower

Part 2: Healing Learning Space

Strategies to support youth resilience

1. Routines
2. Positive activity
3. Healthy social connections



Strategy 1: Enhance routines

Sense of control

- Feeling safe and secure
- Knowing what will happen
- Understanding what is expected from you
- Feeling you can influence what happens to you



Strategy 1: Enhance routines

Summer Program Routines

Schedules	Transitions	Interactions	Instructions
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Strategy 1: Enhance routines



Visually
reinforce
agendas &
expectations



Preview
activities,
assignments



Integrate brain
breaks, SEL
games, +/-
mindfulness



Communicate
changes
(schedule, staff,
environment, etc.)

Strategy 2: Max positivity of activities

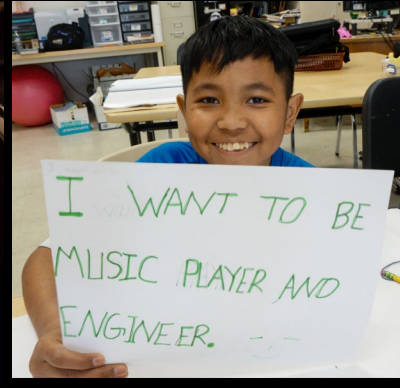
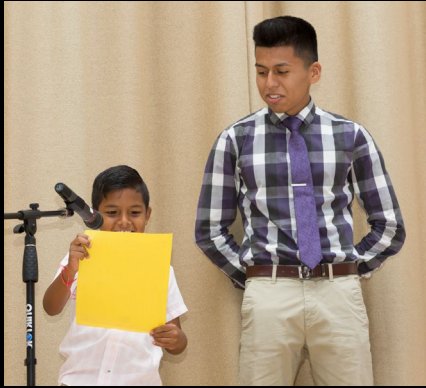
Sense of self worth

- Feeling capable & confident
- Liking yourself
- Feeling able to achieve what you set out to do

Intellectual stimulation

- Understanding the learning goals; feeling they are relevant to your life
- Able to connect new material to existing knowledge and experience
- Feeling agency in how to achieve learning goals
- Feeling challenged and that you are making progress
- Having opportunities to learn in a variety of ways

Strategy 2: Max positivity of activities



Strategy 2: Max positivity of activities

- Mastery
- Voice & choice
- Tap strengths
- Sequencing
 - Opportunities to stand out
 - Social emotional learning



Strategy 3: Facilitate healthy social connections

Sense of belonging

- Feeling included, cared for, and accepted
- Feeling part of a group and valued by the community

Positive relationships

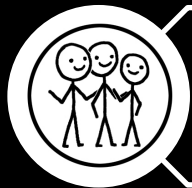
- Safe, stable connections with educators, staff, and other students
- Feeling seen, heard, understood, and valued



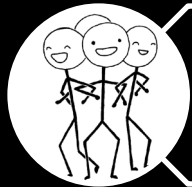
Strategy 3: Facilitate healthy social connections



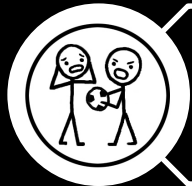
Strategy 3: Facilitate healthy social connections



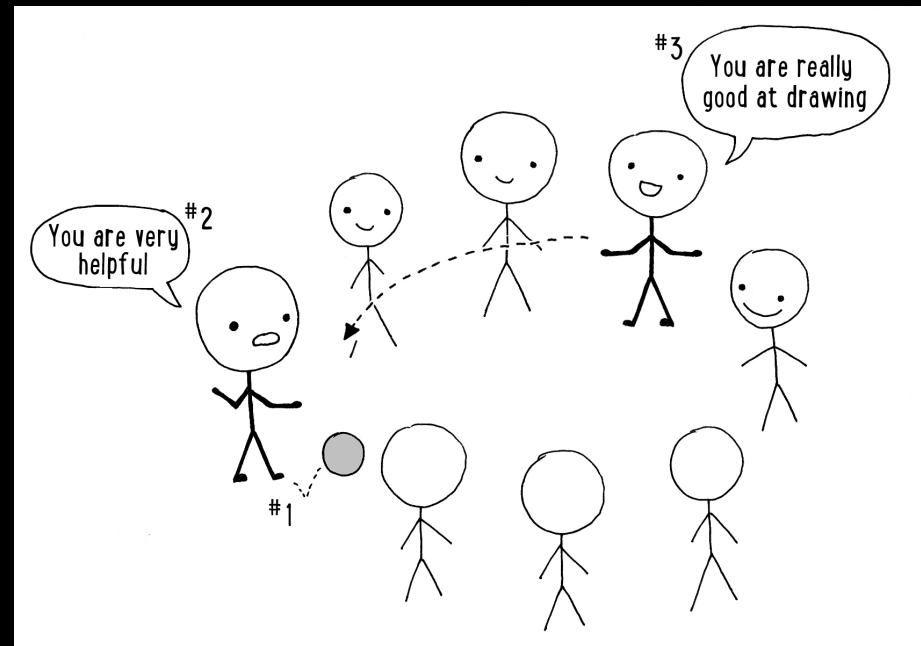
Communication



Collaboration



Conflict resolution



Restorative questions

1. What happened?
2. What were you thinking about at the time?
3. What have you thought about since?
4. Who do you think has been affected?
5. What do you think you need to do to make things right?

Part 3: Strategies for provider well-being

1. Well-being self assessment
2. Integrating mindfulness



Why is provider well-being important?

- ...When I have the time, resources, and support I need at work, I feel
- When I feel capable of managing the stressors I face in my job, I am...
- When I feel my work is making a difference in students' lives, I am...

1. Well-being self assessment



Stress symptoms:


- Difficulty concentrating
- Breathing or heart rate quickens
- Fatigue
- Sleep changes
- Headaches, stomach aches, pain
- Appetite changes
- Flare-ups
- Reduced sexual desire
- Menstrual changes
- Tingling sensations
- Muscles tighten

1. Well-being self assessment



1. Well-being self assessment





Well-Being Reflection

Personal	Professional																				
<p>What does healthy or strong personal well-being look like for you? <i>Example: Cognitive - When I spend time on my creative interests every week.</i></p>	<p>What does healthy or strong professional well-being look like for you? <i>Example: Cognitive - When my work is organized and I know what tasks are priority.</i></p>																				
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<p>Which areas of your well-being would you like to focus on? Try not to select more than 3.</p> <p>How will maintaining or strengthening these wellbeing areas positively impact you and your students?</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Material <input type="checkbox"/> Social <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual </td> <td style="width: 50%;">Describe:</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Material <input type="checkbox"/> Social <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual	Describe:																		
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1. Well-being self assessment



Well-Being Strategy Inventory

INSTRUCTIONS^{1*}

Rate how often you use each of the following strategies to maintain your well-being. Use the numerical scale to fill in the left hand column of each chart.

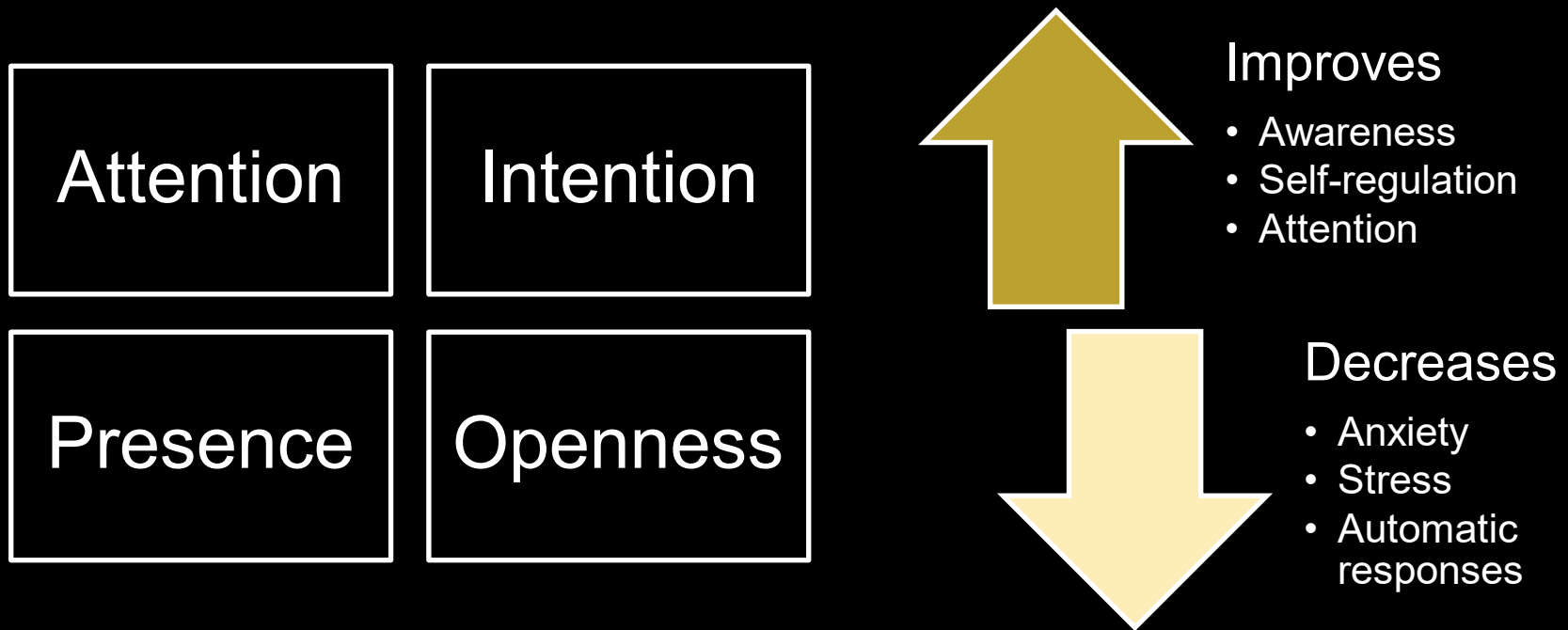
**Note: This self-assessment tool provides a representative list of well-being activities and is designed to give you a snapshot of your current attention to personal wellness.*

5 = Frequently
4 = Occasionally
3 = Sometimes
2 = Never
1 = It never occurred to me

Physical Well-Being		Emotional Well-Being	
Score	Activity	Score	Activity
	Eat regular, healthy meals		Spend time with people I enjoy; limit time with those who drain me
	Engage in regular physical activity/exercise		Stay in contact with important people in my life
	Get regular medical care for prevention and when sick		Treat myself kindly (for example, forgive myself when I make a mistake)
	Take time off work when sick		Find things that make me laugh
	Say "no" to extra responsibilities		Allow myself to cry
	Get enough sleep		Express disagreements with others in a constructive way
	Take vacation days		Connect with neighbors
	Take at least one day a week completely off work		Seek out and enjoy comforting people, objects and places
	Make time away from technology – phones, TV, internet, text pages, etc.		Express opinions and make contributions to your community
	Clean & organize my home		

¹ Adapted from: Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Vicarious Trauma by Karen Saakvitne and Laura Ann Pearlman, published in 1996.

2. Integrating mindfulness



2. Integrating mindfulness

Three Breaths + Squeeze In Mindful Moment

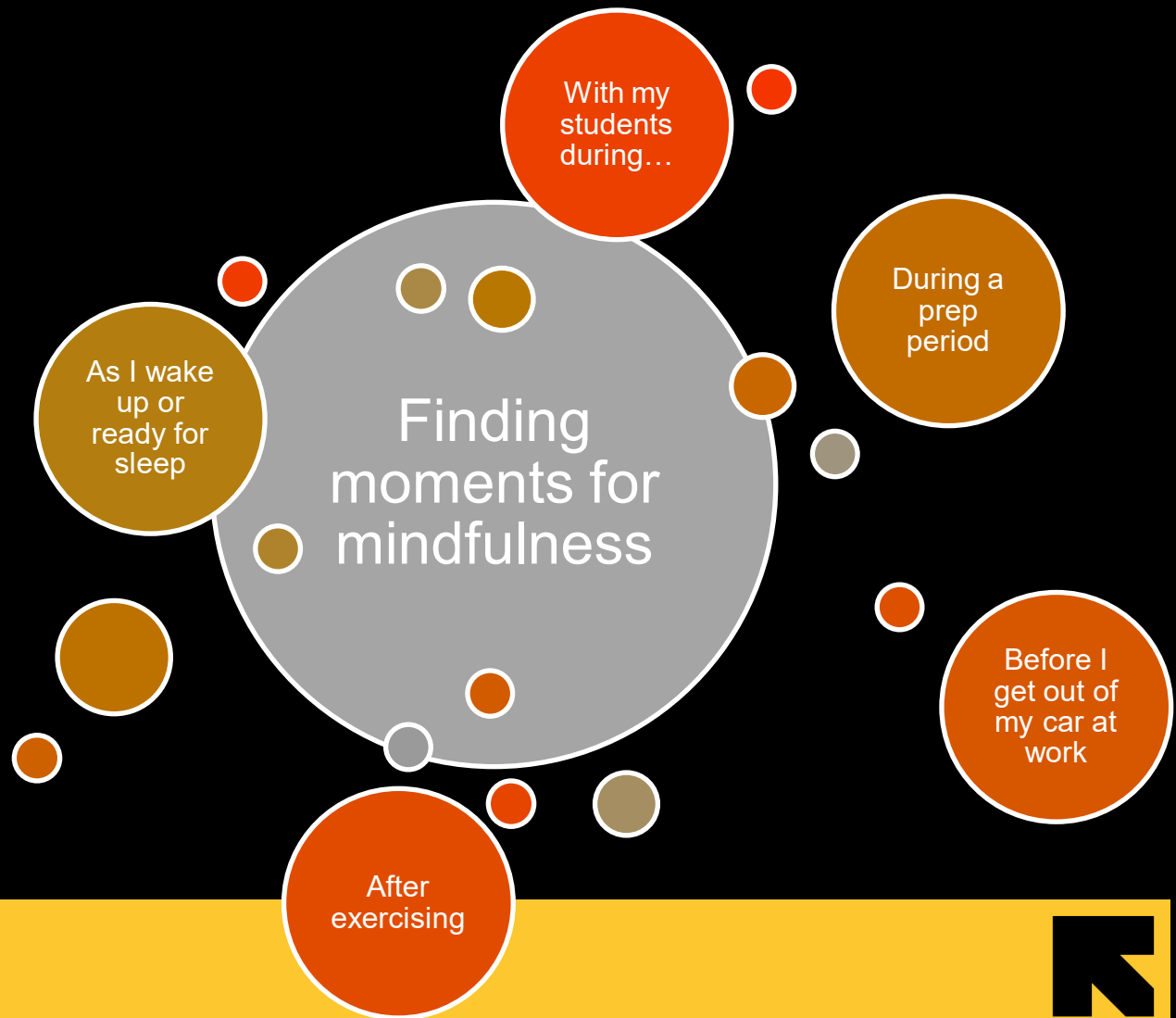
- How did it feel to focus on your breath three times?
- What was difficult or easy about it?
- When do you think you can use the three breaths activity in school and in your personal life?

2. Integrating mindfulness

More IRC mindfulness resources:

[E-Course: Well-Being for Educators of Students Affected by Forced Migration: Introduction to Mindfulness](#)

[YouTube Playlist: IRC Healing Classrooms Mindfulness](#)



2. Integrating mindfulness

Setting intentions with letters to ourselves:

- Why do I do the work I do?
- How can I keep that motivating flame bright?
- What well-being strategies am I proud of?
- What well-being strategies do I want to focus more attention on and how?

Thank you!

