



Why School is Not Always a Walk in the Park for Our Students

**Jason W. Byars, PBIS Program Manager
Georgia Department of Education**

May 31st - Grand Canyon Rim to Rim



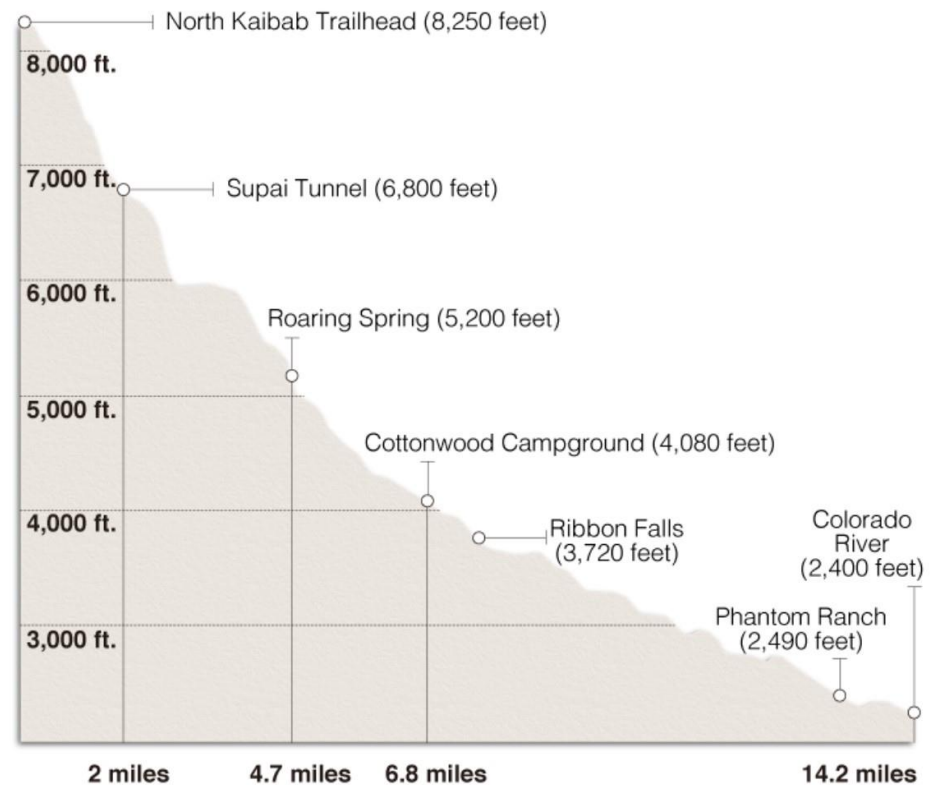
Journey Details

- Began at 4:00 a.m.
- Temperature was 30 degrees
- Snow on the ground
- Had to have head lamps to light the path
- 5 men between the ages of 48 – 62 with a variety of skill levels



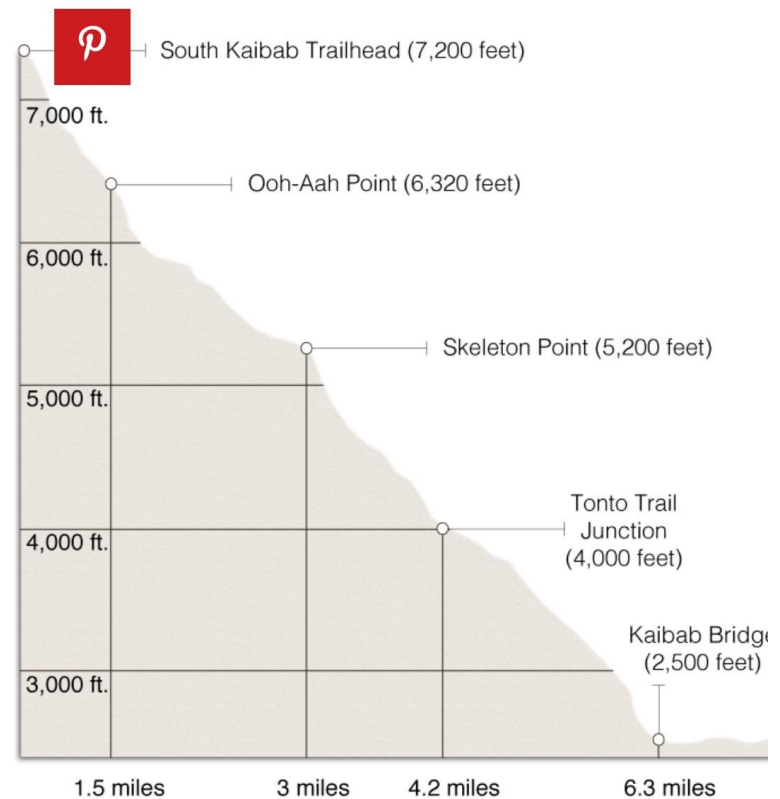
The Descent

- North Kaibab Trail
- 15.9 miles to Phantom Ranch
- Temperature was 90+ degrees
- Elevation change of approximately 6,000 feet



The Ascent

- **2 choices:**
 - **South Kaibab Trail**
 - **8 miles**
 - **No water or shade**
 - **Very little flat trails**
 - **Bright Angel Trail**
 - **Added 3 miles to trip**
 - **Has water and shade**
 - **More flat areas**
- **Sunset at 8:30 p.m.**
- **High winds after sunset**
- **Temperature was 55 degrees**





Travel and Trauma





Not
Everyone
Flies...

Our Students Arrive to Begin Their Journey With a Wide Variety of Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences
(ACEs)



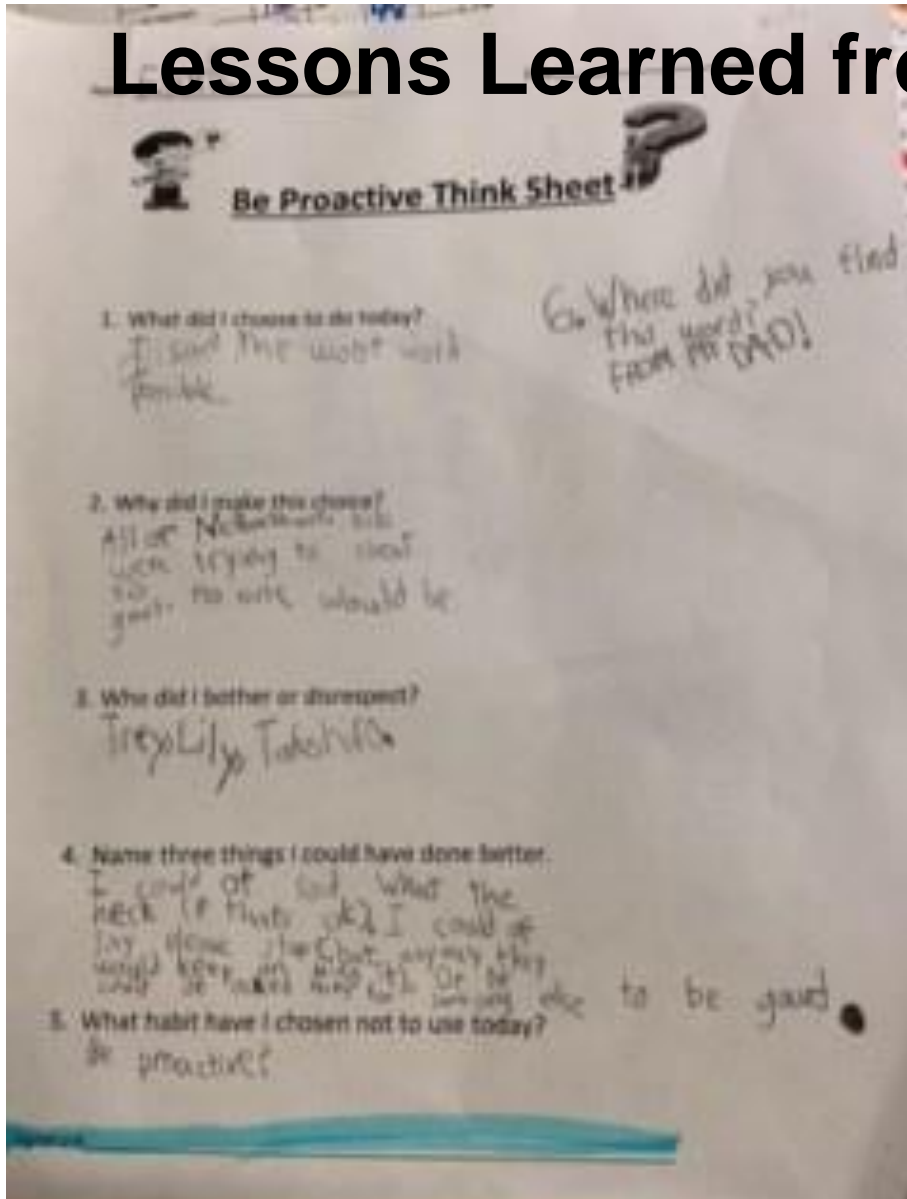


“I don’t need the practice...”

Lessons Learned from my Dad

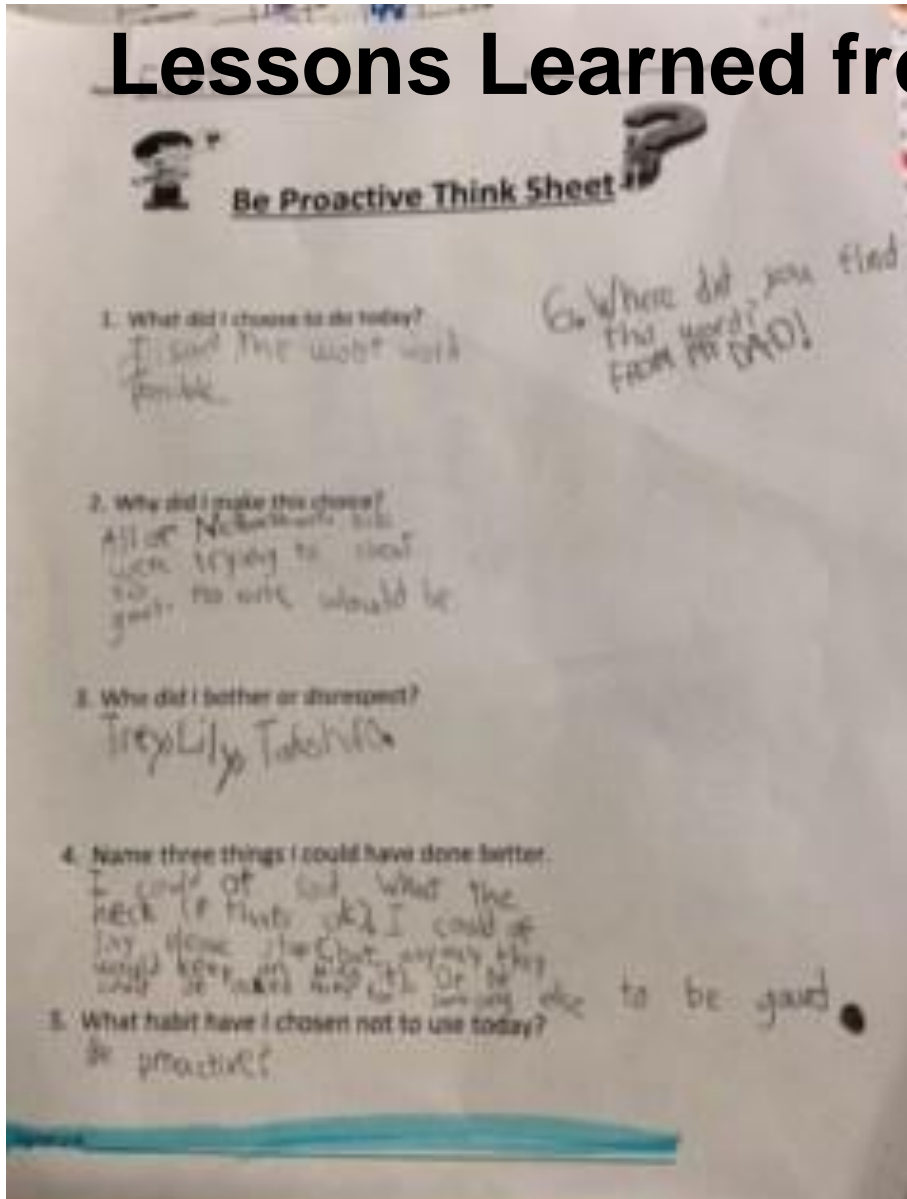
- Ability is not the same thing as skill.
- Do not pay someone to do something that you can do yourself.
- Be careful what you tell your children. It could come back to haunt you.

Lessons Learned from OTHER Dads



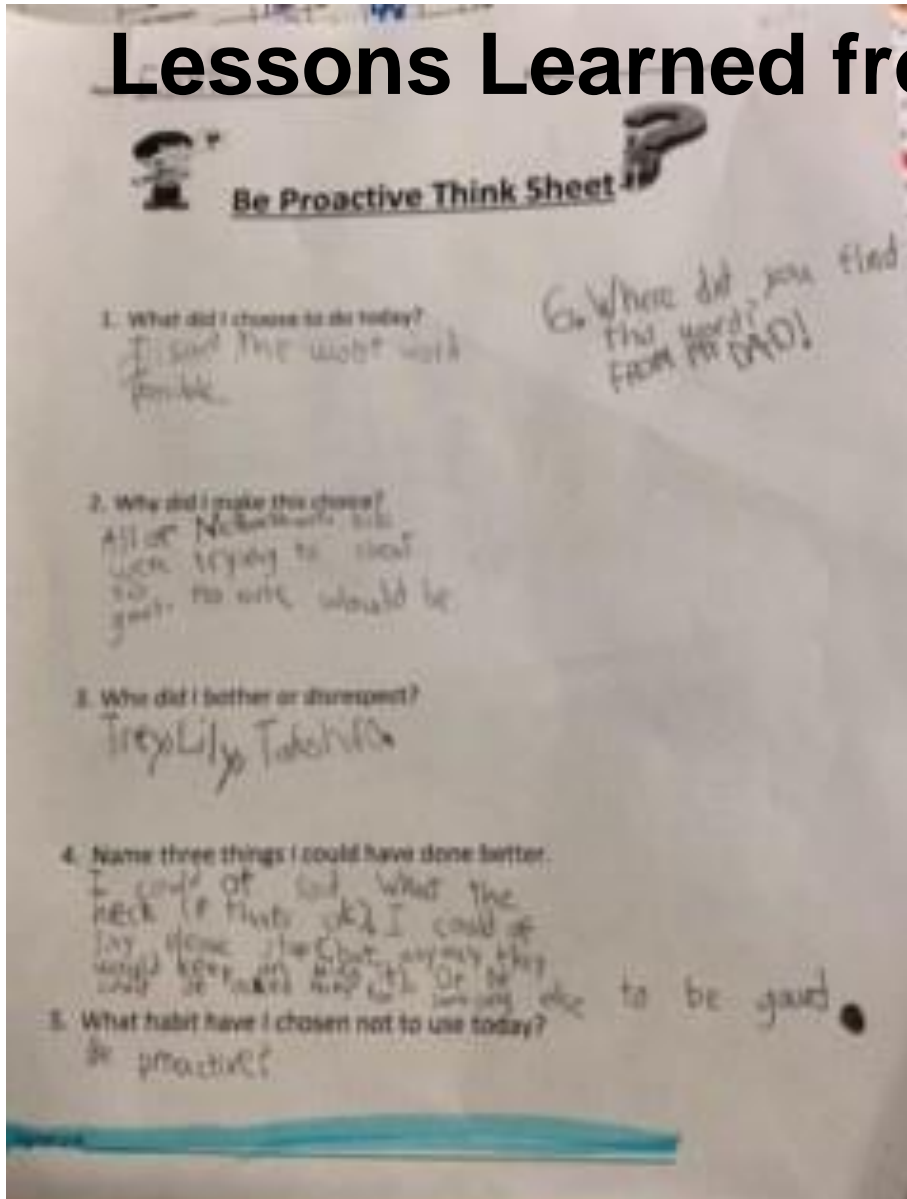
- 1. Q: What did I choose to do today?
- A: I said the worst word possible.

Lessons Learned from OTHER Dads



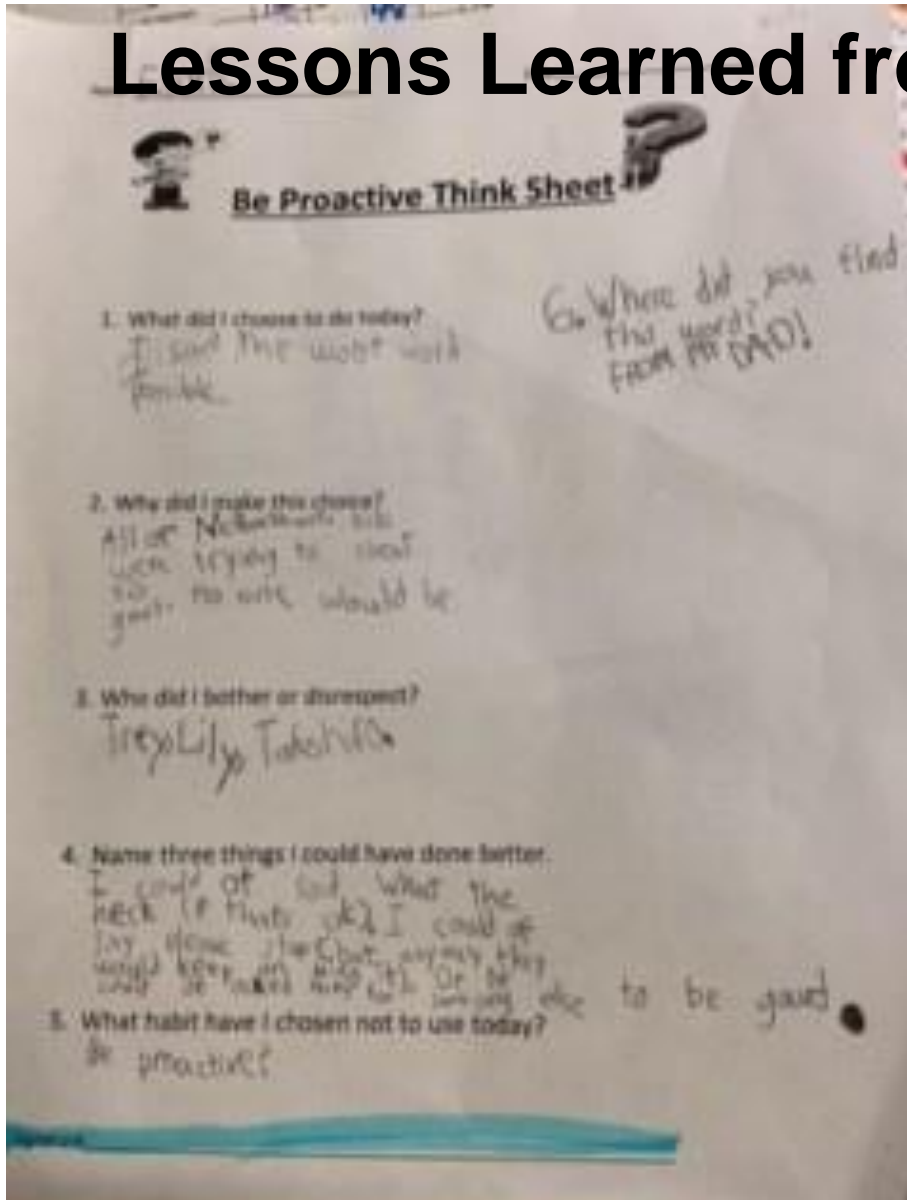
- 2. Q: Why did I make this choice?
- A: All of (another teacher) kids were trying to cheat so no one would be guard.

Lessons Learned from OTHER Dads



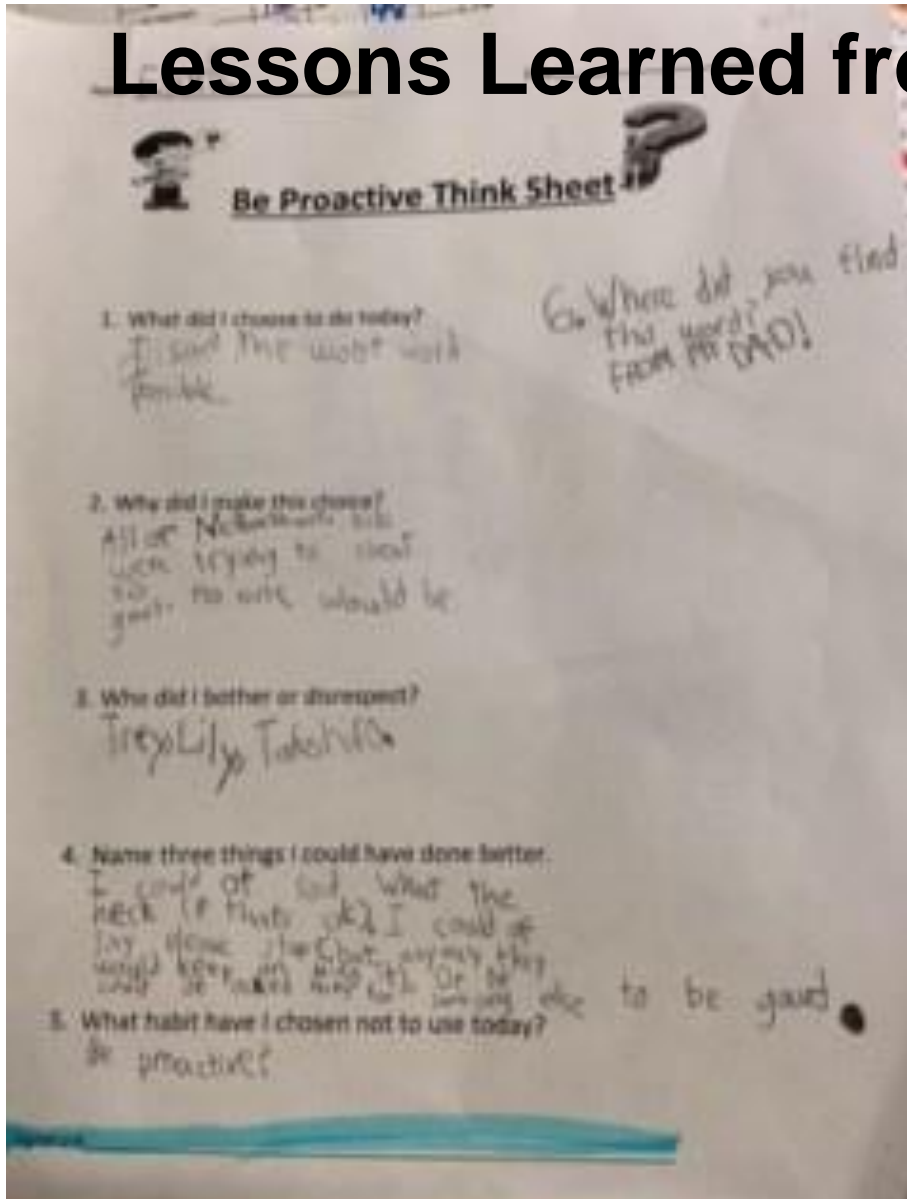
- 3. Q: Who did I bother or disrespect?
- A: (Lists 3 friends).

Lessons Learned from OTHER Dads



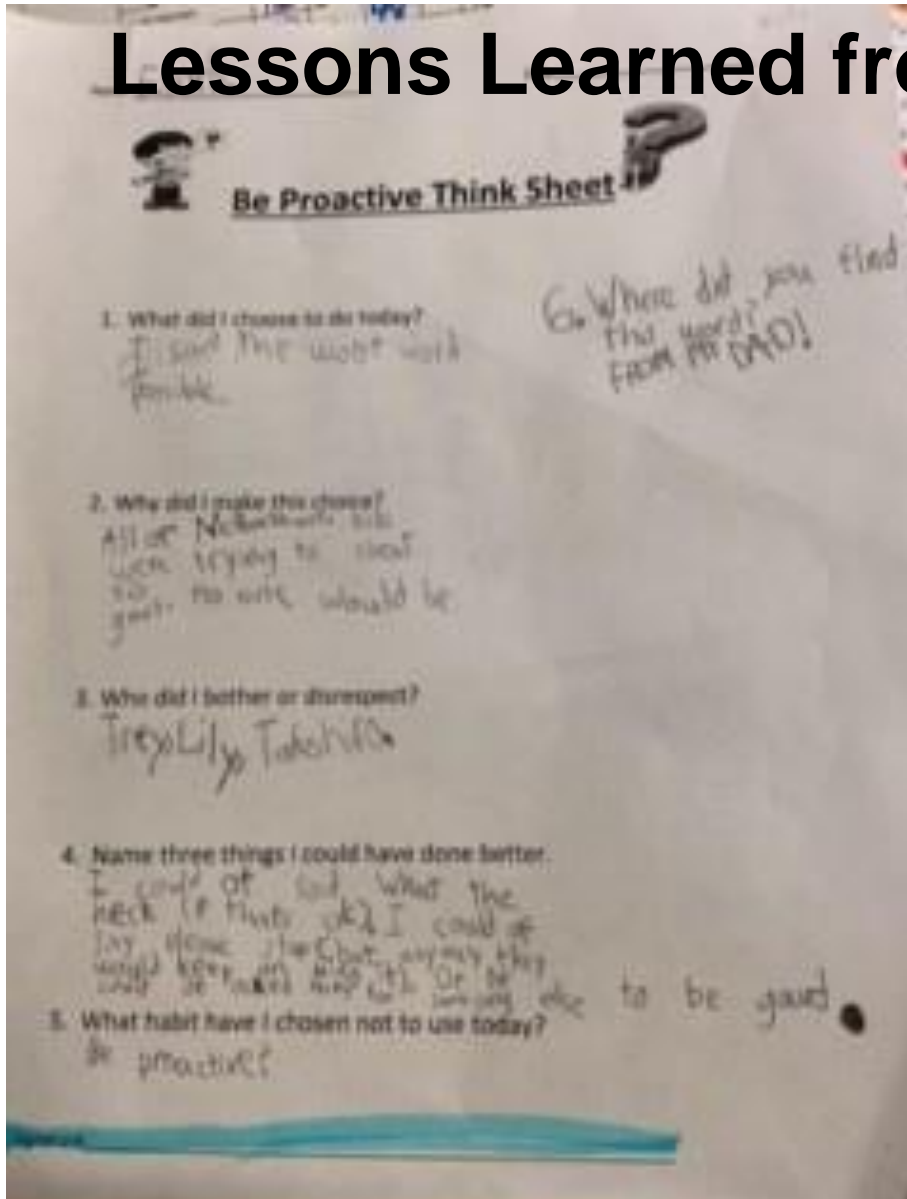
- 4. Q: Name 3 things I could have done better.
- A: I could have said ‘What the heck?’ (if that’s ok). I could say please stop (but, anyway they would keep on doing it).

Lessons Learned from OTHER Dads



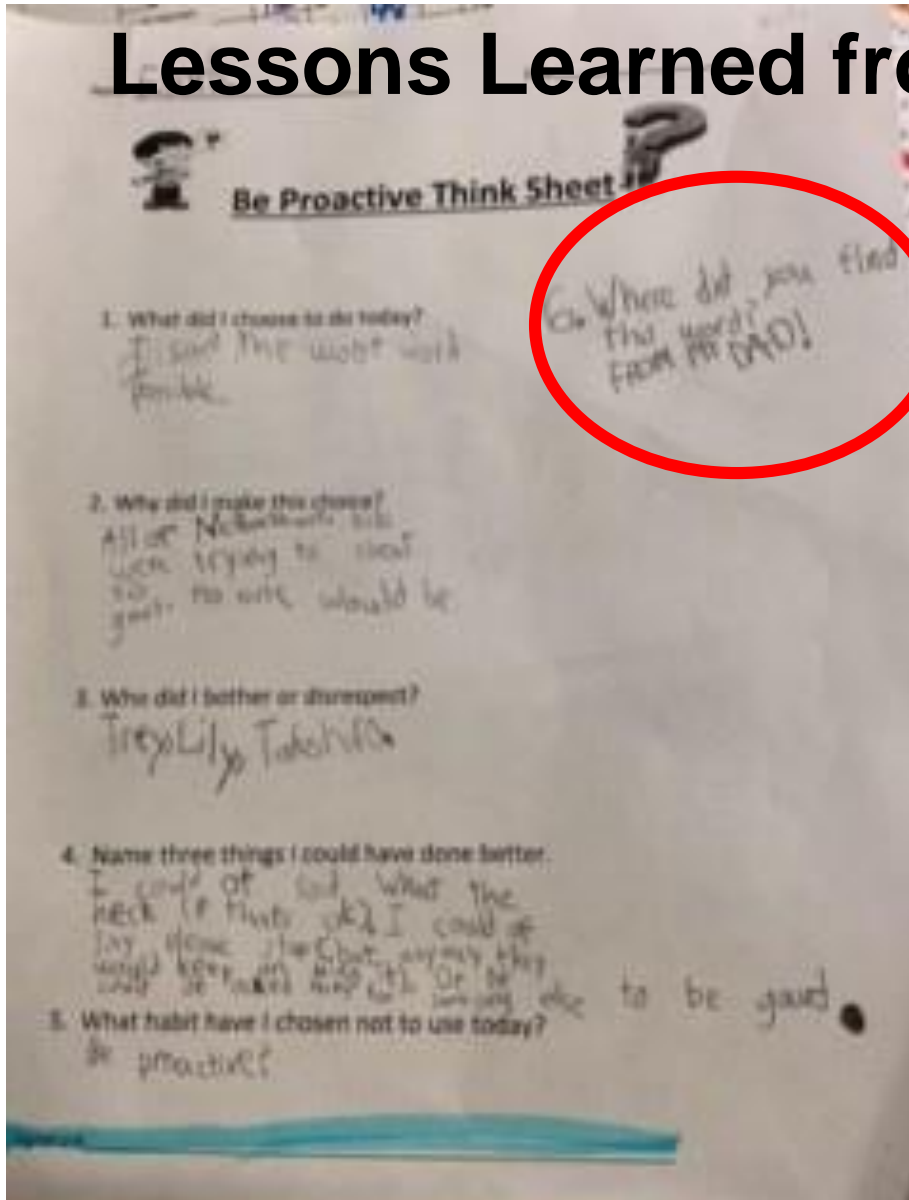
- 4. Q: Name 3 things I could have done better.
- A: Or I've could have asked nicely for someone else.

Lessons Learned from OTHER Dads



- 5. Q: What habit have I chosen not to use today?
- A: Be proactive?

Lessons Learned from OTHER Dads



- 6. Where did you find this word?
- A: FROM MY DAD!

Remember...

- **My dad is not your dad.**
- **My experiences are not your experiences.**
- **My abilities and skills are not your abilities and skills.**
- **Neither are the children we serve.**
- **Believe in their abilities.**
- **Help them develop the skills they need.**

What is Trauma?

Trauma refers to extreme or chronic stress that overwhelms a person's ability to cope & results in feeling vulnerable, helpless & afraid

Can result from one event or a series of events

Event(s) may be witnessed or experienced directly

Experience is subjective

Often interferes with relationships; self regulation; & fundamental beliefs about oneself, others & one's place in the world

What percentage of your students live with these experiences?



A PARENT WHO'S AN ALCOHOLIC OR ADDICTED TO DRUGS



A PARENT WHO'S A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



FAMILY MEMBER IN JAIL



FAMILY MEMBER DIAGNOSED WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS



THE DISAPPEARANCE OF A PARENT THROUGH DIVORCE, DEATH OR ABANDONMENT

Your classroom may look like this:



- 6 Students with No ACE
- 5 Students with 1 ACE
- 6 Students with 2 ACEs
- 3 Students with 3 ACEs
- 7 Students with 4 or 5 ACEs
- 3 Students with 6 or More ACEs

ACEs in the Classroom



ACEs are the greatest single predictor of health, attendance and behavior.



ACEs are the second strongest predictor, after special education status, for academic failure.



The relationship between academic achievement and health status appears much less related to income than to ACEs.

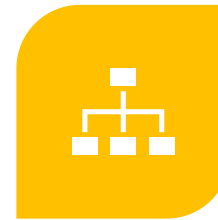
ACEs impact student learning



**INABILITY TO PROCESS
VERBAL/NONVERBAL
WRITTEN INFORMATION**



**INABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY
USE LANGUAGE TO
RELATE TO OTHERS.**



**LACK OF SEQUENTIAL
ORGANIZATION.**



**NOT UNDERSTANDING
CAUSE AND EFFECT.**

ACEs impact student learning



LACK OF SENSE OF SELF AND PERSPECTIVE.



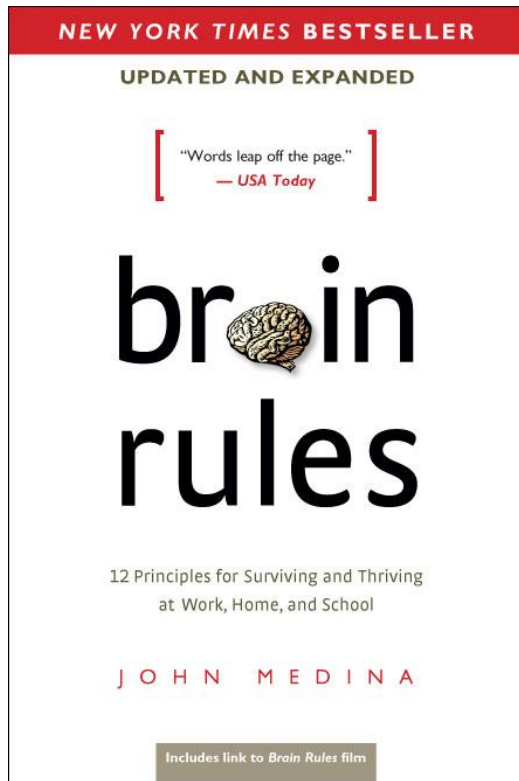
INABILITY TO DISTINGUISH EMOTIONS.



LACK OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS: SETTING GOALS, DEVELOPING A PLAN, CARRYING OUT GOALS, REFLECTING ON THE PROCESS.



DIFFICULTY WITH TRANSITIONS (ENDINGS & BEGINNINGS).



BRAIN RULE # 8

“Stressed brains don’t learn in the same way that non-stressed brains do.”

John Medina, PhD, Seattle Pacific University

University of Washington

Childhood Resiliency Starts With:

A shift in thinking from “***What’s wrong with you?***”



to “***What happened to you?***”

Resilient students need resilient teachers.

When Our Students Arrive on the First Day of School, They Are Already Playing on an Uneven Playing Field



How Do We Level the Playing Field?

Training and Supports



Tier I Support - Foundation

Option A



Option B





**If instruction is
our foundation at
Tier I, does it look
like a hiking boot
or a flip flop?**

Tier I Supports



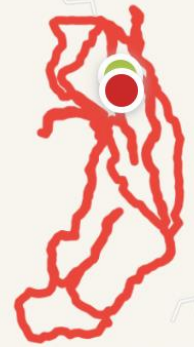
Verizon LTE 12:5



8.01mi Walk

Monday, Apr 22 at 9:42 am

Activity: Walk



A

8.01

DISTANCE



Tier II Supports

Food for Thought...

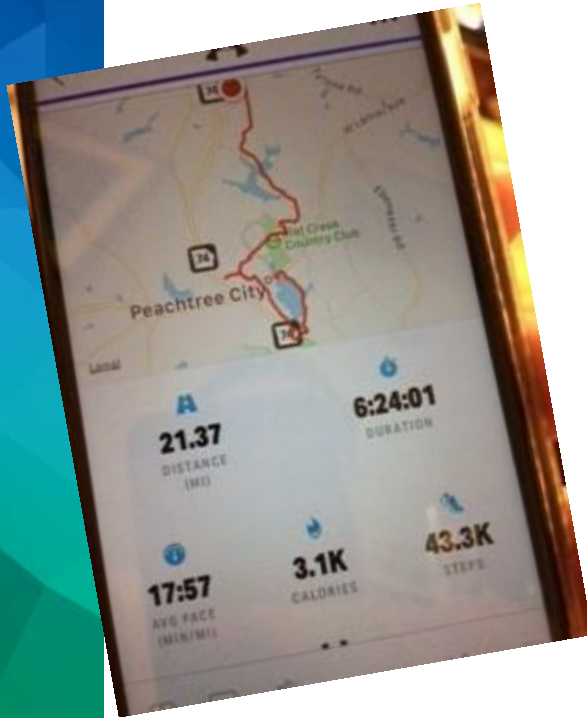
- If a child doesn't know how to read, we teach.
- If a child doesn't know how to swim, we teach.
- If a child doesn't know how to multiply, we teach.
- If a child doesn't know how to drive, we teach.
- If a child doesn't know how to behave, we... teach? punish?

- Why can't we finish the last sentence as automatically as we do the others?

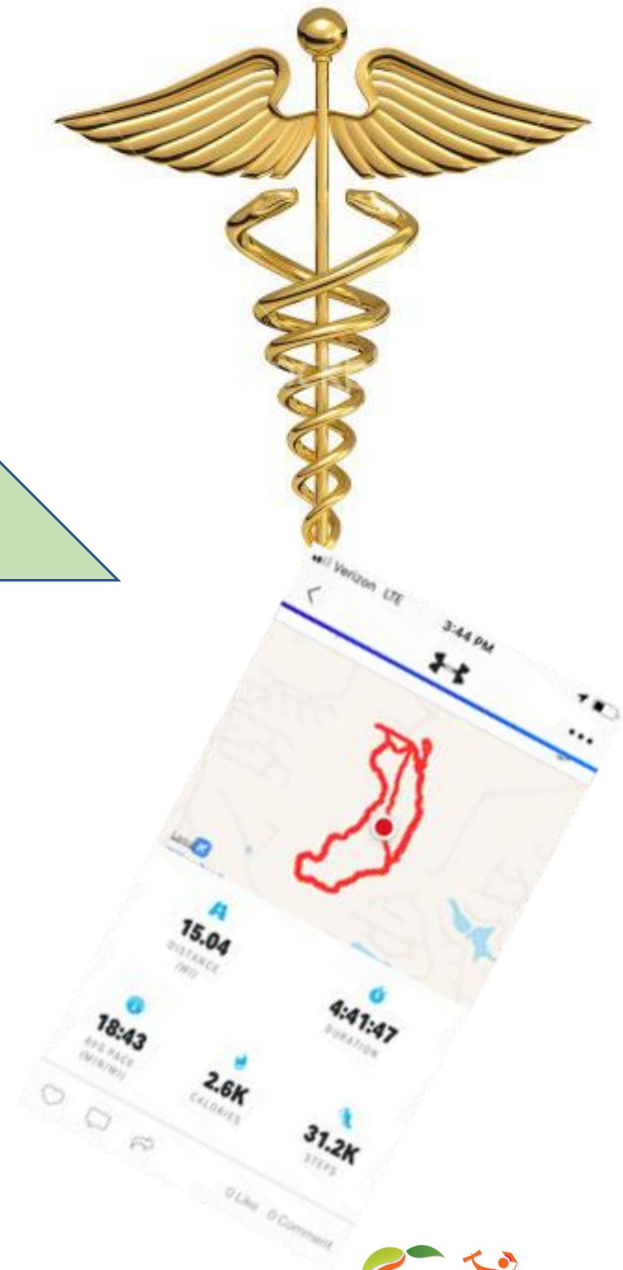
John Herner (NASDE Preent) Counterpoint 1998, page 2



Tier III Supports



Training remained the same, but the **INTENSITY** and **FREQUENCY** increased





Ross Greene – Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems

Lagging Skills

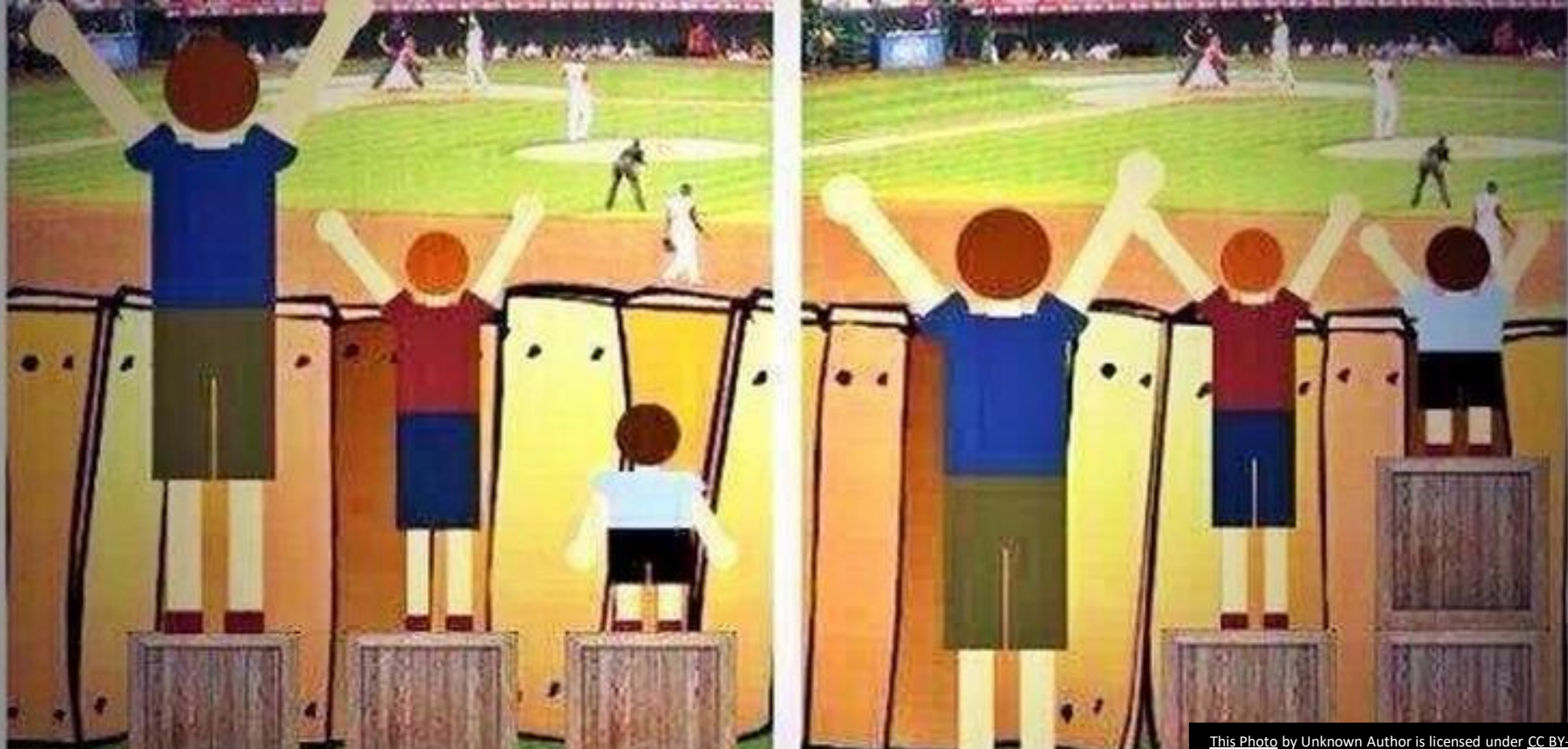
- Identify the skills that are lagging.
- “Difficulty Handling Transitions”
- “Difficulty Maintaining Focus”
- “Difficulty Seeking Attention in Appropriate Ways”



Ross Greene – Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems

Unsolved Problems

- Identify the specific conditions in which the behavior is occurring.
- “Difficulty Moving from Choice Time to Math”
- “Difficulty Sitting Next to Kyle in Circle Time”
- “Difficulty Standing in Line for Lunch”



What Happens if We Do Not Level the Playing Field?

Challenging Behavior

Challenging behavior is reflective of a *developmental delay*.

In order for students to behave adaptively they need: *motivation and skills*.

Many years we have focused on motivation.

Research says *focus on the SKILLS part*.





What Happens to Our Students When We Do Not Address Their Behavior Skill Deficit?

School to Prison Pipeline...

Punitive Index Ranking

1. Mississippi .559
2. Arkansas .400
2. South Carolina .400
4. Alabama .365
5. Louisiana .327
6. **Georgia .325**
7. Delaware .291
7. Oklahoma .291
9. West Virginia .288
- 10 Tennessee .285



School to Prison Pipeline...



State Imprisonment Rate (per 100,000)

1. Louisiana 816
2. Oklahoma 700
3. Alabama 633
4. Arkansas 599
5. Mississippi 597
6. Arizona 593
7. Texas 584
8. Missouri 526
9. **Georgia 517**
10. Florida 513
13. U.S. Total 471

Coincidence?

Punitive Index Ranking

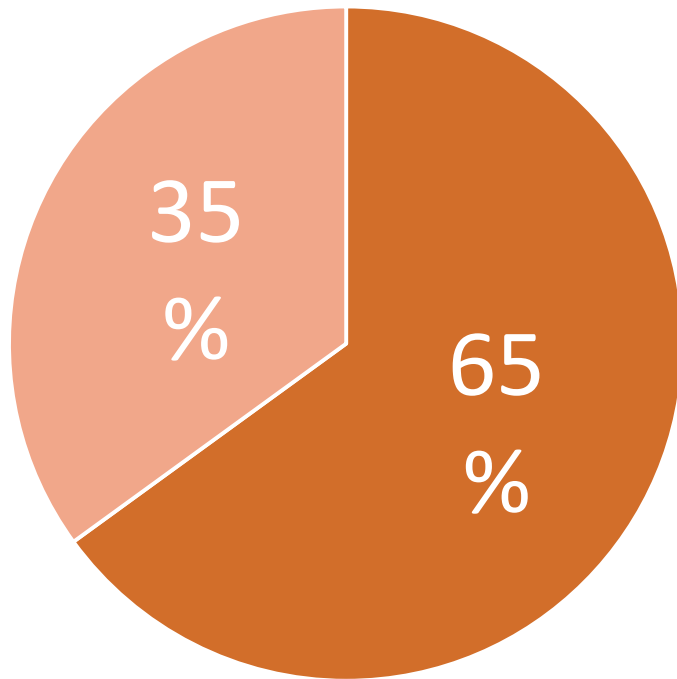
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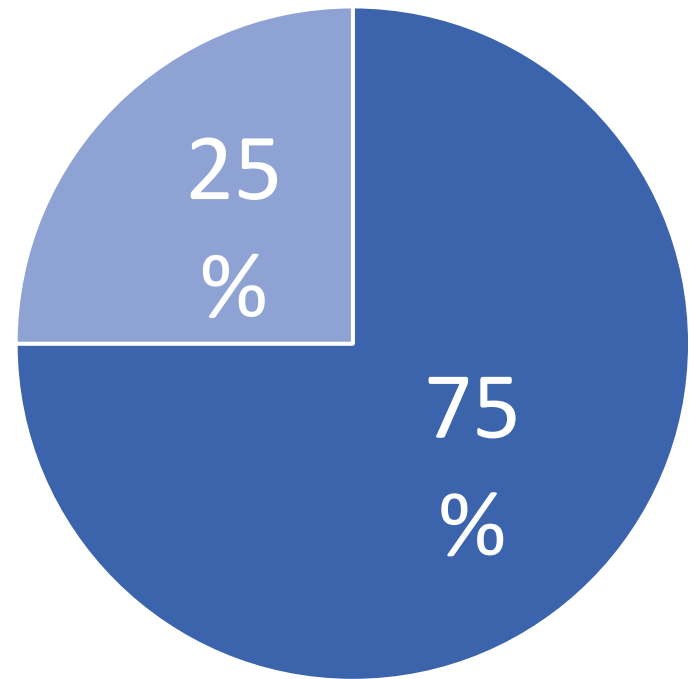
Percentage of adolescents in juvenile detention centers with at least 1 mental illness.

Girls



■ With ■ Without

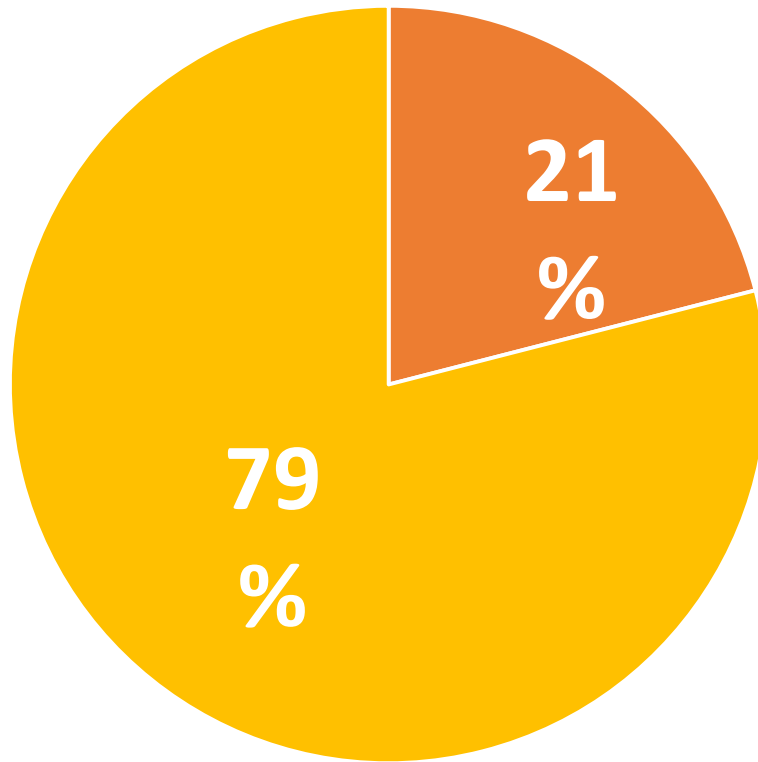
Boys



■ With ■ Without

Prevalence of Child and Adolescent Mental Disorders

Children Ages 9 - 17

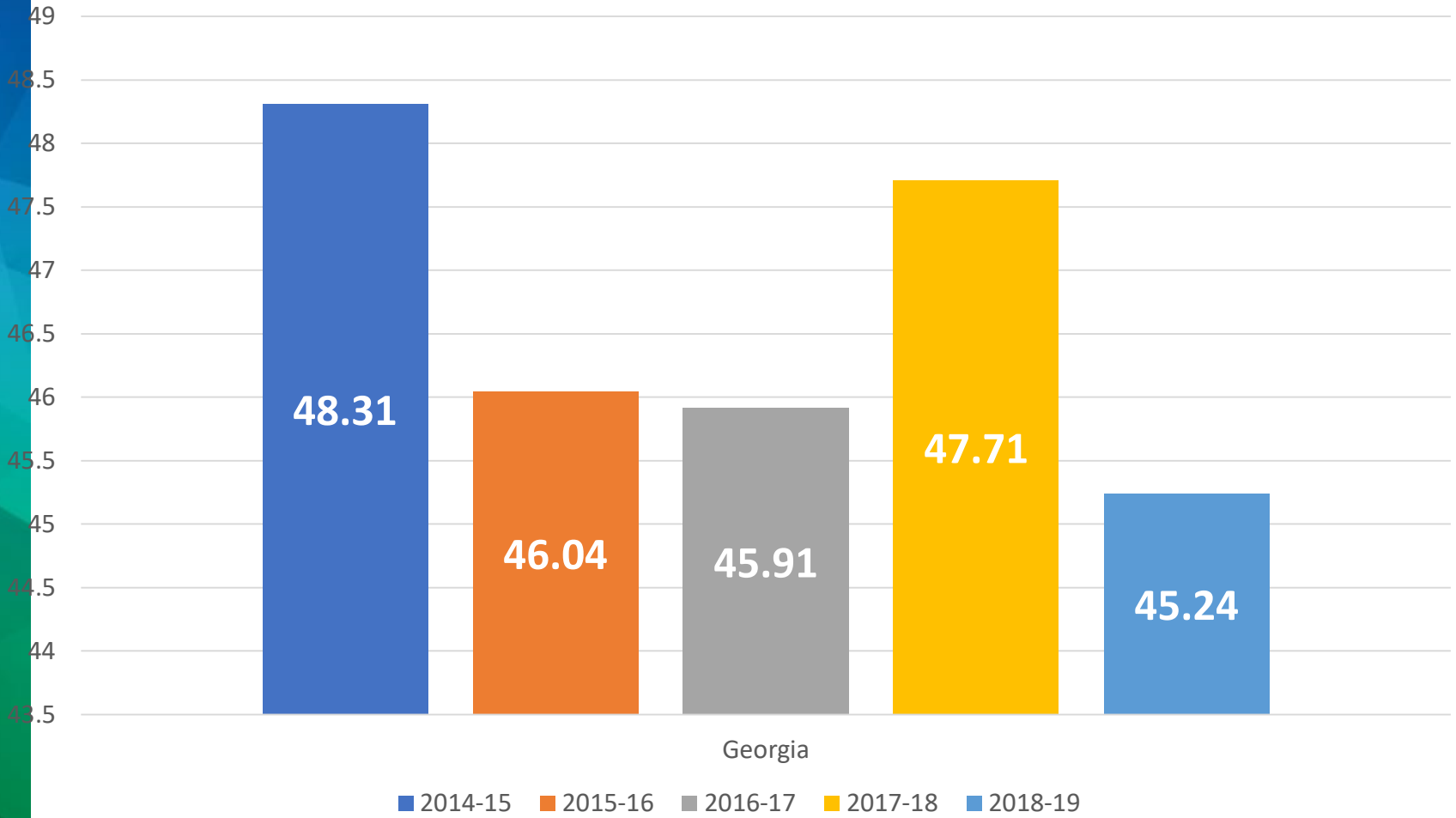


- The 21% represents 4 million children and adolescents in this country who live with **serious** mental disorder.
- This equates to **5 or 6 children in each classroom** in our schools.

Student Health Survey Data Total Number of Secondary Students Completing the Survey

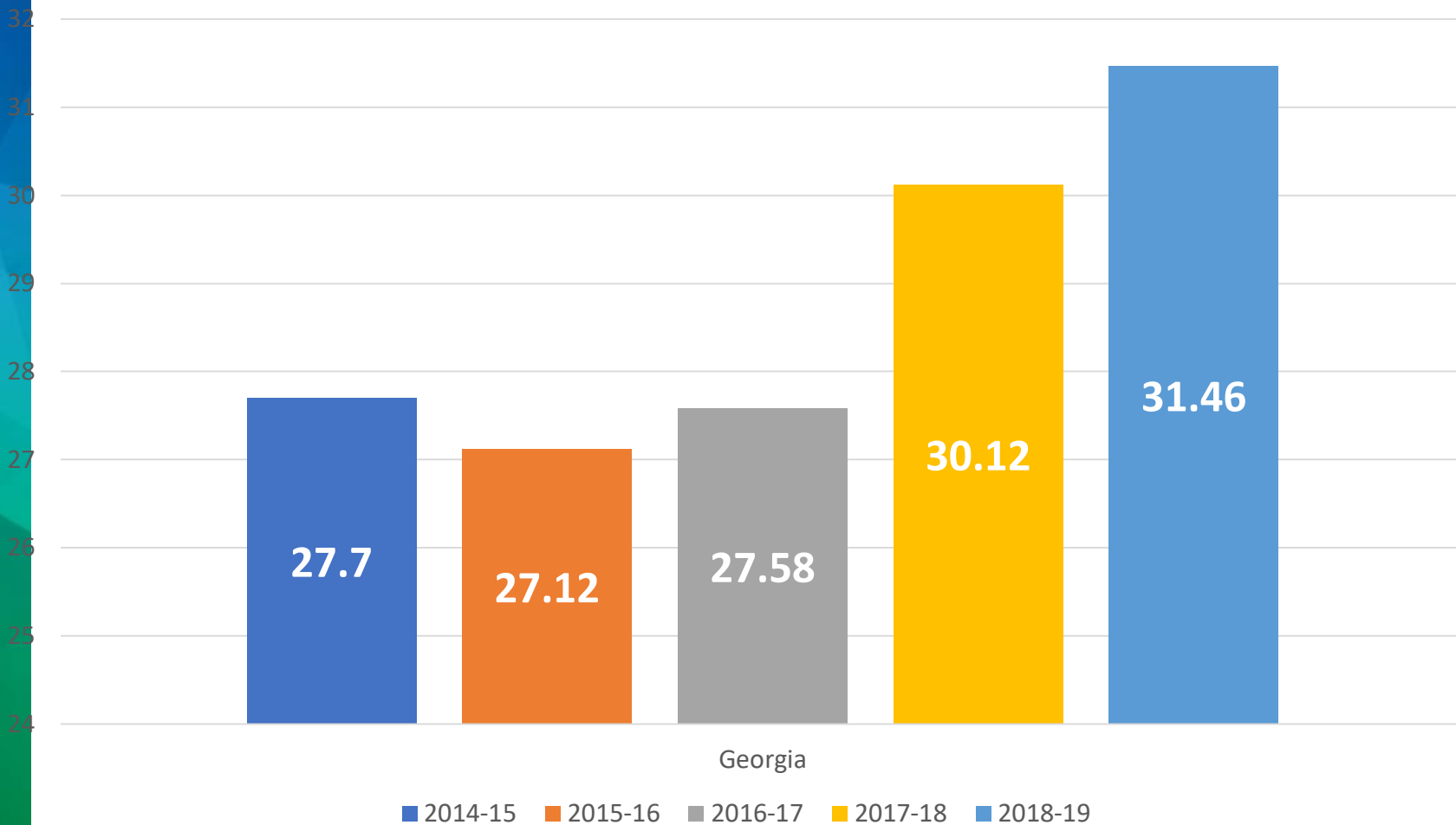
- Georgia
 - 14/15 = 629,648
 - 15/16 = 663,797
 - 16/17 = 672,307
 - 17/18 = 674,354
 - 18/19 = 689,986

114/84. In the past 30 days, (on how many days) have you felt sad or withdrawn?



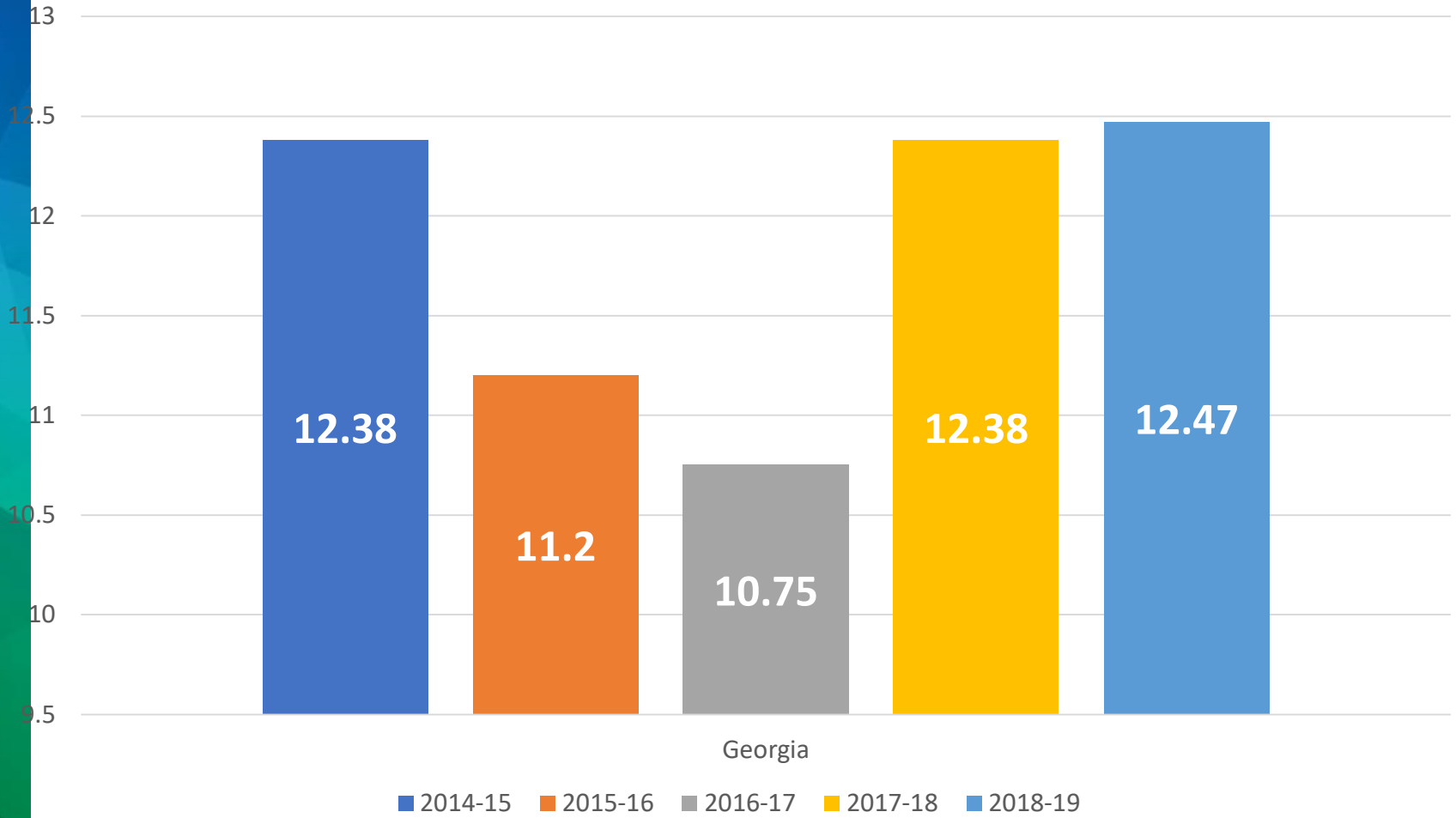
Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

115/85. In the past 30 days, (on how many days) have you felt suddenly overwhelmed with fear for no reason, sometimes including a racing heart or fast breathing?



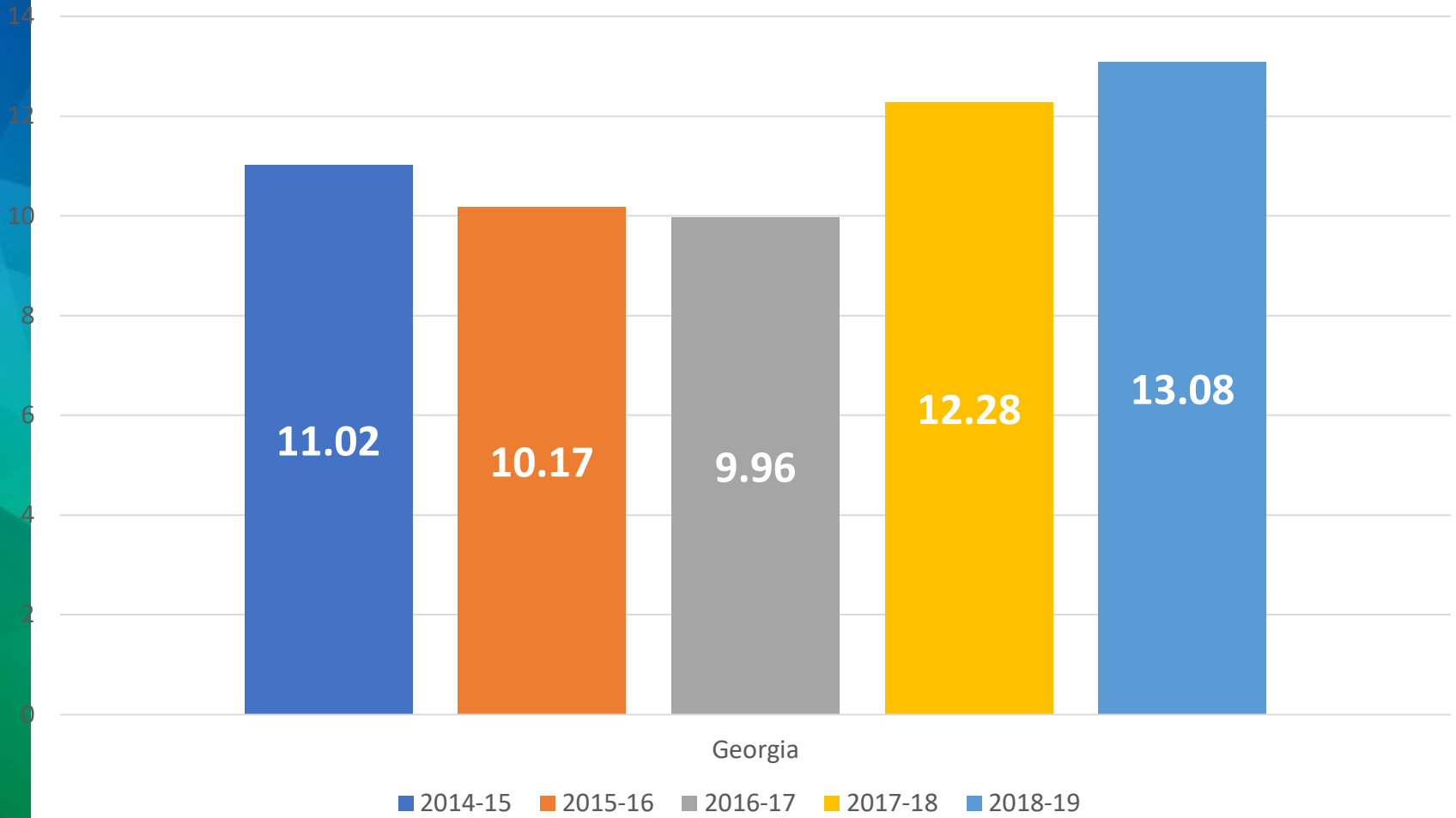
Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

116/86. In the past 30 days, (on how many days) have you experienced severely out of control behavior that could hurt yourself or others?



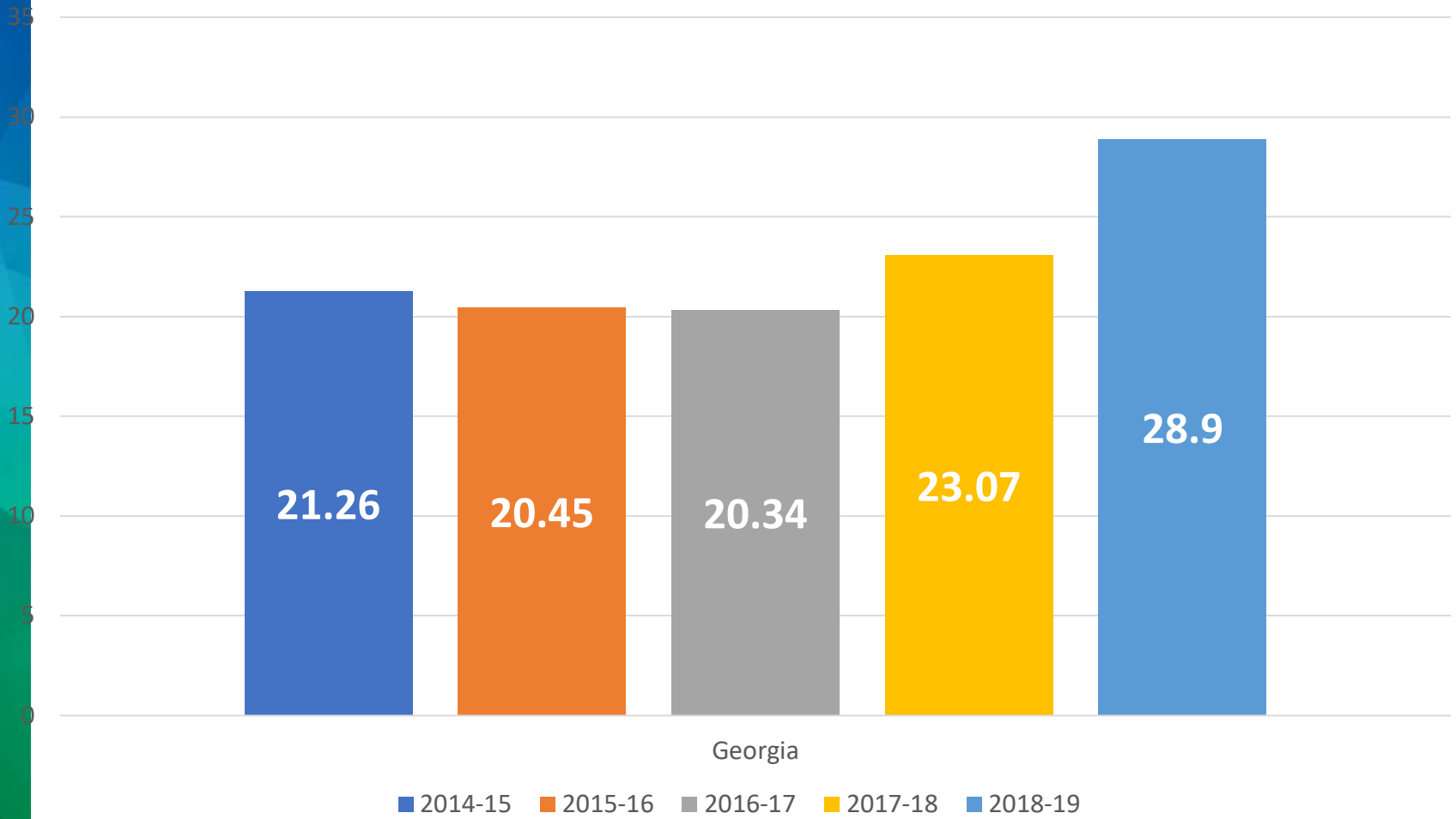
Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

117/87. In the past 30 days, (on how many days) have you avoided food, thrown up, or used laxatives to make yourself lose weight?



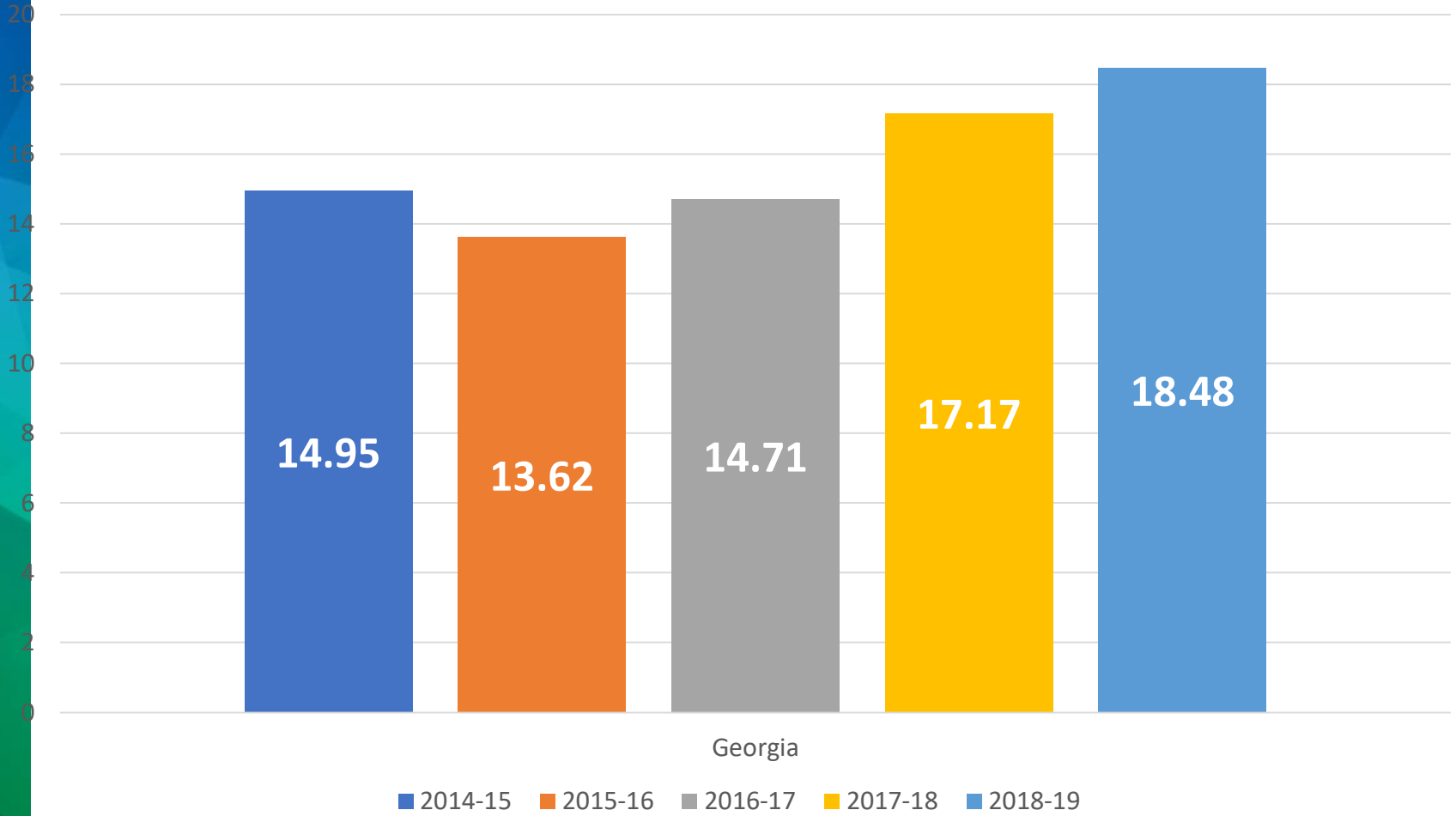
Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

118/88. In the past 30 days, (on how many days) have you experienced intense worries or fears that get in the way of your daily activities?



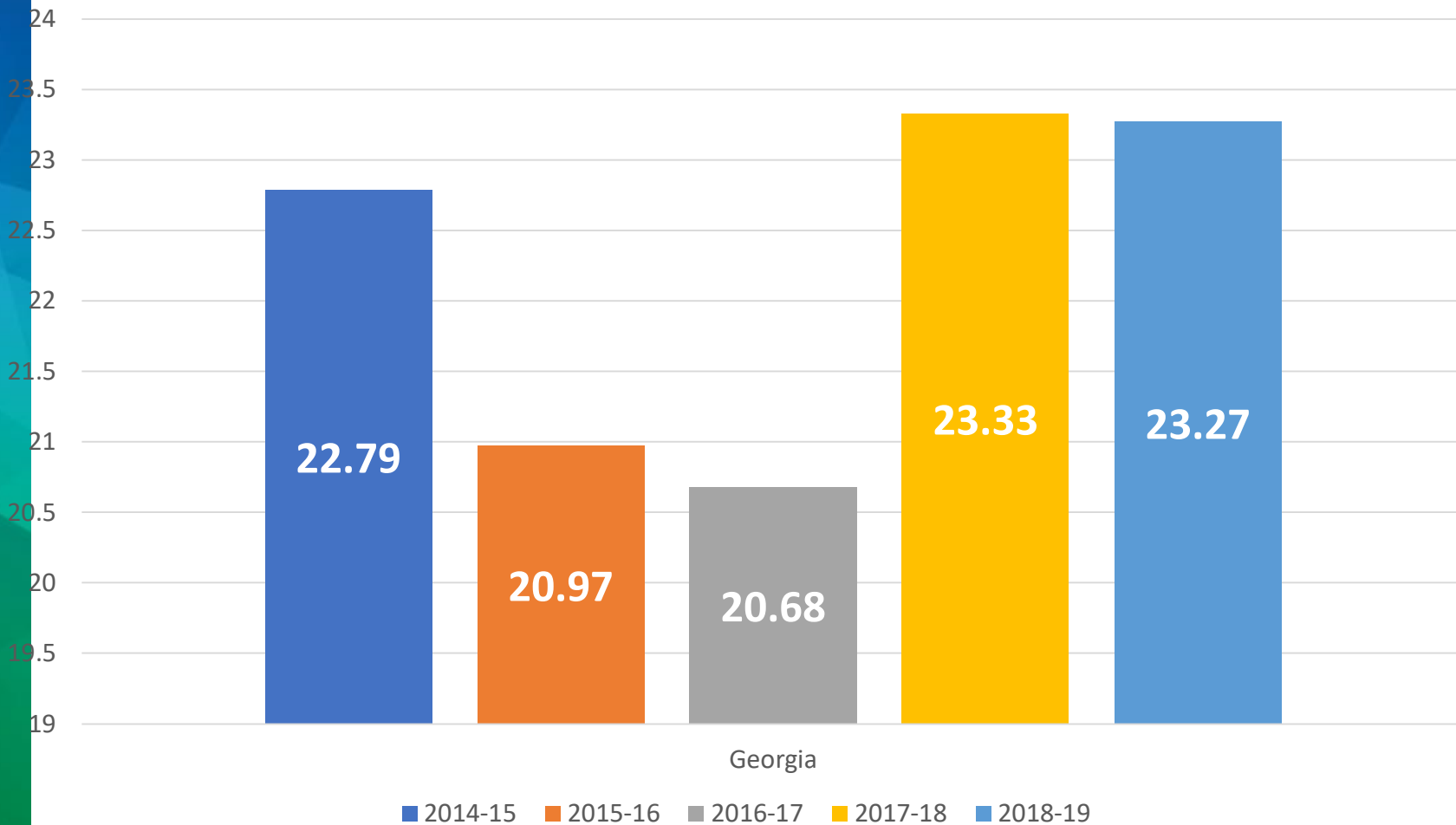
Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

119/89. In the past 30 days, (on how many days) have you experienced extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still, which has put you in physical danger and/or caused school failure?



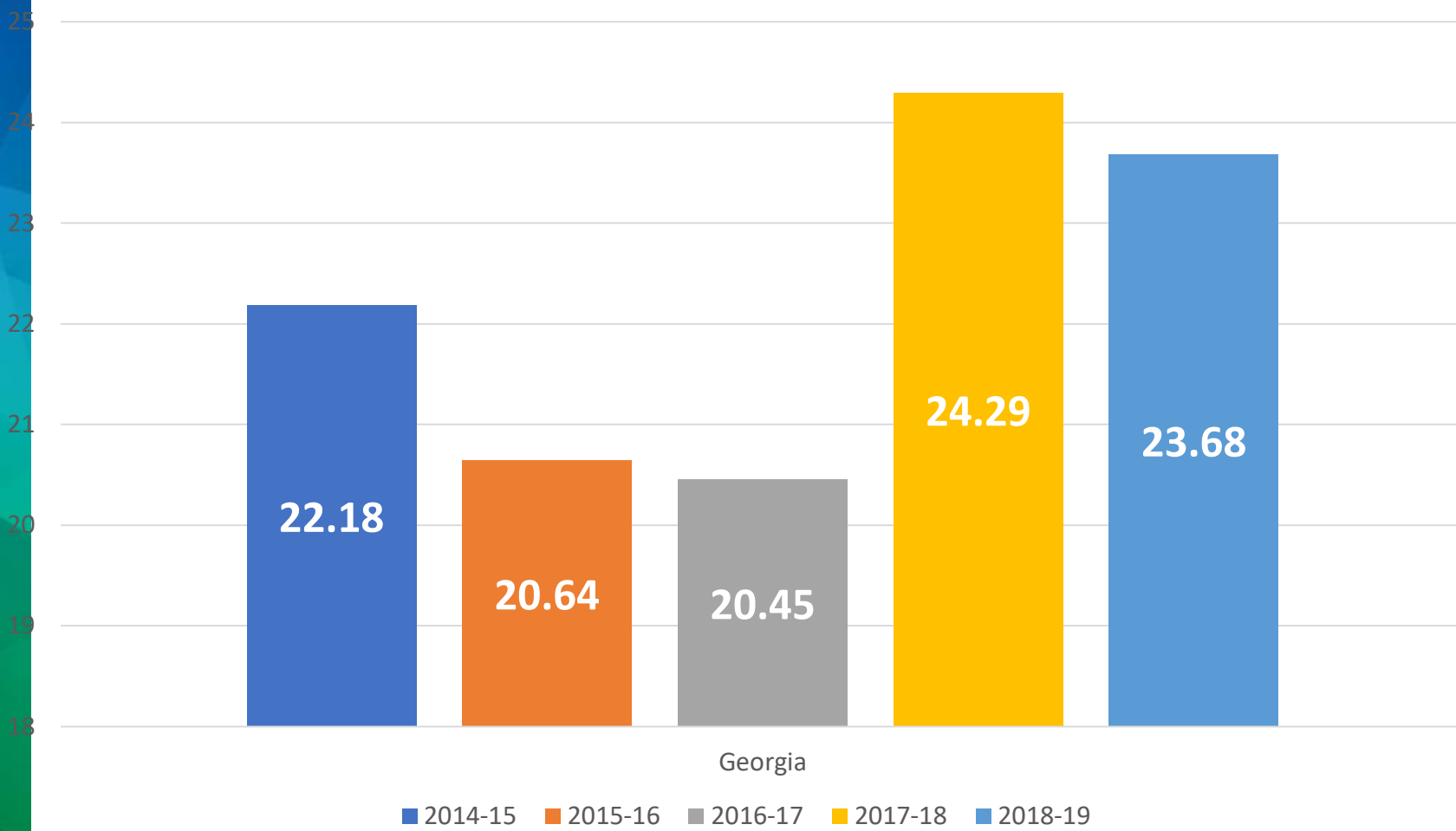
Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

120/90. In the past 30 days, (on how many days) have you experienced severe mood swings that have caused problems in relationships?

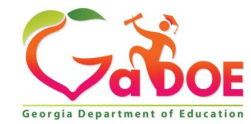


Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

121/91. In the past 30 days, (on how many days) have you experienced drastic changes in your behavior and/or personality?



Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0



YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AT SCHOOL



**1 IN 5 CHILDREN AGE
13-18 HAVE OR WILL
HAVE A MENTAL ILLNESS**

**THAT MEANS IN A CLASSROOM OF 25 STUDENTS,
5 WILL EXPERIENCE A MENTAL ILLNESS.**



SUICIDE

**2ND
LEADING CAUSE
OF DEATH
FOR AGES
10-24**

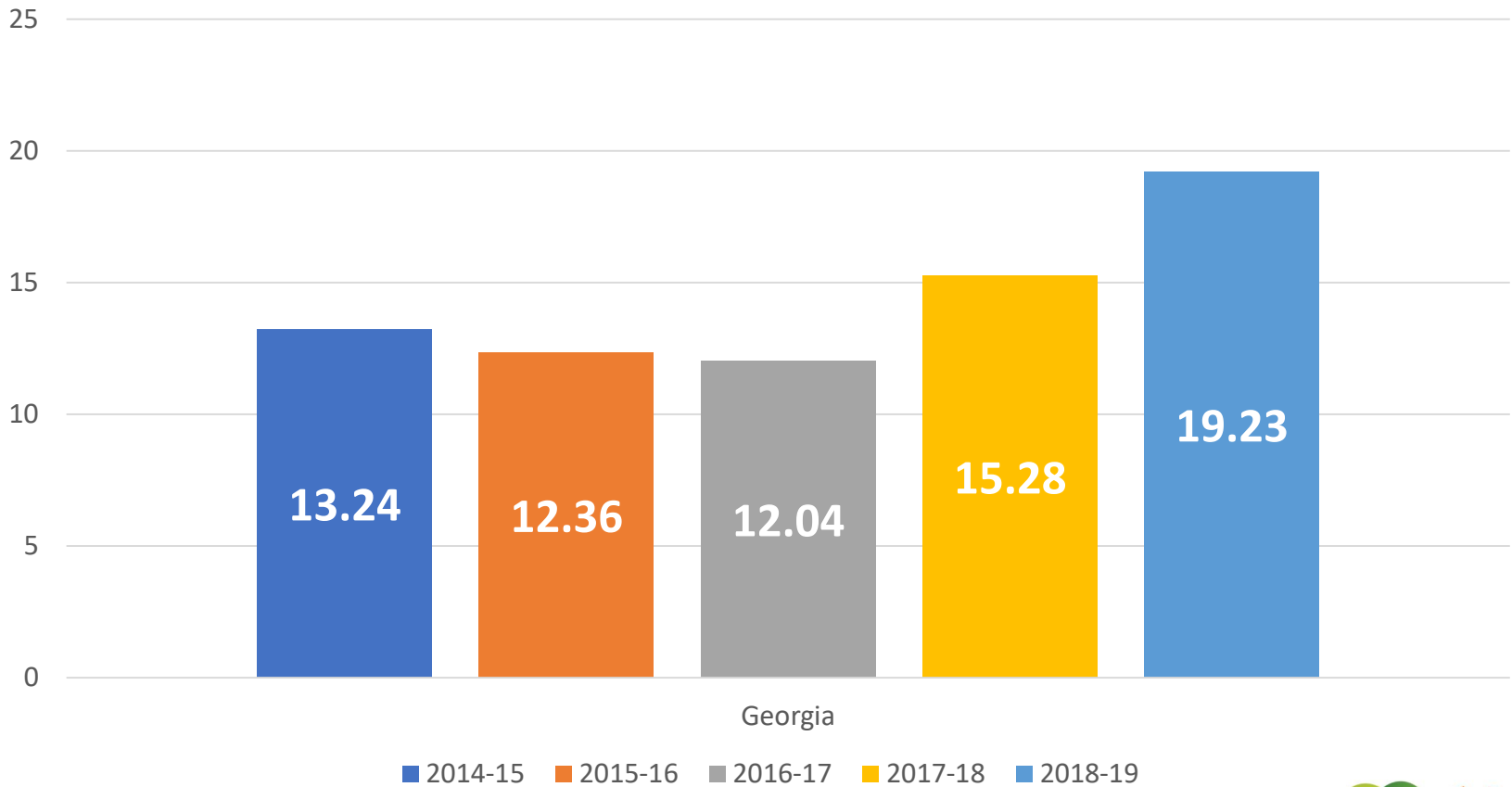
50%

OF STUDENTS AGE 14
AND OLDER WITH A
MENTAL ILLNESS DROP
OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL.

EVERY DAY IN THE UNITED STATES
OVER **5,240 STUDENTS**
IN GRADES 7-12 **ATTEMPT SUICIDE**

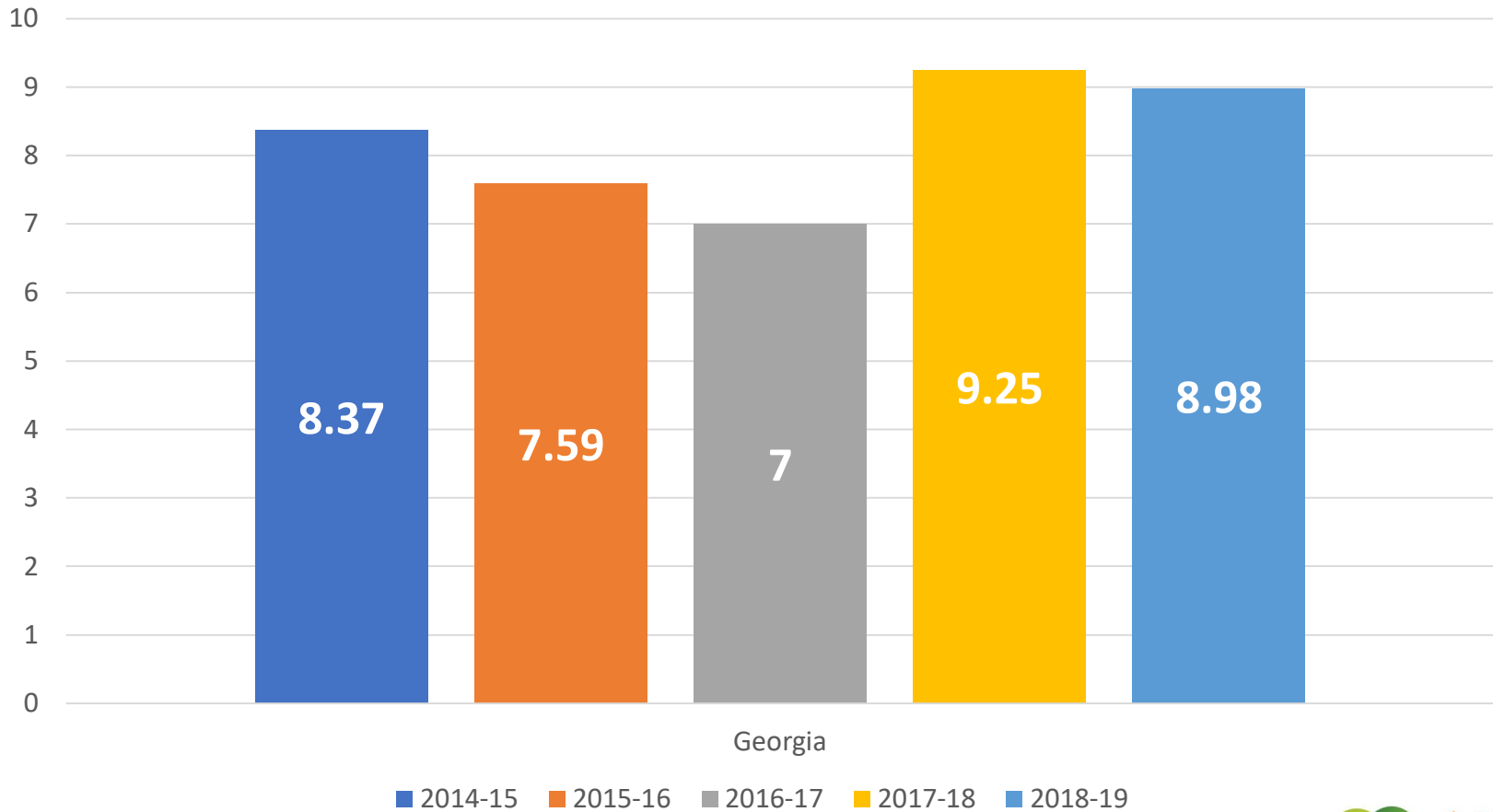
4 OF 5
HAVE GIVEN
**CLEAR WARNING
SIGNS**

79/58. During the past 12 months, (on how many occasions) have you seriously considered harming yourself on purpose?



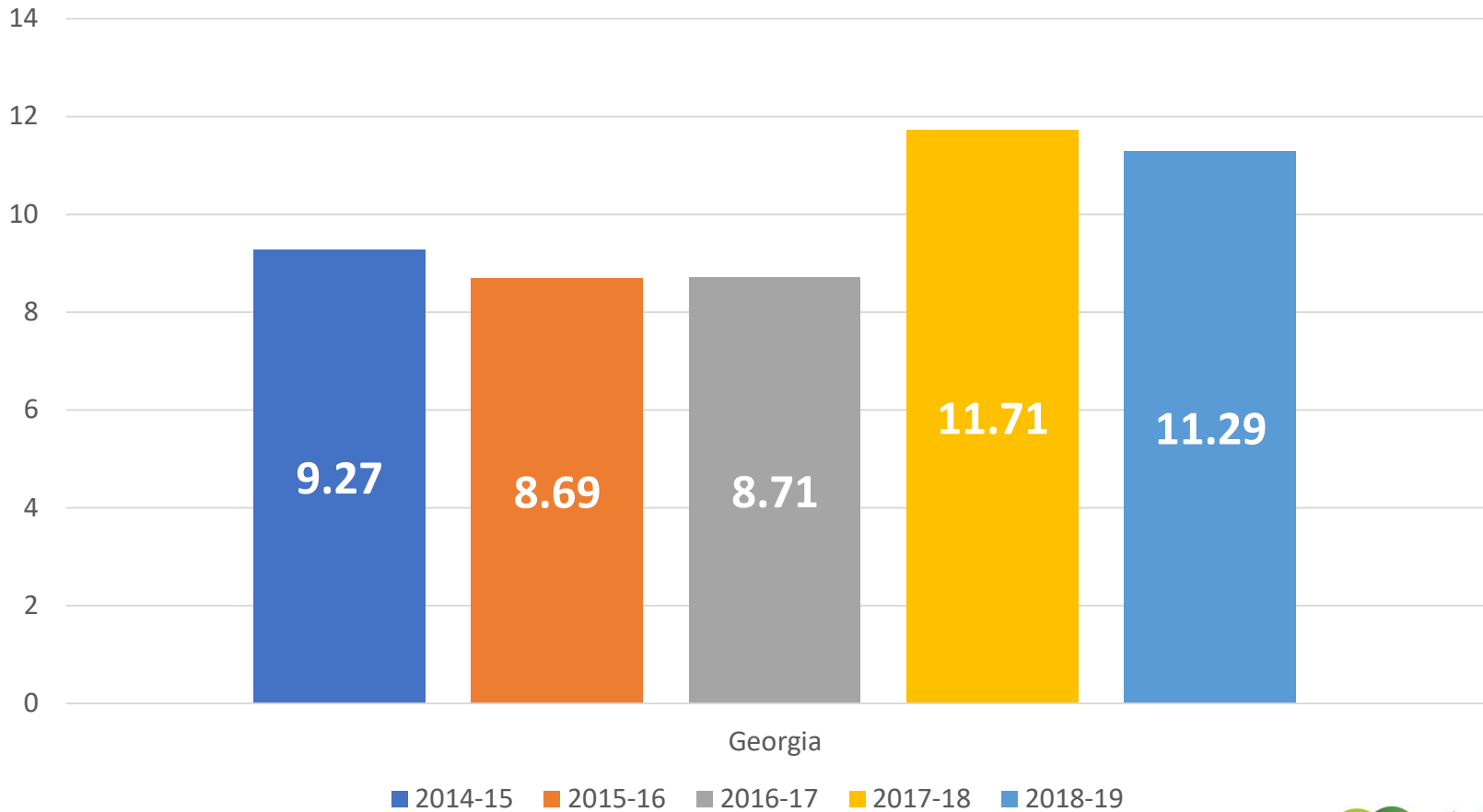
Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

81/60. During the past 12 months, (on how many occasions) have you harmed yourself on purpose?



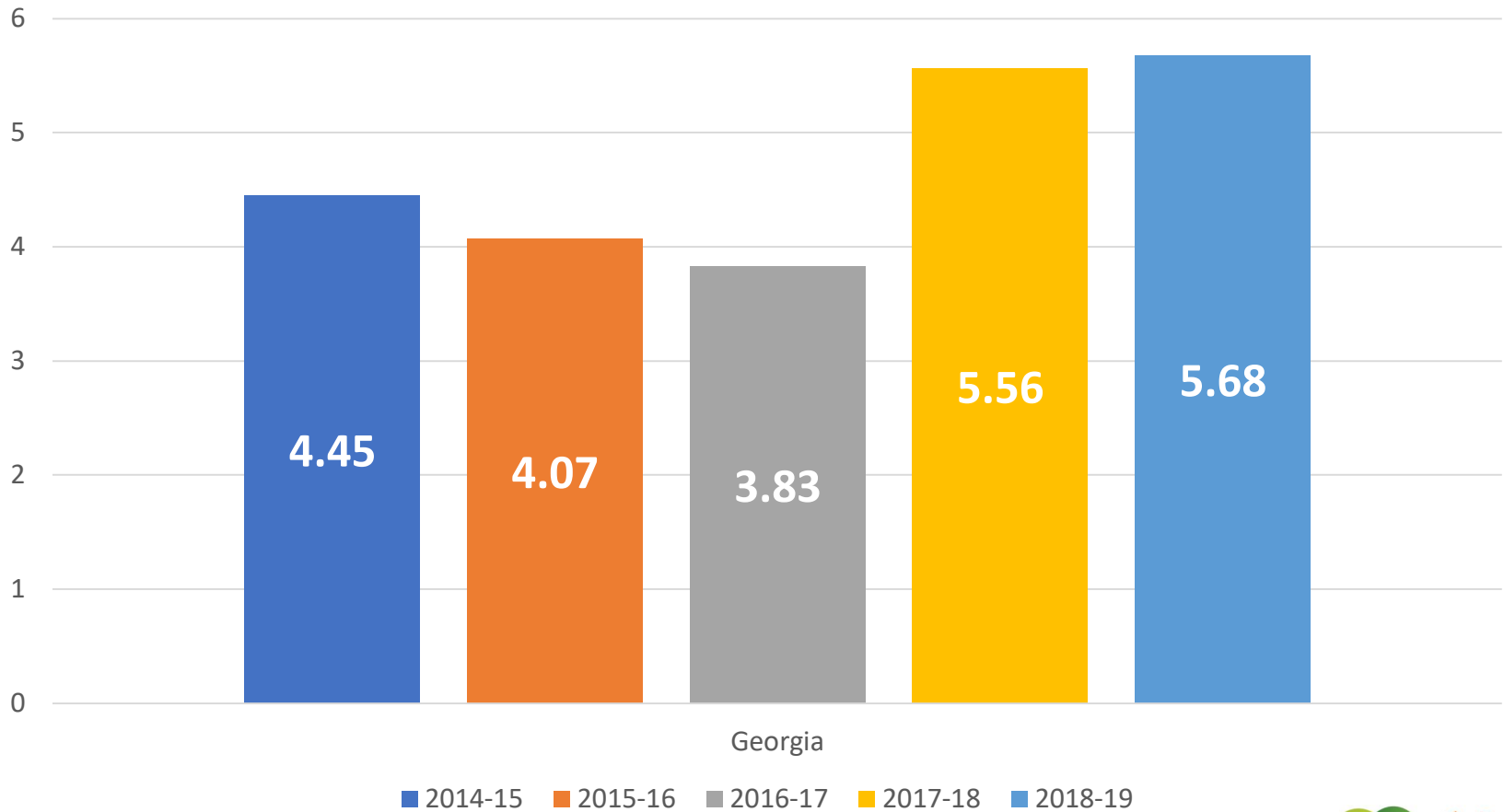
Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

83/62. During the past 12 months, (on how many occasions) have you seriously considered attempting suicide?



Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

85/63. During the past 12 months, (on how many occasions) have you attempted suicide?



Source: Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0

5.68% of Georgia Survey Respondents = 39,191 Students



SunTrust Park has a seating capacity of 41,000



Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for teens. Over 90% of adolescents who die by suicide live with a mental illness.



Data Does Not Paint the Entire Picture...

What are students searching?

- 8/23 XXXX - searched internet about poisons used to kill people, “fastest killing poisons.”
- 8/23 XXXX - looking on internet about how to make a noose.
- 8/24 XXXX - looked on internet and searched “What happens if you put a plastic bag on your head.”
- 8/29 XXXX googled, “How to end your life” and “Why teachers hate kids.”
- 8/31 XXXX- Searched internet, “Why am I feeling very down lately. I feel like I want to end my life.”
- 8/31 XXXX - googled “I want to die.”
- 8/31 XXXX - searched internet about “How to kill yourself.”
- 9/7 XXXX created a Google Doc that only had “I want to die” written on the page
- 9/7 XXXX searched the internet for the Suicide Hotline phone number
- 11/17 XXXX - ”I want to kill myself. Please help.”
- 1/26 XXXX- “How to kill yourself in school.”

Source: Griffin-Spalding County Project AWARE

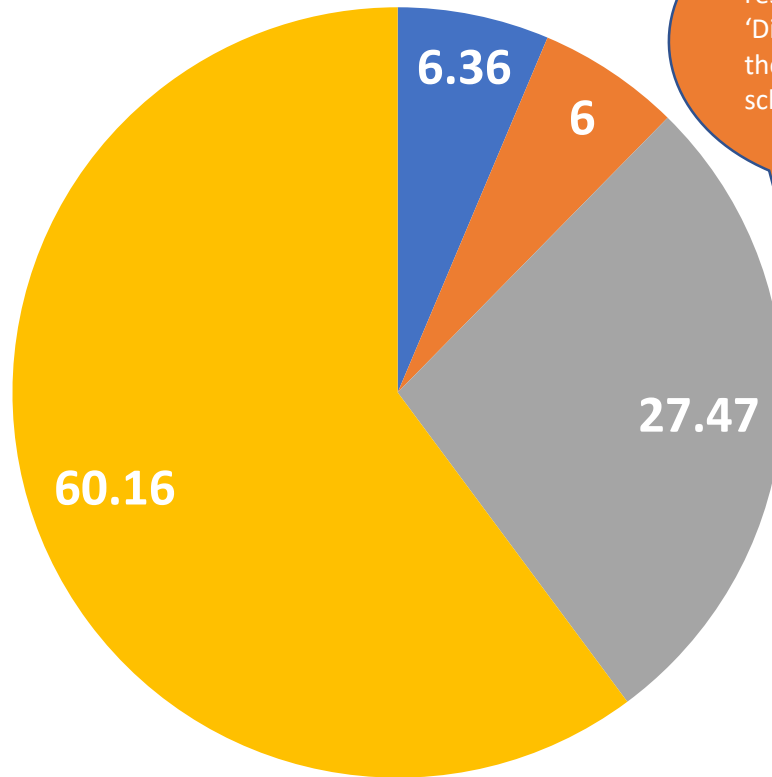


Why are students searching the internet for answers?

7. I know a student at my school that I can talk to if I need help.

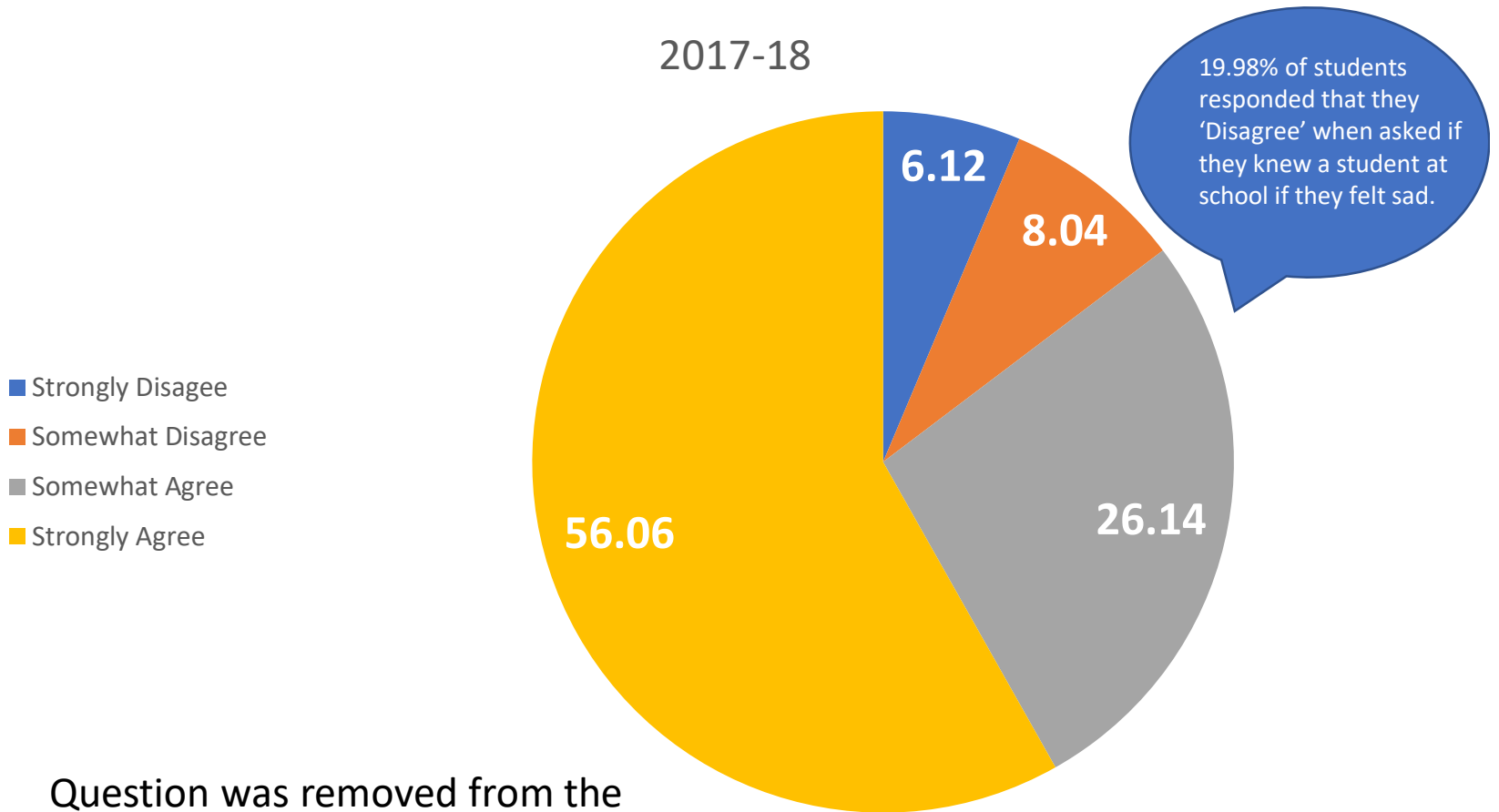
2018-19

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree



12.36% of students responded that they 'Disagree' when asked if they knew a student at school if they need help.

8. I know a student at school that I can talk to if I am feeling sad or down.



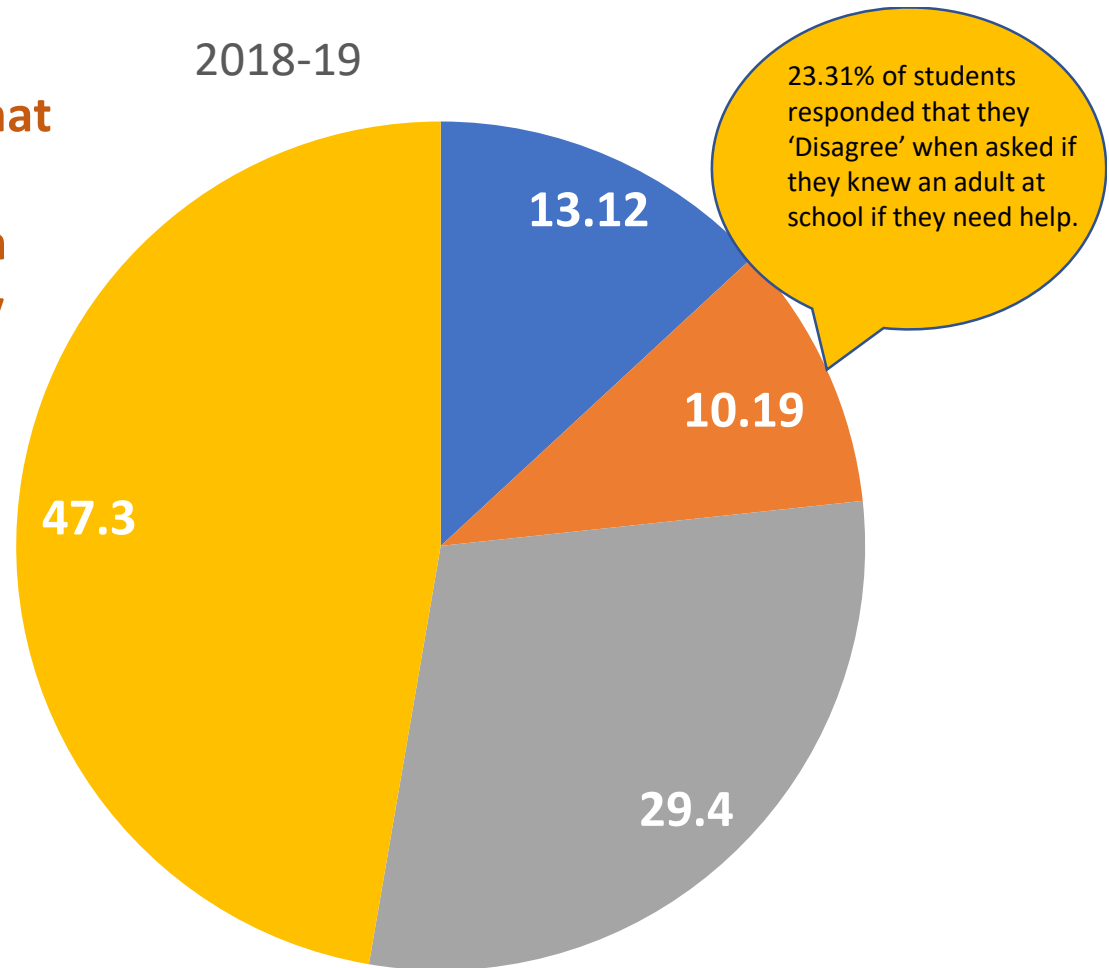
Question was removed from the survey in 2018-19

91/70. I know an adult at school that I can talk with if I need help.

160,811 students in Georgia responded that they 'Disagree' when asked if they knew an adult at school if they need help.

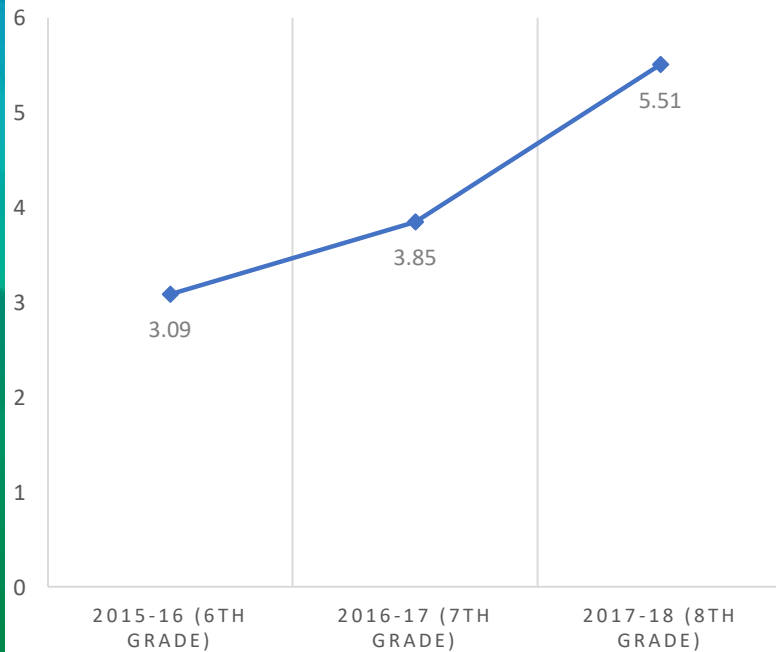
2018-19

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

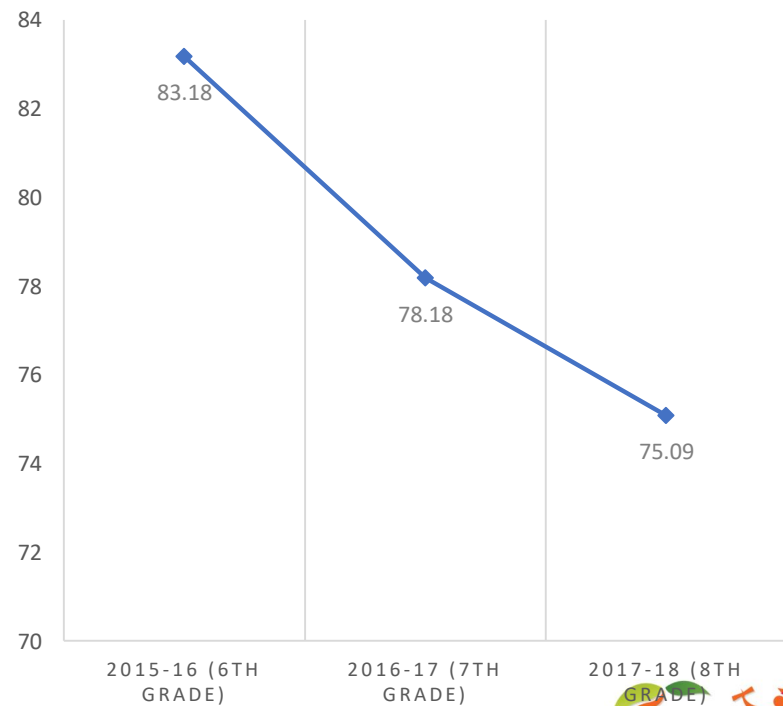


Relationships Matter

#85 - DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS, (ON HOW MANY OCCASIONS) HAVE YOU ATTEMPTED SUICIDE?



#91 - I KNOW AN ADULT AT SCHOOL THAT I CAN TALK WITH IF I NEED HELP.



Teens and Self-Image: Survey Results

Question 8. How much influence does each of the following have on your life?

	A Lot or Some	None
Parents	96%	4%
<u>Teacher</u>	<u>80%</u>	<u>20%</u>
Other kids	78%	22%
Religion	70%	30%
Girl/Boyfriend	63%	37%
Celebrities	63%	37%
TV Shows	44%	56%
Advertising	36%	64%

Teens and Self-Image: Survey Results

Question 5. Who understands you the most?

Friend	42%
Parent	28%
Girl/Boyfriend	10%
No one	8%
Sibling	5%
Religious Leader	1%
<u>Teacher</u>	<u>1%</u>
Other	5%



Focus on School Climate



Educating Georgia's Future by graduating students who are ready to learn, ready to live, and ready to lead.

“If an egg is broken by an outside force, life ends. If broken by an inside force, life begins. Great things always begin from the inside.”



GaPBIS is NOT about an outside force:

Tokens

Tickets

Bucks

Parties

School stores

Rewards

Goals of an Imposed Consequence

1. Teaching students basic lessons about right and wrong ways to behave.
2. Giving students the incentive to behave the right way.



(Most) Students Know How We Want Them to Behave

They do not need:

STICKERS

DEPRIVING THEM FROM RECESS

SUSPENDING THEM FROM SCHOOL

In fact, most challenging students want to behave the right way...but they need something more from us.

They are lacking the skills.



GaPBIS IS about an inside force:



**SKILL
BUILDING**



**DEFINING
EXPECTATIONS**



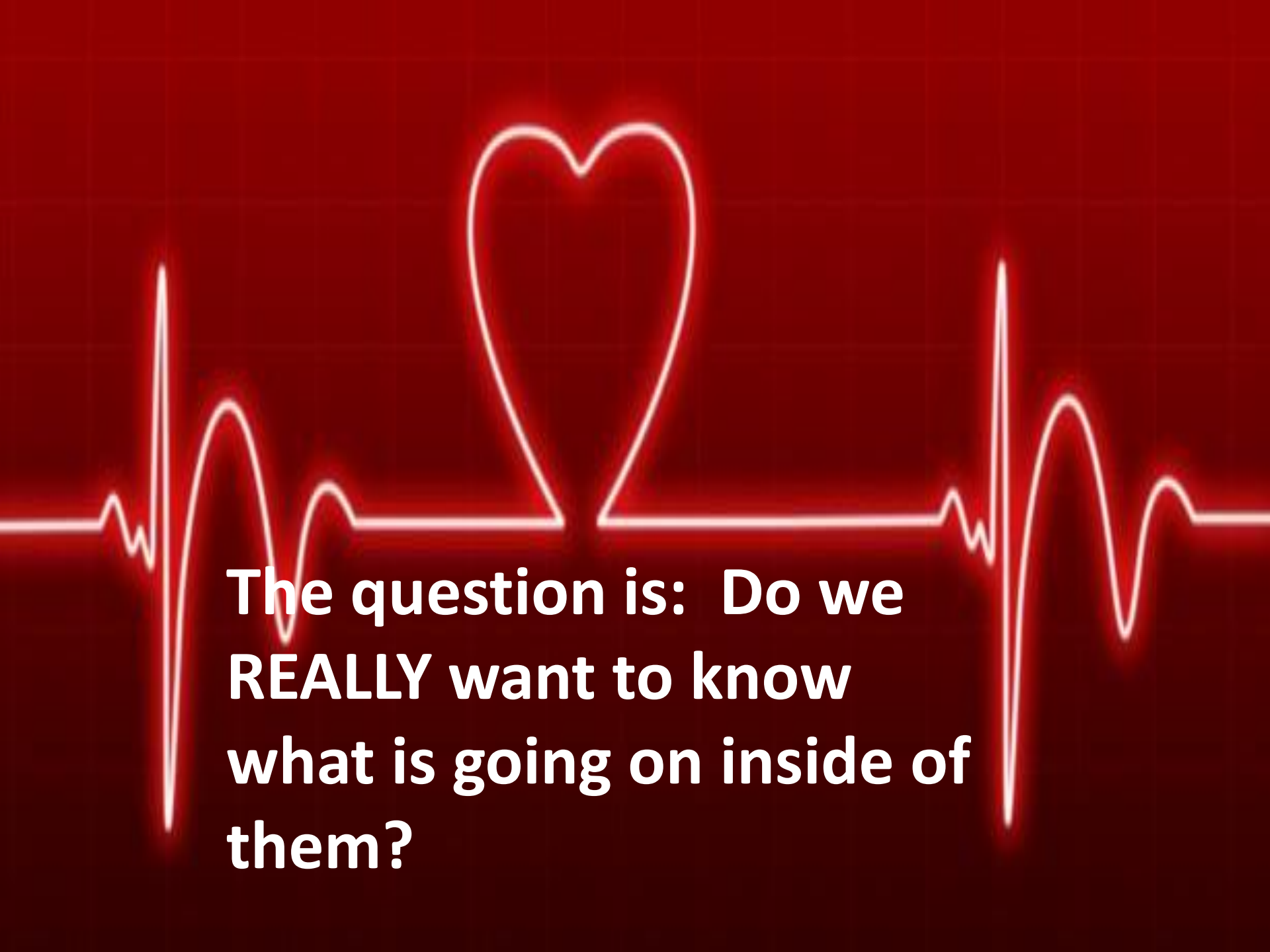
ACCOUNTABILITY



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



CLIMATE



**The question is: Do we
REALLY want to know
what is going on inside of
them?**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Report – June 2019

- Tracked over 14,000 middle and high school students over 20 years
- “Students who felt connected to their school and family as adolescents grew up safer and with better mental health than those who were disconnected as teenagers.”

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Report – June 2019

- “Connected adolescents were less than half as likely to be the victims of physical violence, to use illicit drugs, or to be diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease by their 20s or 30s, a significant decline in risk.”
- CDC recommends, “Providing teachers more training on classroom management, particularly positive behavior management and ways to make classrooms feel inclusive.”

National School Climate Center

- “The quality and character of school life.”
- “Based on patterns of students’, parents’ and school personnel’s experience of school life;”
- “Reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.”

Source: National School Climate Council, 2007

National School Climate Center

- “A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributory, and satisfying life in a democratic society.”

Source: National School Climate Council, 2007

A Positive School Climate Includes...

- Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe
- People are engaged and respected
- Students, families, and educators work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision
- Educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning
- Each person contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment

Source: National School Climate Council, 2007

PBIS: The Importance of School Climate

“Through a problem-solving approach, the PBIS framework begins with examining and improving the entire school climate. Teams use data to examine the reasons behaviors are occurring and then implement changes and interventions designed to address the identified needs. PBIS is a preventative and proactive system of addressing discipline problems that includes fair and consistent discipline practices unlike traditional discipline methods that have addressed discipline problems through punishment.”

-Georgia Department of Education, [The Strategic Plan: 2014-2020](#) (gosa.Georgia.gov)

"...school climate IS the plate that everything sits on."

the plate



-Peter M. Dewitt

PBIS vs. Traditional Discipline Model

In a school with PBIS...

- A positive school environment is evident.

In a school with traditional discipline...

- Staff and students are reactive and negative towards inappropriate behavior.

Source: Georgia Department of Education. 2013. "Addressing Climate, Safety, and Discipline in Georgia Schools."

PBIS vs. Traditional Discipline Model

In a school with PBIS...

- Educators, teach, monitor and acknowledge appropriate behavior before relying on punishment.

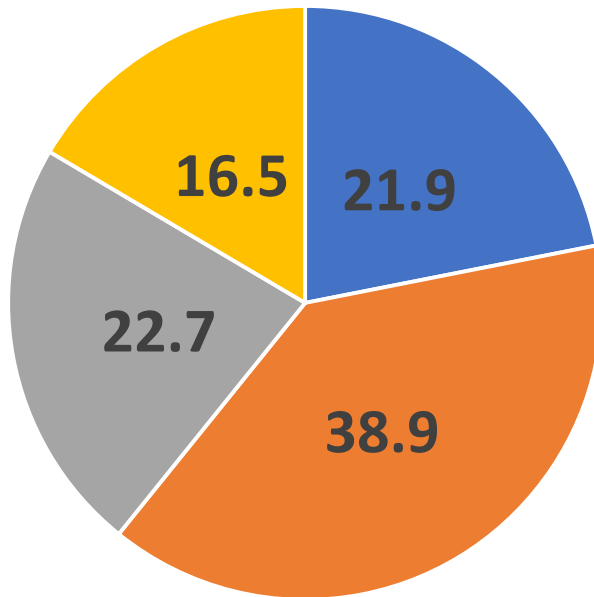
In a school with traditional discipline...

- Parents and students are provided with the Code of Conduct and the consequences if students violate the rules.

Source: Georgia Department of Education. 2013. ["Addressing Climate, Safety, and Discipline in Georgia Schools."](#)

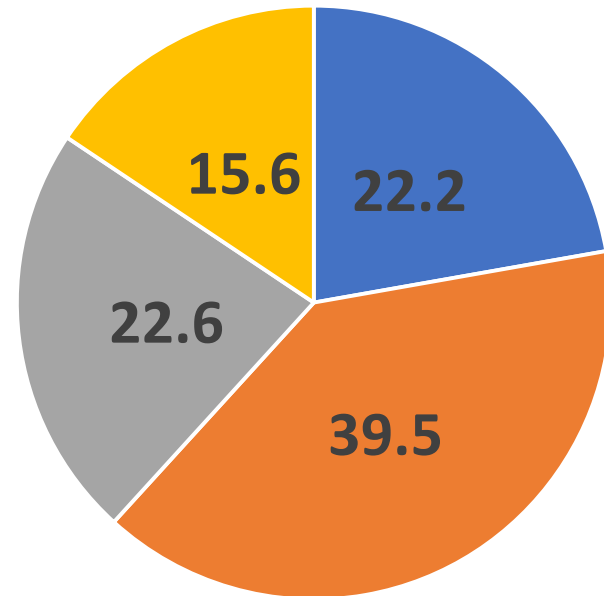
#90/69. Students are frequently recognized for good behavior.

2014-15



■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree
■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

2018-19



■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree
■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

PBIS vs. Traditional Discipline Model

In a school with PBIS...

- Adhering to school-wide expectations and rules are taught and recognized.

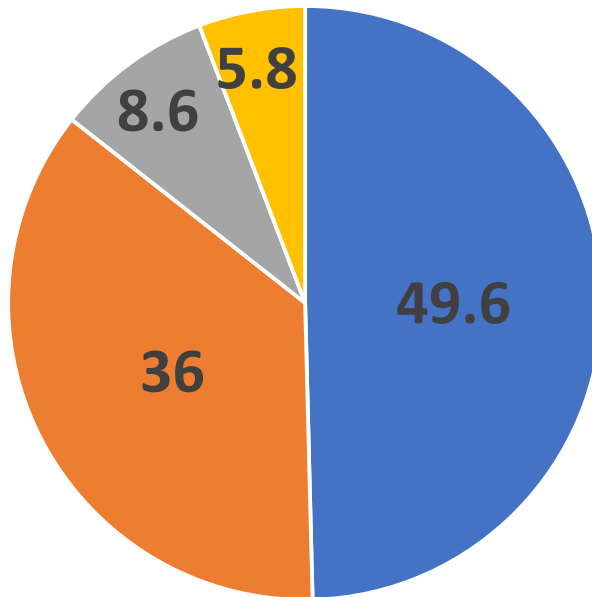
In a school with traditional discipline...

- Inappropriate behavior is more likely to be acknowledged than positive behavior.

Source: Georgia Department of Education. 2013. "Addressing Climate, Safety, and Discipline in Georgia Schools."

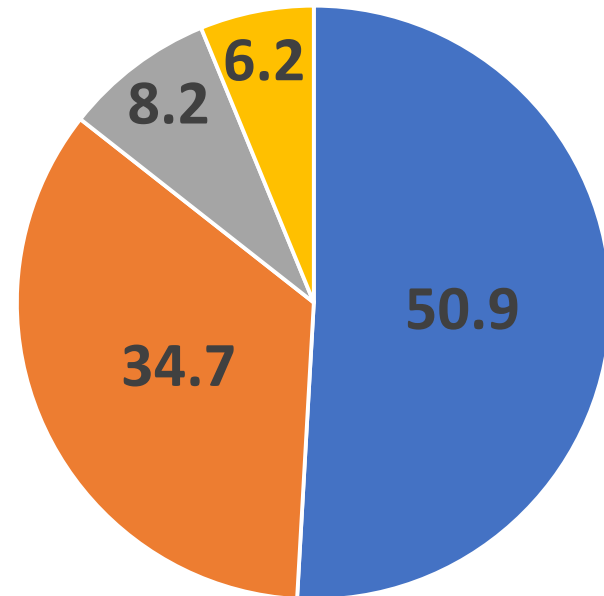
#88/67. My school sets clear rules for behavior.

2014-15



- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2018-19



- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PBIS vs. Traditional Discipline Model

In a school with PBIS...

- A predictable, consistent, fair, and equitable disciplinary system is the norm.

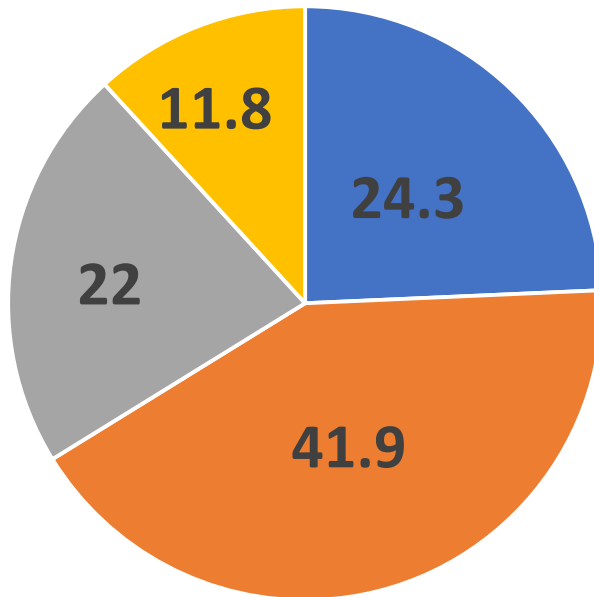
In a school with traditional discipline...

- Disciplinary practices, which are not based on data or research, are inconsistent. Consequences often lead to ISS/OSS resulting in a loss of instruction.

Source: Georgia Department of Education. 2013. ["Addressing Climate, Safety, and Discipline in Georgia Schools."](#)

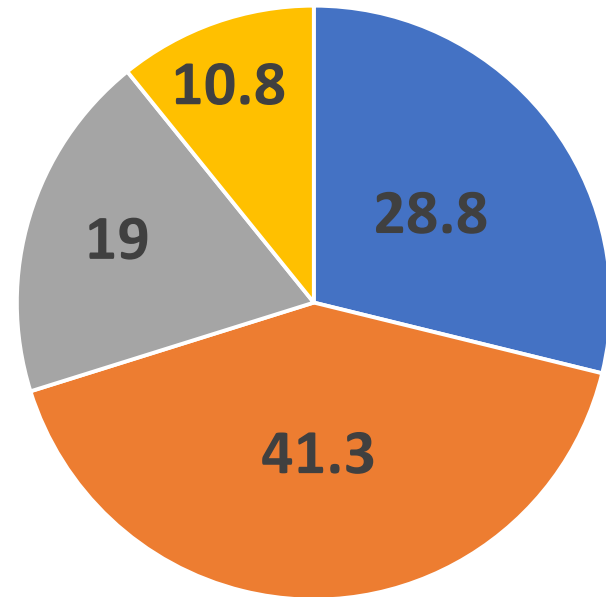
#13/11. All students are treated fairly by the adults in my school.

2014-15



■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree
■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

2018-19



■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree
■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

PBIS vs. Traditional Discipline Model

In a school with PBIS...

- The school has a tiered support system to meet the needs of all students.

In a school with traditional discipline...

- A system for providing students with a continuum of support is not present.

Source: Georgia Department of Education. 2013. "Addressing Climate, Safety, and Discipline in Georgia Schools."



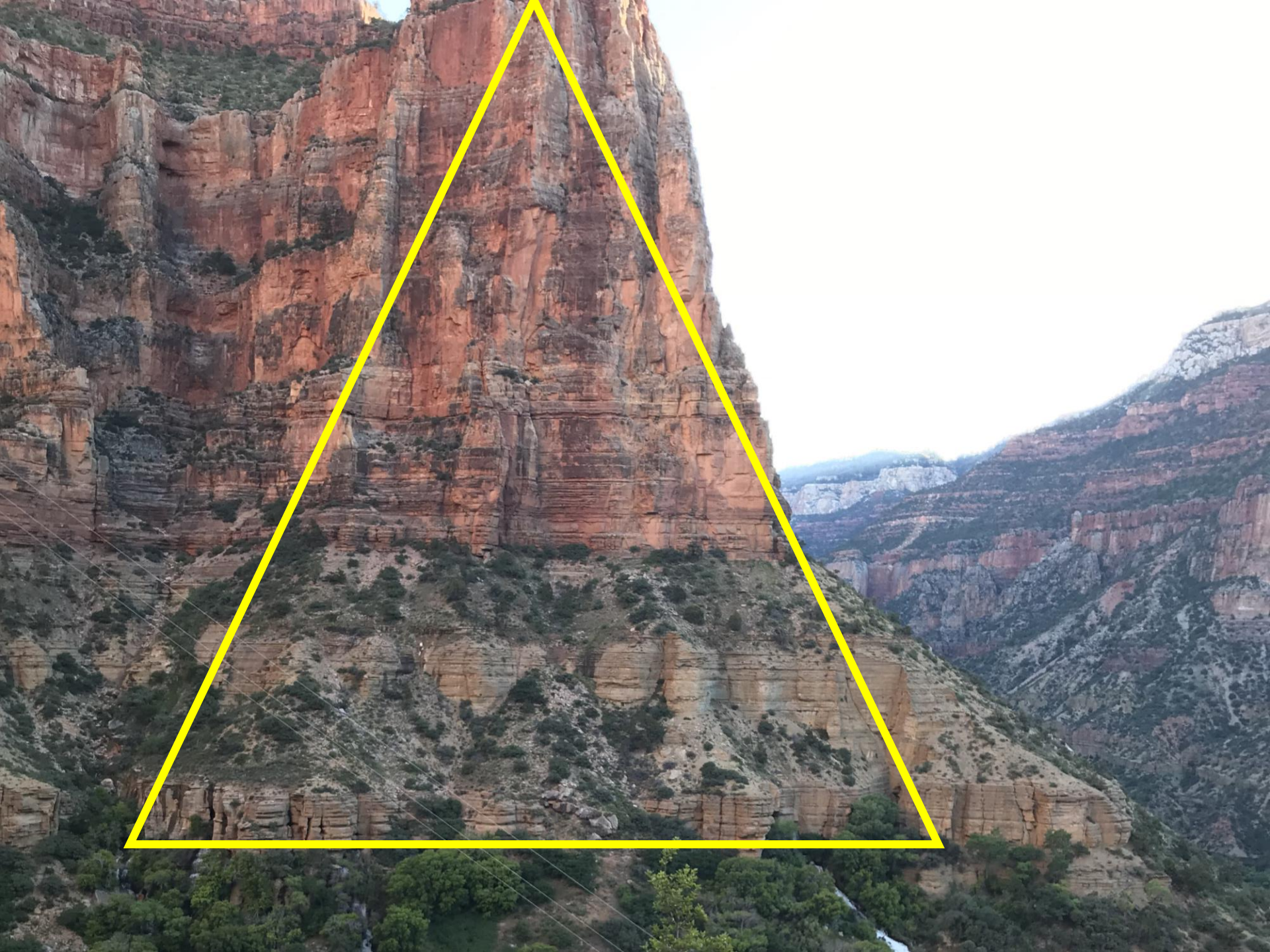
What is ISF?

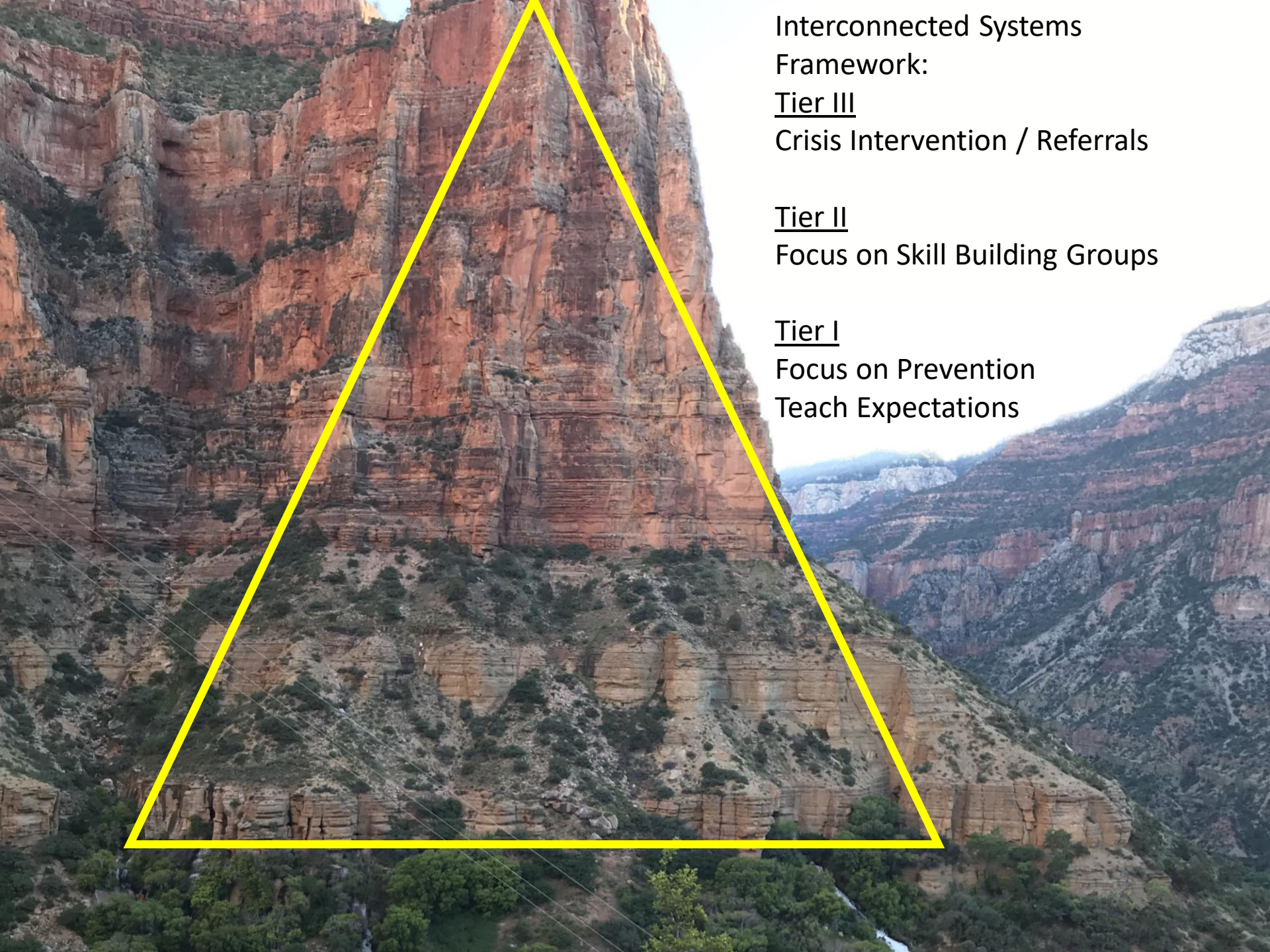
Interconnected Systems Framework

PBIS + SMH = ISF

- “The Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF) described in this monograph represents a proposed and developing interconnection of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and School Mental Health (SMH) systems to improve educational outcomes for all children and youth, especially those with or at risk of developing mental health challenges”







Interconnected Systems

Framework:

Tier III

Crisis Intervention / Referrals

Tier II

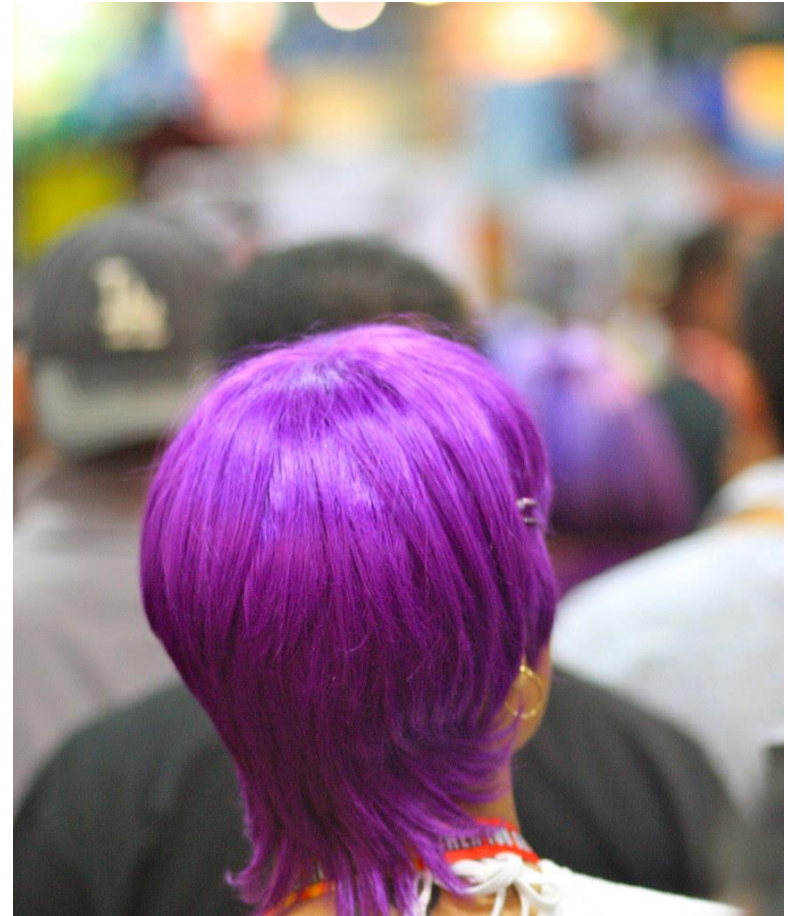
Focus on Skill Building Groups

Tier I

Focus on Prevention

Teach Expectations

Why is School Climate Important?



**Are our students running
to our schools, or away
from them?**

**“It is easier to build
strong children than
to repair broken
men.”**

~ Frederick Douglass

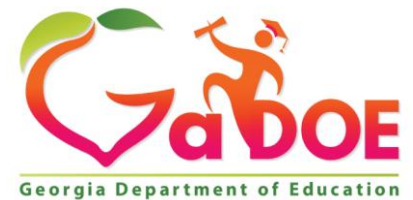


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Questions/Comments

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