

# Universal Screening Procedures for Middle School Students

Vicki Nishioka, Ph.D

Jeffrey Sprague, Ph.D.

Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior

University of Oregon

1265 University of Oregon

(541) 346-3592

# The Challenge of Delinquency

---

- 2-9% of the general population display chronic antisocial behavior
- 6-9% of children in schools account for >50% of discipline referrals (Sprague et al., 1999, Sugai et al, 2001)
- 12-22% of youth under 18 need mental health services (Surgeon General, 2000)
- 18% of middle and high school youth experience MDD (Seely and Lewinsohn, 2001)
- 8% of Lane County, Oregon youth (10-17) had a Youth Services referral in 2001
- 20% of offenders committed 87% of all new crime

# Common Themes of Evidence-based Practice

---

- Start early and continue through adolescence
- Early identification of at-risk children and youth
- Use universal, selected, and indicated interventions
- Match interventions to needs of students
- Target clusters of risk behaviors vs. individual behaviors
- Coordinate universal and individual student interventions

# Risk and Protective Factors

## Individual and Family

- Early aggression
- Impulsivity
- Social Skill deficits
- Family conflict
- Ineffective parenting
- Poor supervision and monitoring

## School

- Low school engagement
- Poor cognitive development

## Peers

- Associates with deviant peers
- Peer rejection

## Individual and Family

- Self-control
- Problem-solving skills
- Interpersonal & self-mgt. skills
- Positive parent involvement
- Effective parenting
- Parental monitoring

## School

- Adult mentor relationship at school
- Academic success

## Peers

- Associates with positive peer models
- Opportunities for participation in healthy activities

# Implications

---

- A subgroup of young people has multiple problems at serious levels.
- Interventions targeting that group have the potential to prevent a wide range of problems.
- Optimal prevention: interventions focused on youth at risk for multiple problems *and* universal interventions

# *Skills for Success* Program

---

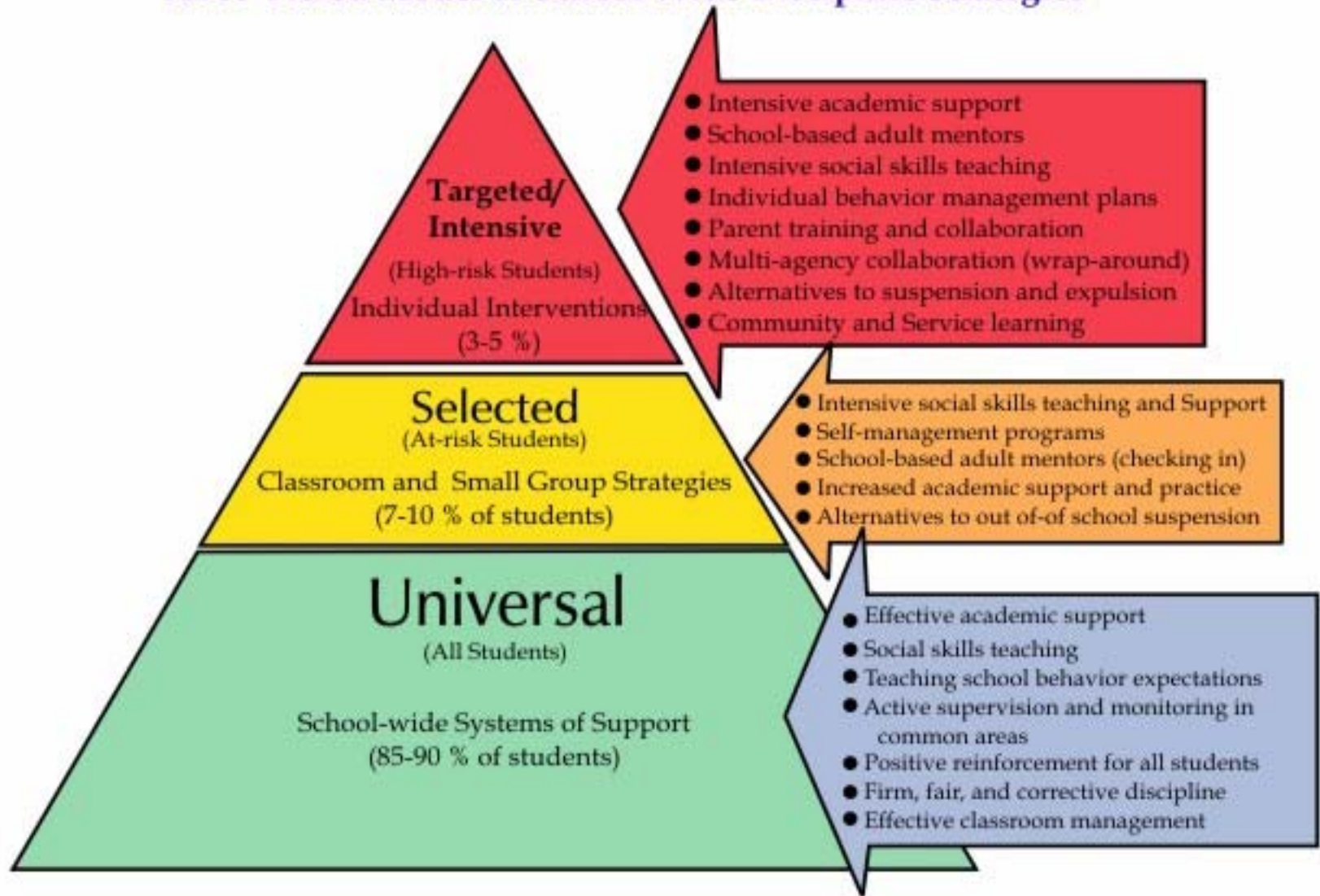
Universal prevention strategies and an array of program services individually matched to maximize student strengths and build skills that will promote learning, school achievements, and social competence.

# School safety and violence prevention requires . . .

---

- **Universal Prevention Procedures** that provide consistent expectations, high levels of reinforcement, and effective school discipline for problem behavior.
- **Early identification of students** who engage in anti-social and/or violent behaviors
- **Implementation of strategic plans** for prevention and intervention programs for schools, families, and communities

## Three-Tiered Model of School-Wide Discipline Strategies



# Screening and assessment process

---

- Screeners should identify students for identified concerns at 70% reliability
- Assessment for group decisions should be 80% reliable
- Assessment for individual student decisions should be 90% reliable

# Goals of Universal Screening

---

- Fast, efficient, and respectful
- Include all children and youth of interest
  - If we make an screening error, the error should identify students that are not at-risk
  - Errors should not overlook students that are at-risk
- Identify students for further assessment that are not at-risk

# Universal Screening Procedures

---

## ■ **Multi-gated System**

- Early identification of students at-risk for school failure
- Screen 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from elementary feeder schools in spring
- Screen middle school students in late October.

## ■ **Procedure**

- Ask teachers to nominate 3-5 boys and 3-5 girls who may be at risk for significant difficulty due to externalizing behaviors
- Ask teachers to nominate 3-5 boys and 3-5 girls who may be at risk for school problems due to internalizing behaviors
- Screen nominated students with short screener

# Important Guidelines

---

- Ensure each student is considered by one teacher
- Respectful and non-threatening language
- Identifies students with internalizing as well as externalizing behavior
- Adaptable to variations in school schedules and teacher preferences
- Required teacher time and effort is reasonable

# Universal Screening

---

- Stage 1: Teacher Nomination
  - Nominated 10 students with externalizing behaviors and 10 students with internalizing behaviors
- Stage 2: Screeners
  - Middle and High School: Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale
- Stage 3: School Record Review and school staffing

***TOTAL TIME COMMITMENT: ONE CLASS PERIOD***

## Teacher Nomination Form

---

---

Please identify 3-5 male students and 3-5 female students that, in your opinion, are at-risk for school failure.

Male	Female
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

Please identify 3-5 male students and 3-5 female students that are at-risk for emotional and behavioral problems (such as fighting, depression, **significant relationship problems**, etc.). Note: some of these students may overlap or be the same students as those nominated for school failure.

Male	Female
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

Thank you for your time!

# Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (Epstein & Sharma, 1998)

---

- Protective Factors
- Skill-based
- Considers student as part of school and family system
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - Intrapersonal Skills
  - Family Involvement
  - School Functioning
  - Affective Skills

# BERS Examples

---

- Interpersonal
  - Uses anger management skills
  - Accepts criticism
  - Is kind toward others
- Family Involvement
  - Demonstrates a sense of belonging to family
  - Interacts positively with parents
  - Participates in family activities

# And

---

- Intrapersonal
  - Is self confident
  - Requests support from peers and family
  - Identifies own feelings
- School Functioning
  - Completes a request on first request
  - Completes school tasks on time
  - Studies for tests

# And

---

- Affective
  - Asks for help
  - Shows concern for the feelings of others
  - Discusses problems with others

# Our Partner Schools

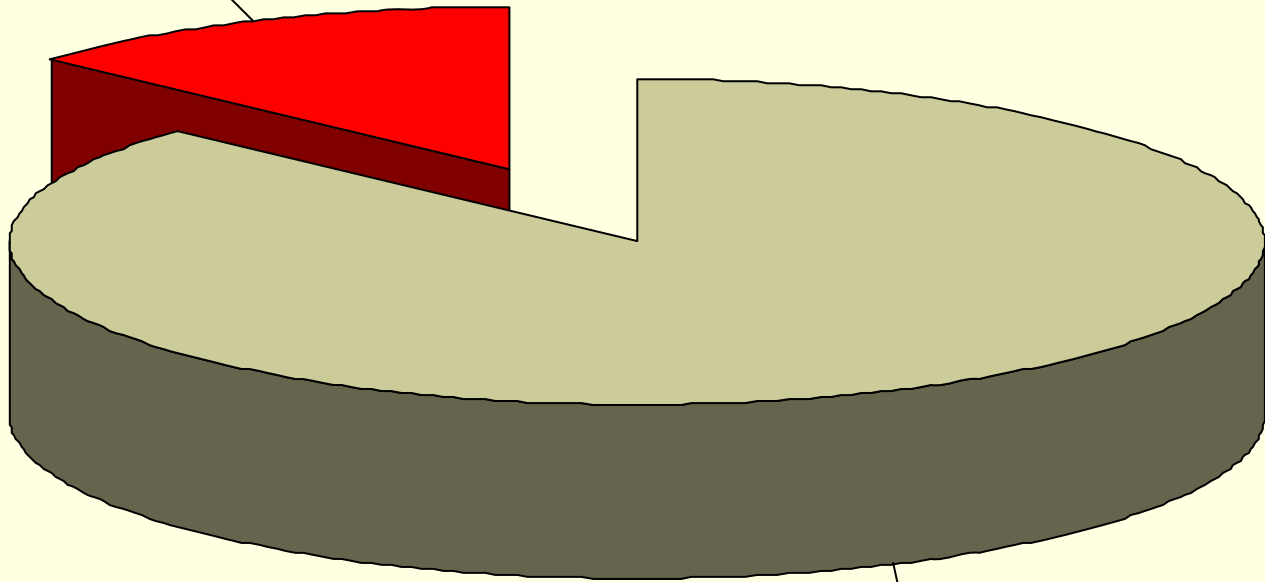
---

- 7 high schools, 8 middle schools, and 7 elementary schools
  - 6096 total students
  - Free/Reduced Lunch – 29% to 72%
  - Ethnicity – 6% to 59% non-white

# Percentage of At-Risk Students (n = 6096 Total Students Considered)

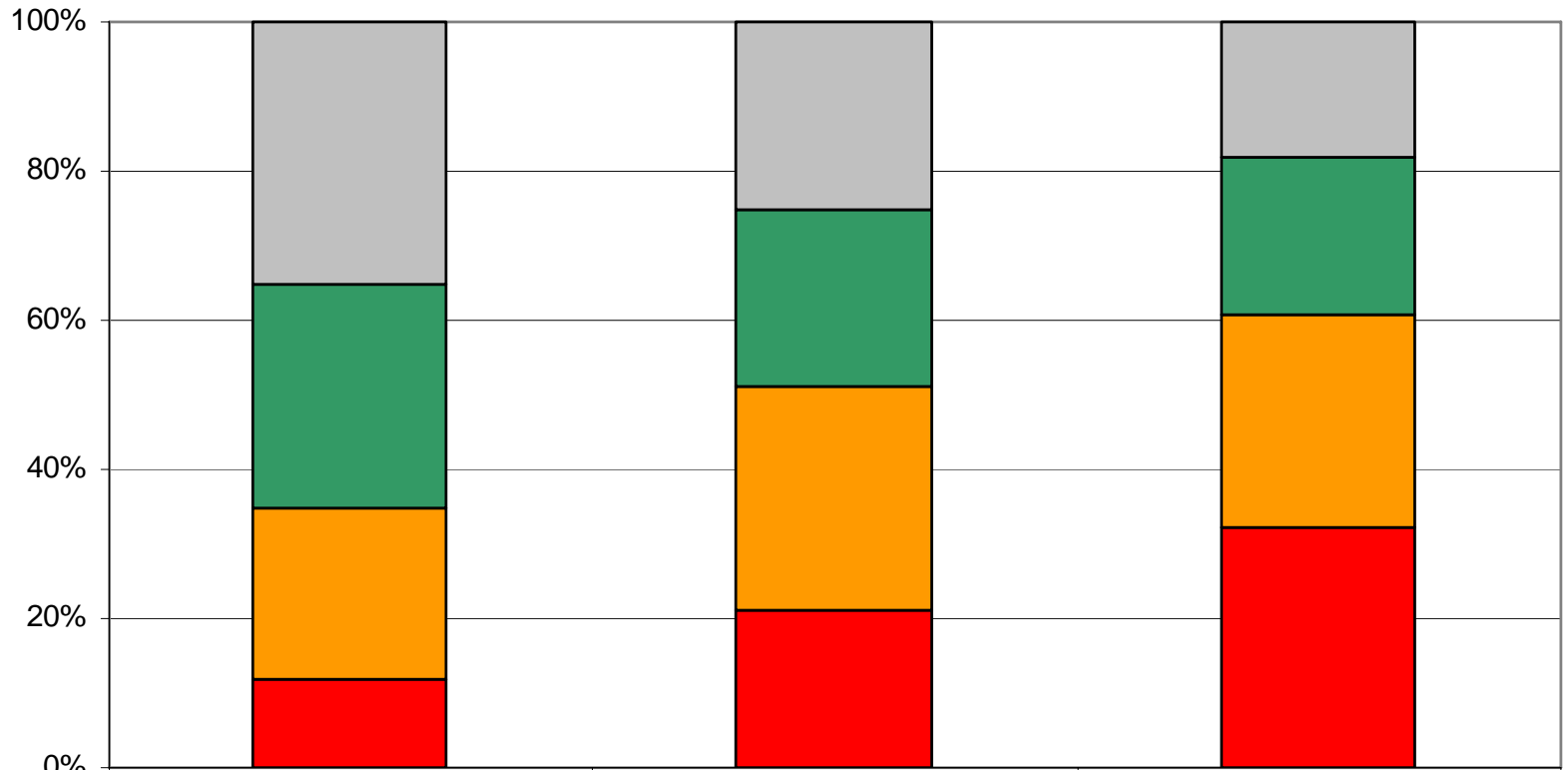
---

**15% At-Risk  
Students**



**85% Typical  
Students**

## Universal Screening Results for Elementary, Middle, and High Schools (1251 At-Risk Students)

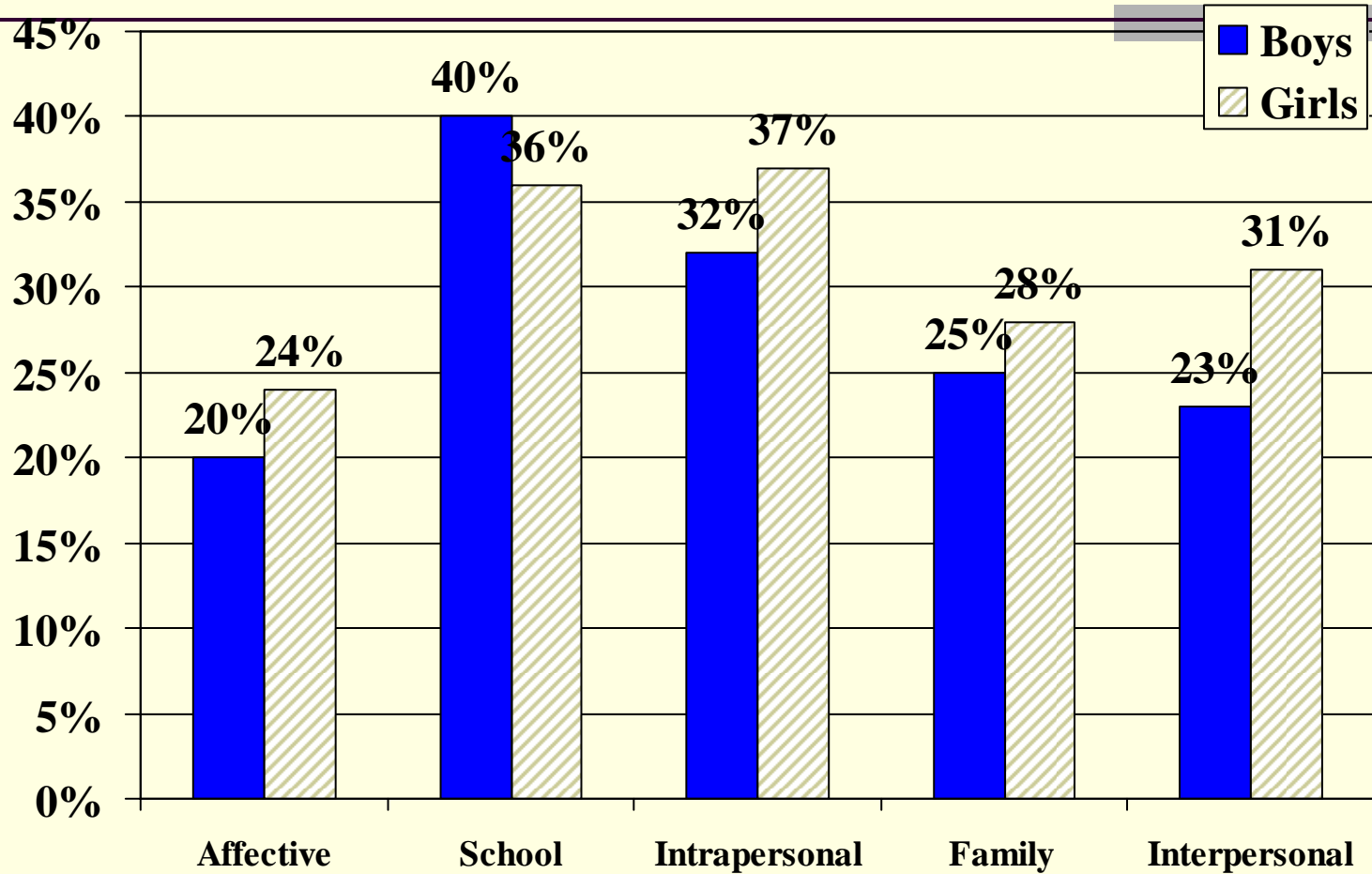


	Elementary	Middle	High
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #cccccc; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Average	35%	25%	18%
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #388e3c; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Below Average	30%	24%	21%
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #f39c12; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Poor	23%	30%	28%
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #e74c3c; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Very Poor	12%	21%	32%

# A Comparison of Four Schools

Schools	Total Sample	At-Risk	% At-Risk
A	542	60	<b>11%</b>
B	436	73	<b>15%</b>
C	234	50	<b>21%</b>
D	253	82	<b>32%</b>

# Number of At-Risk Students by Gender and BERS Subscales (n = 1470 students)



# What can Universal Screening do??

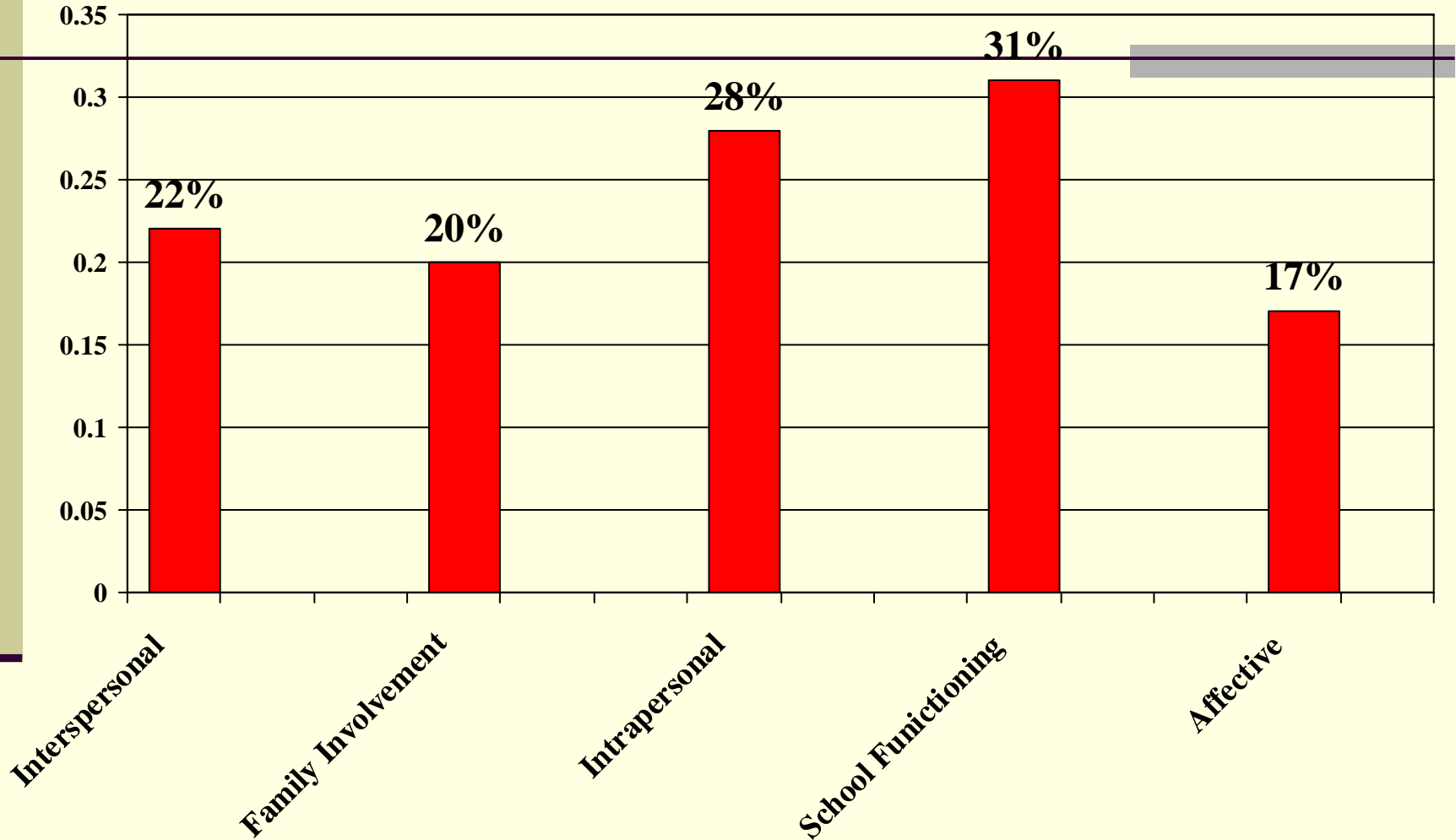
---

## ■ ASSIST WITH PLANNING

- Informs schools about the student population
- Find groups of students with common needs
- May help with Resource Mapping of their services

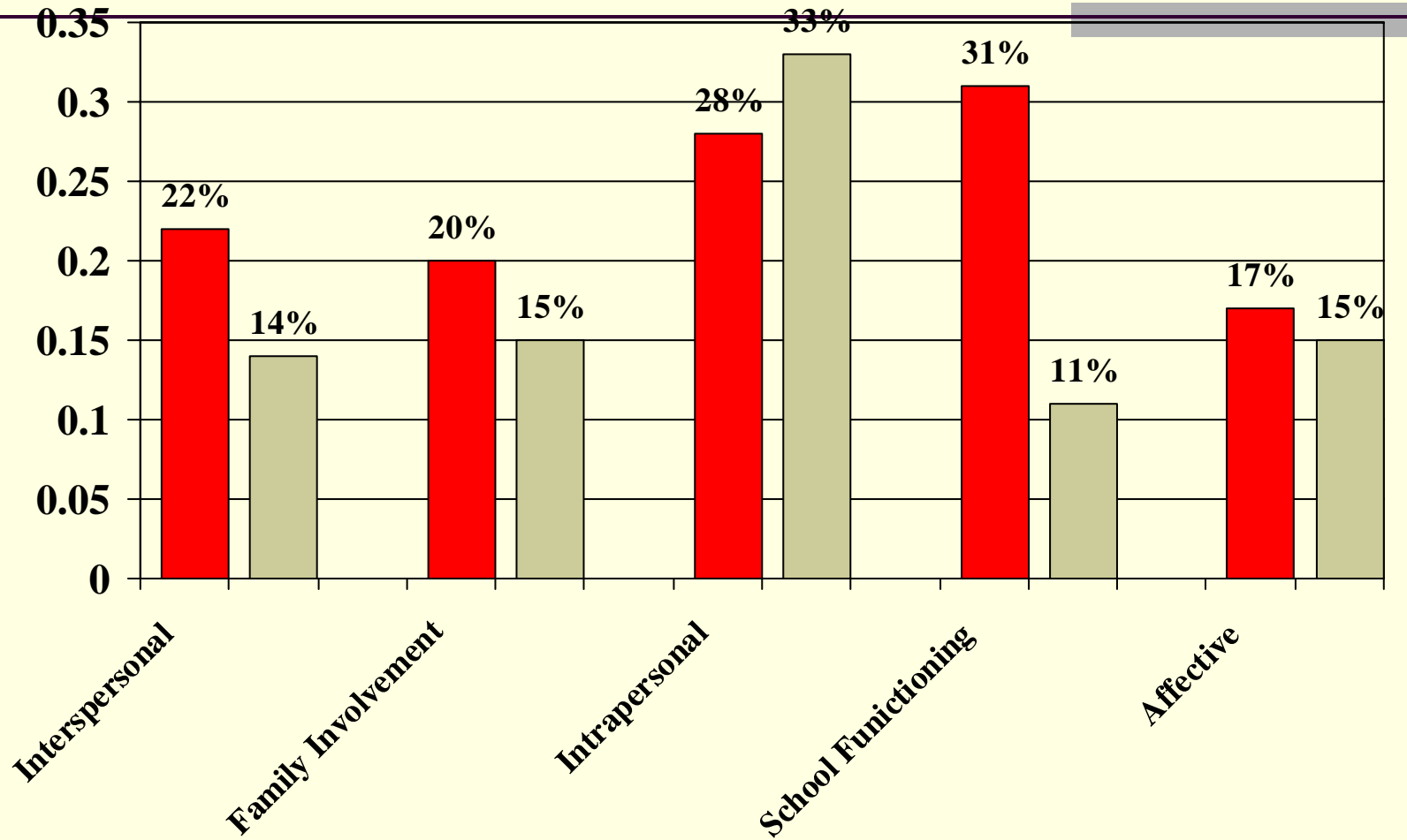
# Universal Screening for Two Schools

(School D: 253 students)



# Universal Screening for Two Schools

(School D: 253 students and School C: 234 students)



# Things to Consider

- 32% At-Risk Population

## **School Functioning -31%**

- 17% to 28% of students
  - Intrapersonal
  - Interpersonal
  - Family involvement
  - Affective

- 22% At-Risk Population

## **Intrapersonal Skills – 33%**

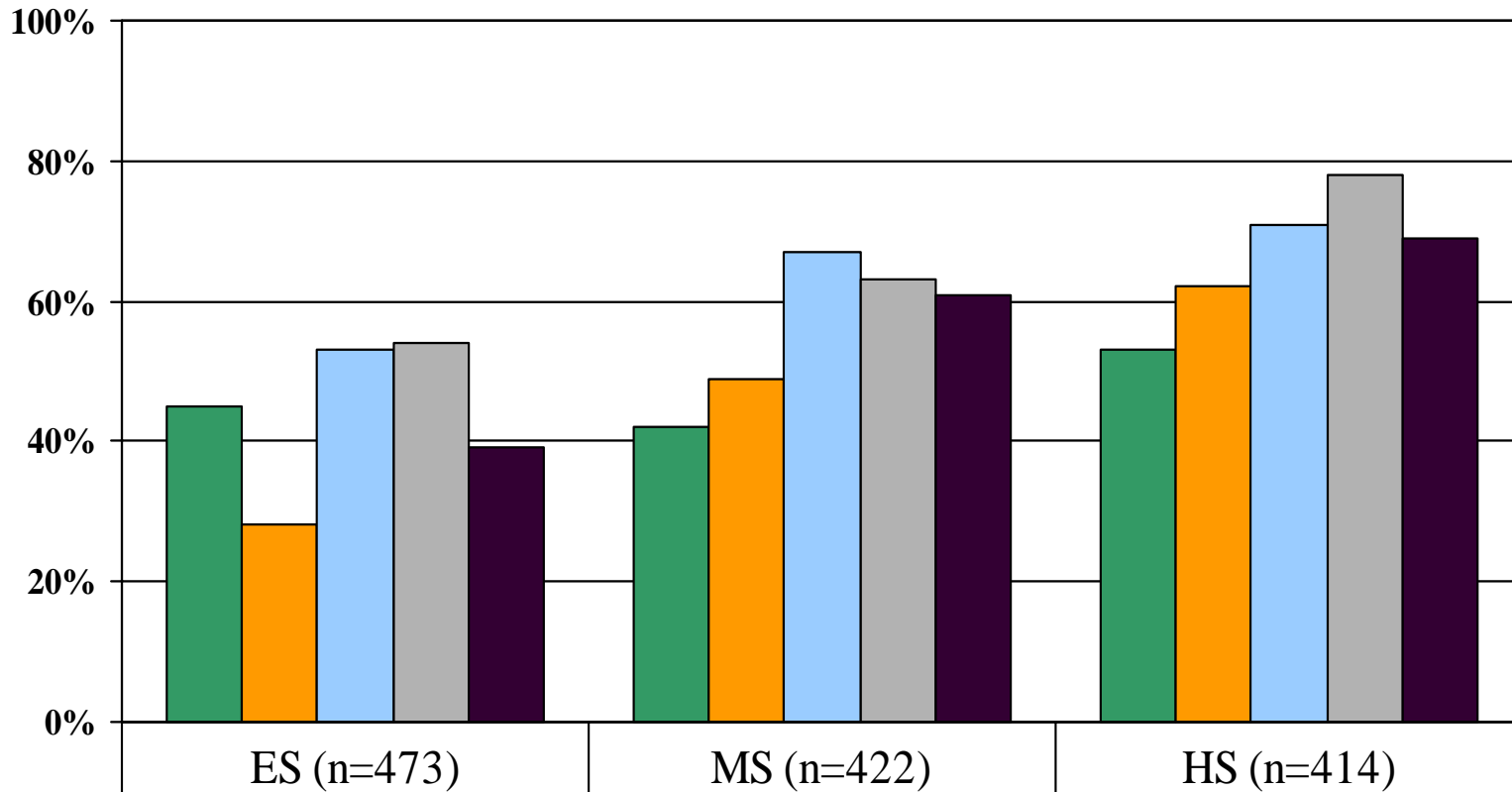
- 11% - 14% of students
  - Affective
  - Family involvement
  - Interpersonal
  - School functioning

# Some Ideas

---

- School Functioning
  - Teach study skills
  - Check and Connect
  - Academic support/tutoring
  
- Intrapersonal Skills
  - Self-management/social skills
  - Recognition system for social skills
  - Coping with Depression
  - Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions for Trauma in Schools

# Universal Screening By Grade Level (22 schools)



■ Interpersonal	45%	42%	53%
■ Family Involvement	28%	49%	62%
■ Intrapersonal	53%	67%	71%
■ School Functioning	54%	63%	78%
■ Affective	39%	61%	69%

# Big Ideas

---

- Behavioral and emotional strengths decreased as students get older
- Family involvement strongest for elementary
- Highest percentage of students had difficulty with
  - Intrapersonal
  - school functioning

# Help with Individual Student Planning: Two Student Examples

---

BERS Scale	Sally	Matt
Interpersonal	Below Average	Below average
Family involvement	Poor	Average
Intrapersonal	Average	Poor
School functioning	Very poor	Below Average
Affective	Average	Very poor

# Some Ideas

## Sally

- Family Involvement and School Functioning
  - Increase communication with parents
  - Help build system for homework
  - School travel card

## Matt

- Intrapersonal and Affective
  - Increase opportunities for healthy peer activities
  - Mentoring
  - Skill building