

MENTAL HEALTH & MENTAL DISORDERS

So far we have covered...

- Developmental aspects of the normal adolescent
- How to explore the adolescent's health and lifestyles
- How to fit various health settings to the specific needs of young people

OBJECTIVES

1. Differentiate normal and abnormal psychological functioning during adolescence
2. *List and recognize the main symptoms of common mental health problems/disorders in adolescence*
3. Lay the foundation to investigate a situation symptomatic of mental health problems
4. *Describe strategies & interventions which positively impact on adolescent mental health*

Entry scenario

A divorced mother comes to consultation with her son Bill, a 16 year-old only child, complaining about the fact that he is withdrawn and has hardly talked to her for two months.

The boy himself denies any problem, despite the fact that he is skipping school often and his grades are dropping. The boy sees his father every two weeks, and the father, according to the mother, doesn't seem to be troubled by his son's situation.

Until the age of 14, Bill was a bright, talkative, active kid. After his father left home two years ago to live with another women, Bill's situation has gradually worsened with conflicts around the issue of social outings and school duties, and a deterioration of his behaviour at school.

Entry scenario

Over the last three months, Bill skipped school several times because of headaches and stayed alone in his room, playing his guitar. He quit his football club 4 months ago, and has not seen his friends for two months.

The consultation was prompted by the fact that the mother discovered an entire package of sleeping pills in her son's desk.

Differentiate normal and abnormal psychological functioning during adolescence

List and recognize the main symptoms of common mental health problems/disorders in adolescence

DEFINITIONS

Mental health develops and establishes itself through several processes thanks to which an individual acquires motivations for and capacities to function in an optimal way within a specific context and environment

DEFINITIONS

More specifically, mental health involves those processes through which one individual is able to cope with stressful situations, build a positive self-image and self-esteem, develop cognitive skills as well as affective capacities and insight, and finally to build meaningful relationships with others

DEFINITIONS

■ Mental health is defined by the World Health Organisation as “a state of well-being whereby individuals recognize their abilities, are able to cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and make a contribution their communities”

■ *A mental disorder is:*

- ❖ Behavioural or psychological
- ❖ Of clinical significance
- ❖ With a concomitant distress and/or a handicap, an elevated risk of death, or an important loss of freedom
- ❖ Not the expected cultural response to any situation

Estimate the percentage of the adolescent population in your region that suffer from symptoms of mental health problems within a given year.

Any trend ?

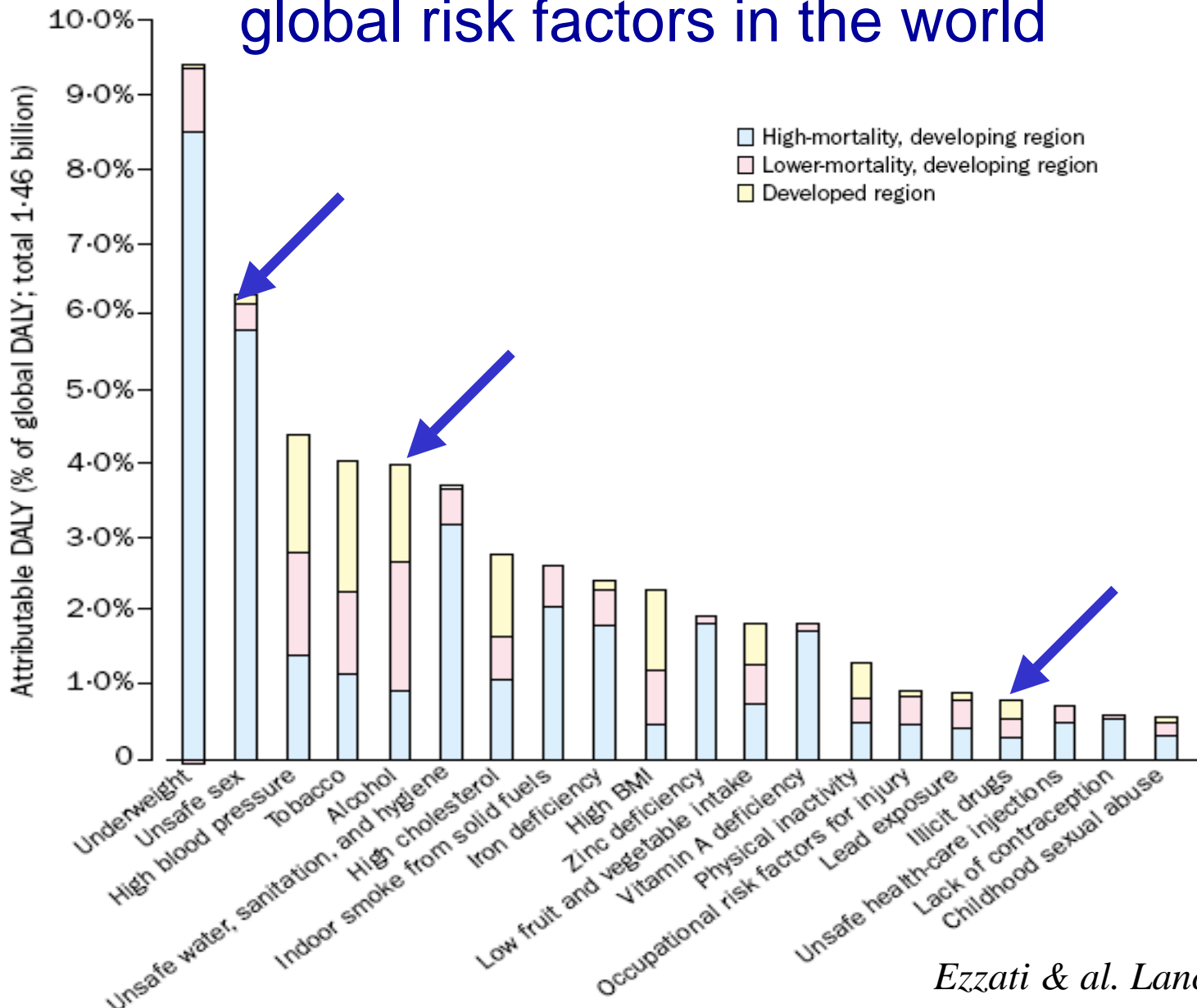
WHY FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS ?

- Many disorders appear during adolescence
- Increasing prevalence around the world

- Comorbidity, co-occurring problems
 - Violence
 - Substance use
 - School failure
 - Problems in the area of sexual/reproductive health

- Often diagnosed too late

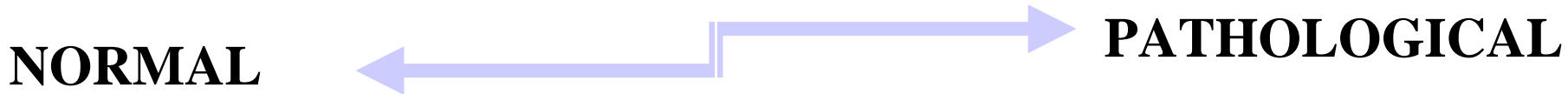
Burden of disease: contribution of the 20 leading global risk factors in the world



**Differentiate normal and abnormal
psychological functioning during
adolescence**

**List and recognize the main symptoms
of common mental health
problems/disorders in adolescence**

CONTINUUM OR BREAKPOINT?



List the main symptoms of
mental health problems

MAIN SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS/DISORDERS

- Signs of overt mood depression, low mood, tearfulness
- Lack of interest in usual activities
- Somatic complaints such as headache, stomach-ache, backache or sleeping problems
- Self-harming behaviours, aggression
- Isolation, loneliness
- Deviant behaviour such as theft and robbery, disappearance of money
- Change in school performance or behaviour
- Use of psychoactive substances (including over-the-counter medication)
- Weight loss or failure to gain weight with growth

CRITERIA

■ Behavioral criteria

- Withdrawal
- Violence deviant behaviour
- Substance use
- School problems
- Physical complaints

CRITERIA

■ Emotional criteria

- Fatigue
- Sleeping problems
- Anxiety
- Mood shifts
- Sadness
- Psychotic symptoms, hallucinations

CRITERIA

■ Environmental problems

- Mental health problems in the family
- Unfavourable school environment
- Poor peer support
- Poverty, migration, war...

THREE MAIN CRITERIA

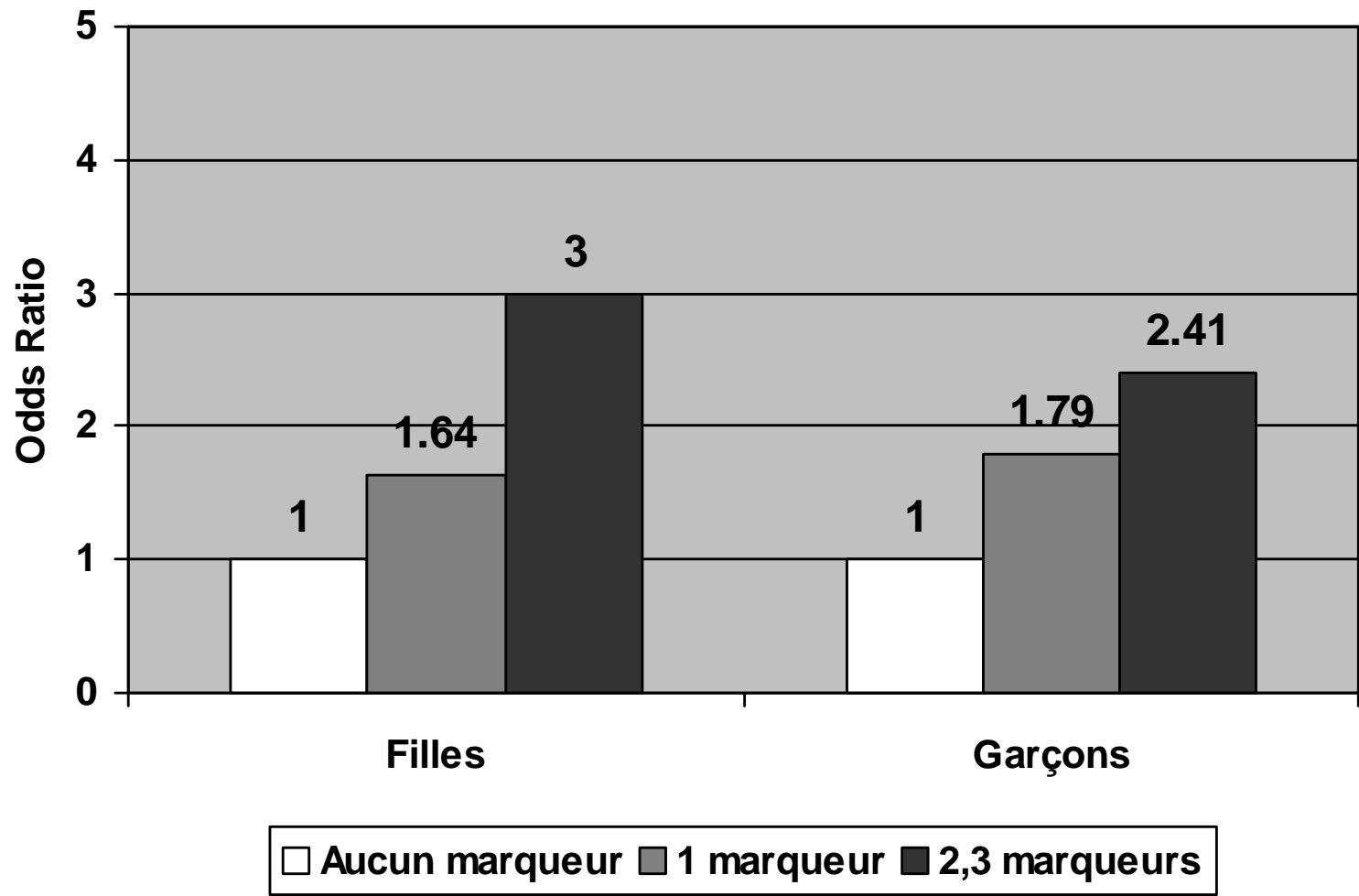
1. problems lasting more than a few weeks should be considered as potentially harmful
2. persistence and severity of fixed symptoms.
(normal adolescent progress is marked by fluctuations in mood and behaviour)
3. impact of symptoms on the young person's general functioning

Apply the list of main
symptoms to Bill's situation

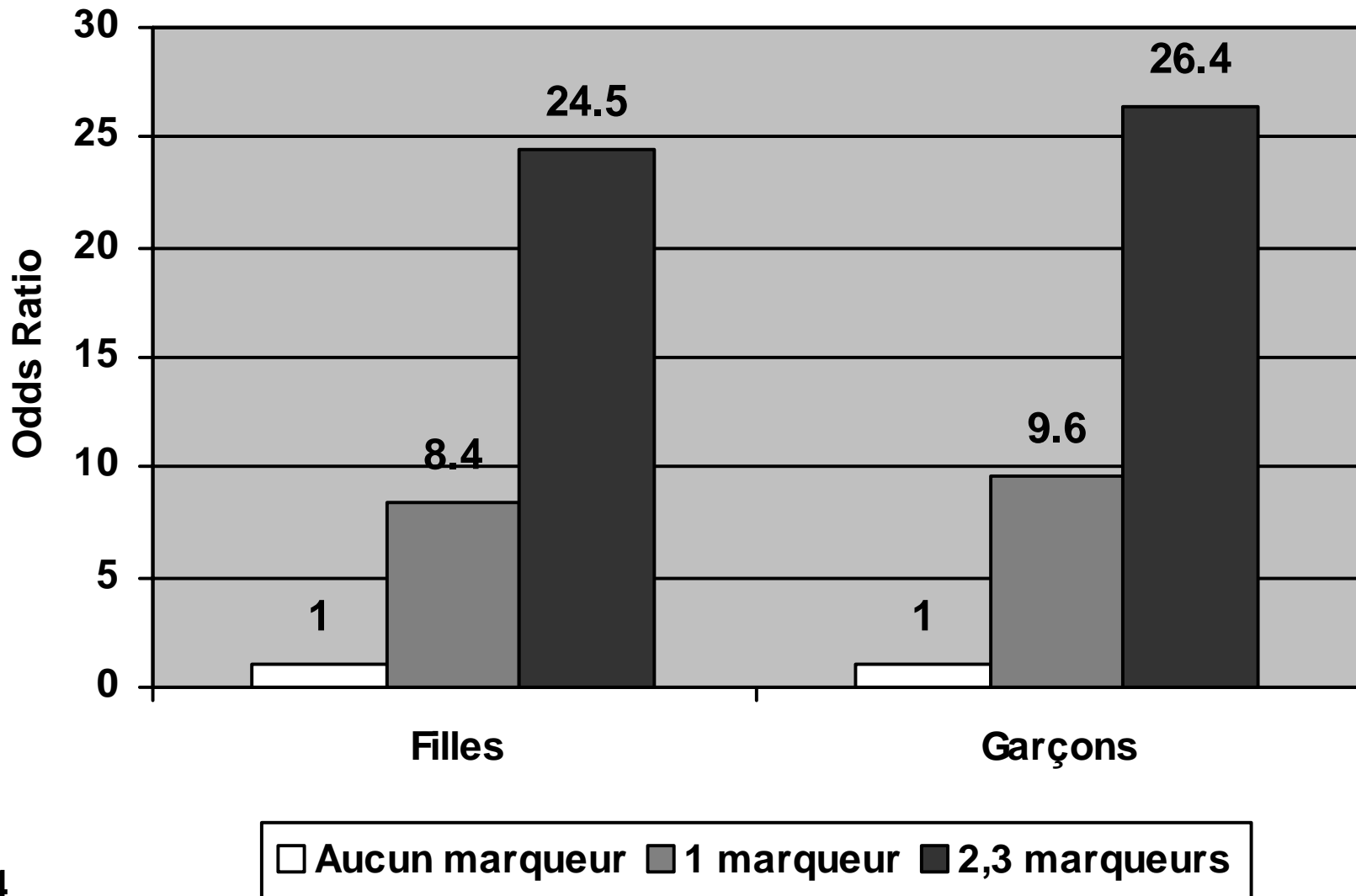
Lay the foundation to investigate
a situation symptomatic of mental
health problems

Risk, vulnerability and resilience

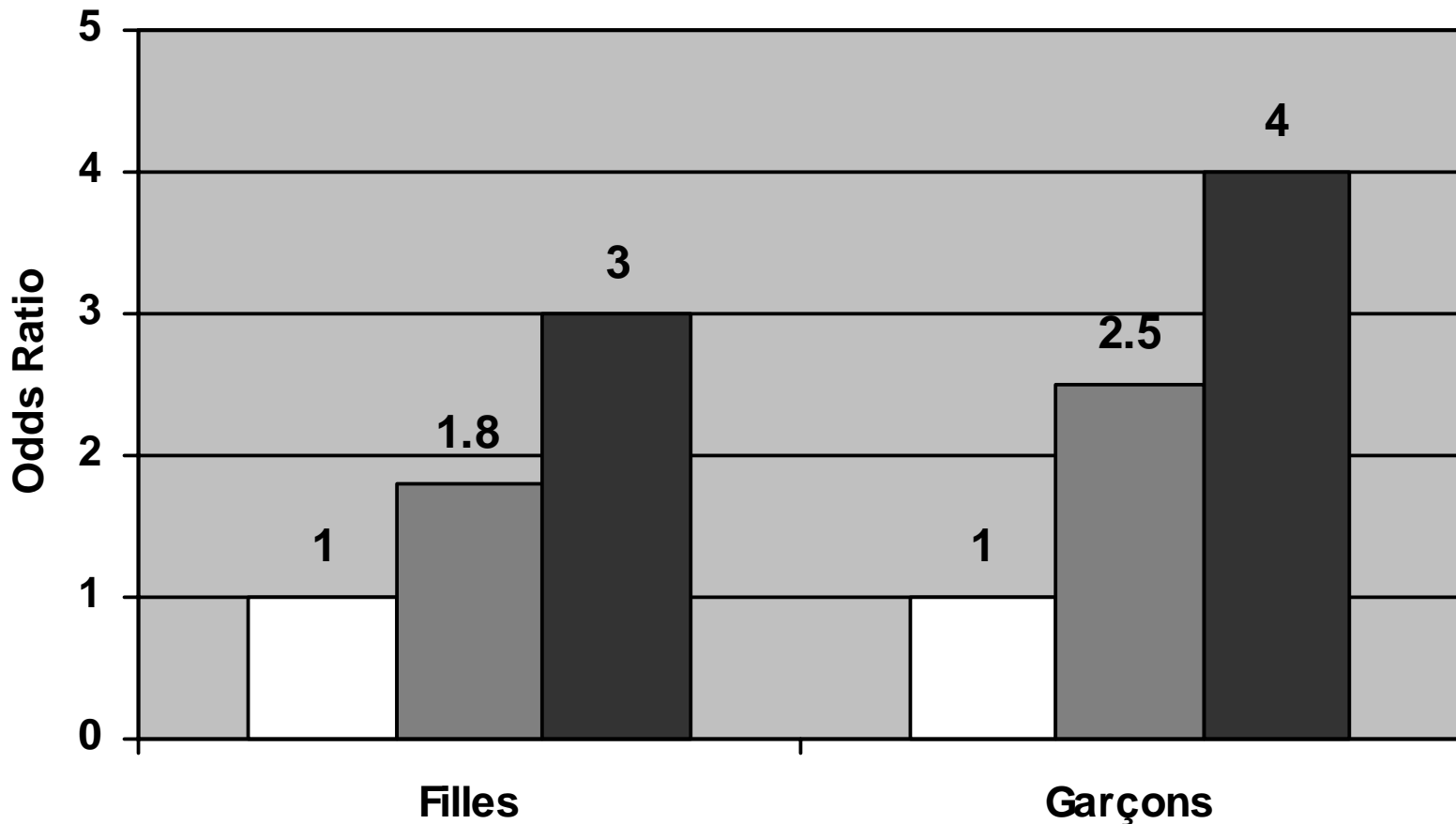
Vulnerability and tobacco use



Vulnerability and suicide attempt



Vulnerability and violent behaviour

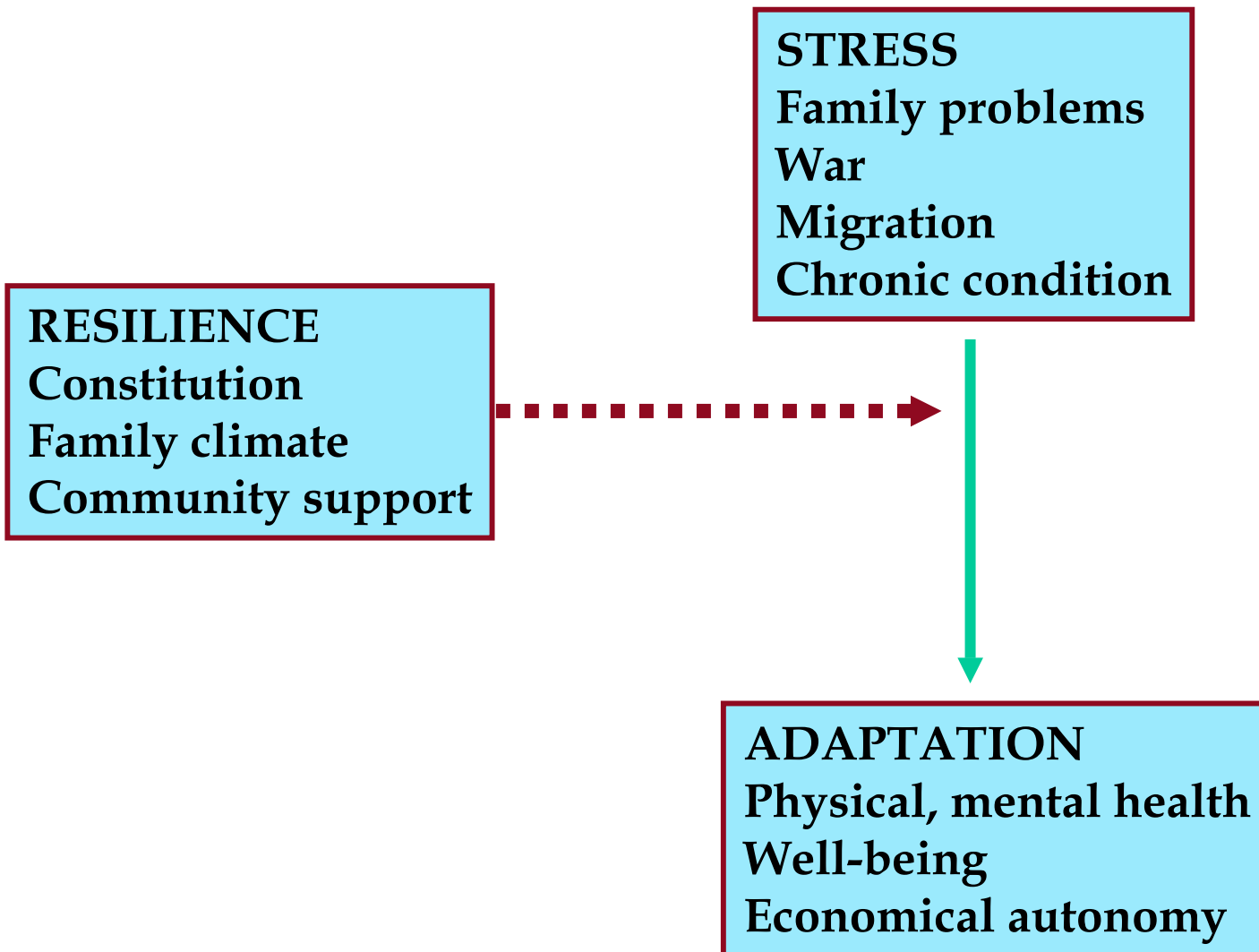


Aucun marqueur
 1 marqueur
 2,3 marqueurs

Coping with adversity: the concept of resilience

RESILIENCE :

Why do adolescents chronically facing a stressful situation cope with it and engage in a fruitful existence?



RESILIENCE :

- individual & constitutional factors
- family, social & environmental factors

CONSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

- ✓ Capacity in raising the adults' interest
- ✓ Effective and flexible adaptation strategies
- ✓ Social maturity, search for responsibilities
- ✓ High self-esteem, autonomy
- ✓ External locus of control

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

- ✓ **A stable relationship over time with an adult referee**
- ✓ The family is providing opportunities to take responsibilities
- ✓ Stress on moral/religious values
- ✓ Strong network of peers / friends
- ✓ Good school climate and appropriate pedagogic approaches

SOME FACTORS

Vulnerability (risk)

Personnal

Physical abuse
Sensation seeking
Early puberty
Chronic stress
Depression

Family

Lives with one parent
Bad relations with parents
Poor educational climate
Substance use by parents
Low SES

Social

School absenteeism
Bad grades
Poor social network

Protection

Personnal

High self esteem
Internal locus of control
Religiosity
Social skills

Family

Good relations with parents
Parents' support & expectation
Parents' monitoring
High SES

Social

Link between school & parents
Good grades
Good school climate

Lay the foundation to
investigate a situation
symptomatic of mental
health problems

Refer

Referral process

What are the barriers to access mental health care ?

- Lack of trained professionals
- The adolescents with mental health problems are not identified (covert symptoms)
- Adolescents don't want to be labelled as "mad"
- The families don't have the money to pay for these kind of diseases

Referral process

overcoming the barriers

- Investigate and confirm mental health problem
- Ask the adolescent and his/her parents for solutions (tackling the environment)
- Discuss referral

Small group exercise

**HOW, IN YOUR WORK SITUATION,
COULD YOU IMPROVE ACCESS TO
MENTAL HEALTH CARE ?**

- For individuals (Bill)***
- For general public***

Barriers for migrant young people

- Language barriers – access to interpreter who is trustworthy
- Financial
- Lack of cultural competence – where to go for service?
- Different/other ways of explaining ailments-
different explanatory systems

*Describe strategies &
interventions which positively
impact on adolescent mental
health*

To some extent, the promotion of mental health and of health do overlap a lot (see WHO definition of health).

It is important to keep in mind the impact of the environment:

- Socio-economical situation of the family
- Family structure and functioning
- School climate
- Economical situation
- Political situation

LIFE SKILLS

LIFE SKILLS

- Around the world, **Life Skills-Based Education (LSBE)** is being adopted as a mean to empower young people in challenging situations. LSBE refers to an interactive process of teaching and learning which enables learners to acquire knowledge and to develop attitudes and skills which support the adoption of healthy behaviours.
- *LSBE strengthens educational **processes** by insisting on participatory and gender-sensitive teaching and learning methods*
- *LSBE enhances the quality of **content** by addressing issues relevant to the lives of learners, both boys and girls*

The life skills that reinforce health

SKILL
Personal interactions
Communication

The 1st level
Enhancing the relation with friends and family communicative skills, verbal and non verbal

The 2nd level
Forming good relations and patience for loss of some friends.
Resisting peer /media pressure

The 3rd level
Seeking others' support and advice as needed

The life skills that reinforce health

SKILLS

The critical
conception

The creative
thought

The 1st level

**Learning the
critical
approaches.**

**Developing the
potentiality of
creative thought**

The 2nd level

**Making objective
decisions on
different choices
and risks.**

**Originating
creative thoughts
over factual
issues**

The 3rd level

**Resisting the
impact of media
related to
adoption of
drugs and
smoking.**

**Adapting to the
social condition
variable.**

The life skills that reinforce health

SKILLS

Dealing with stress, tension and frustration.

Dealing with emotions and feelings

The 1st level

Determining the pressure and stress sources.

Identifying the different sentiment indicators.

The 2nd level

Learning to approach and how to deal with stress and frustration situations.

Understanding the effect of feelings on the behavior

The 3rd level

Handling difficult and obstinate situations

Handling the emotional tension.

The life skills that reinforce health

SKILLS
Decision making
Problem solution

The 1st level

Learning the basic steps for decision making.

Learning the basic steps for problem solving

The 2nd level

Selecting difficult choices.

Generating solutions to dilemmas.

The 3rd level

Making decisions on life plans.

Settling disputes.

THE SCHOOL

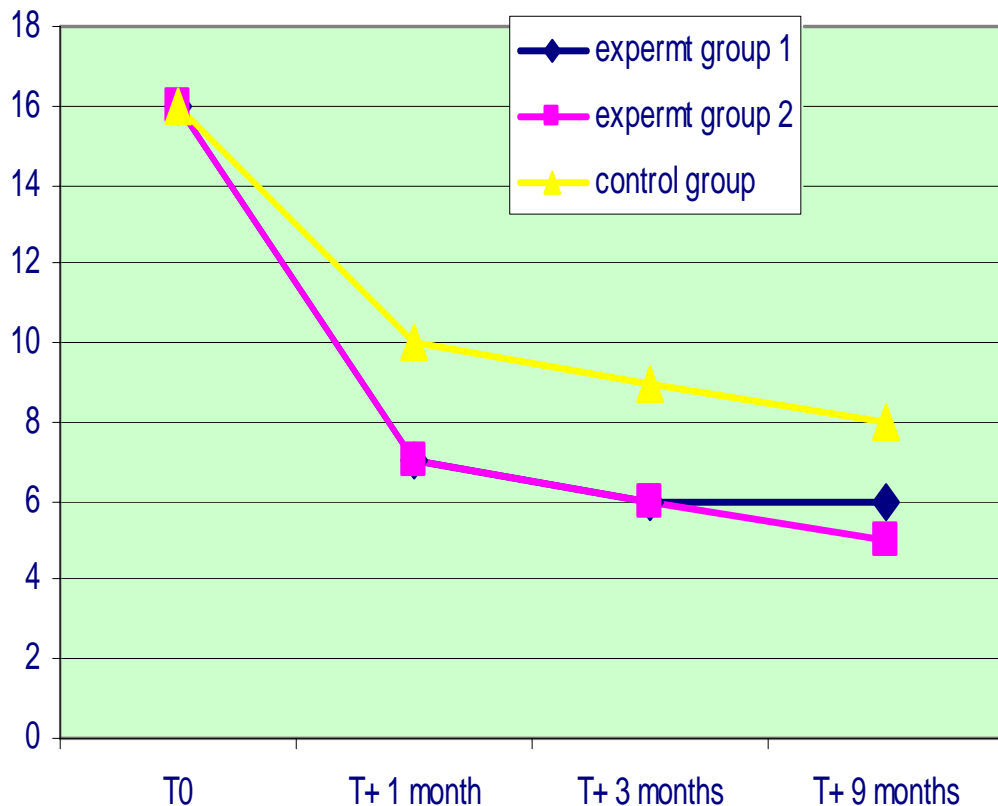
- ❖ **context:** various private organisations, school health services
- ❖ **means:**
 - ❖ Specific approaches towards “at risk” youth
 - ❖ Screening
 - ❖ Peer-lead groups
 - ❖ Debriefing
- ❖ **evaluation:** ???

A PROGRAM BASED ON RESILIENCE

(Thompson & al, AJPH, May 2001)

COUNSELLING, LIFE SKILLS WORKSHOPS

- Control over emotions
- Skills in resolving conflicts
- Capacity to seek help
- Available facilities and addresses
- Connections within the school



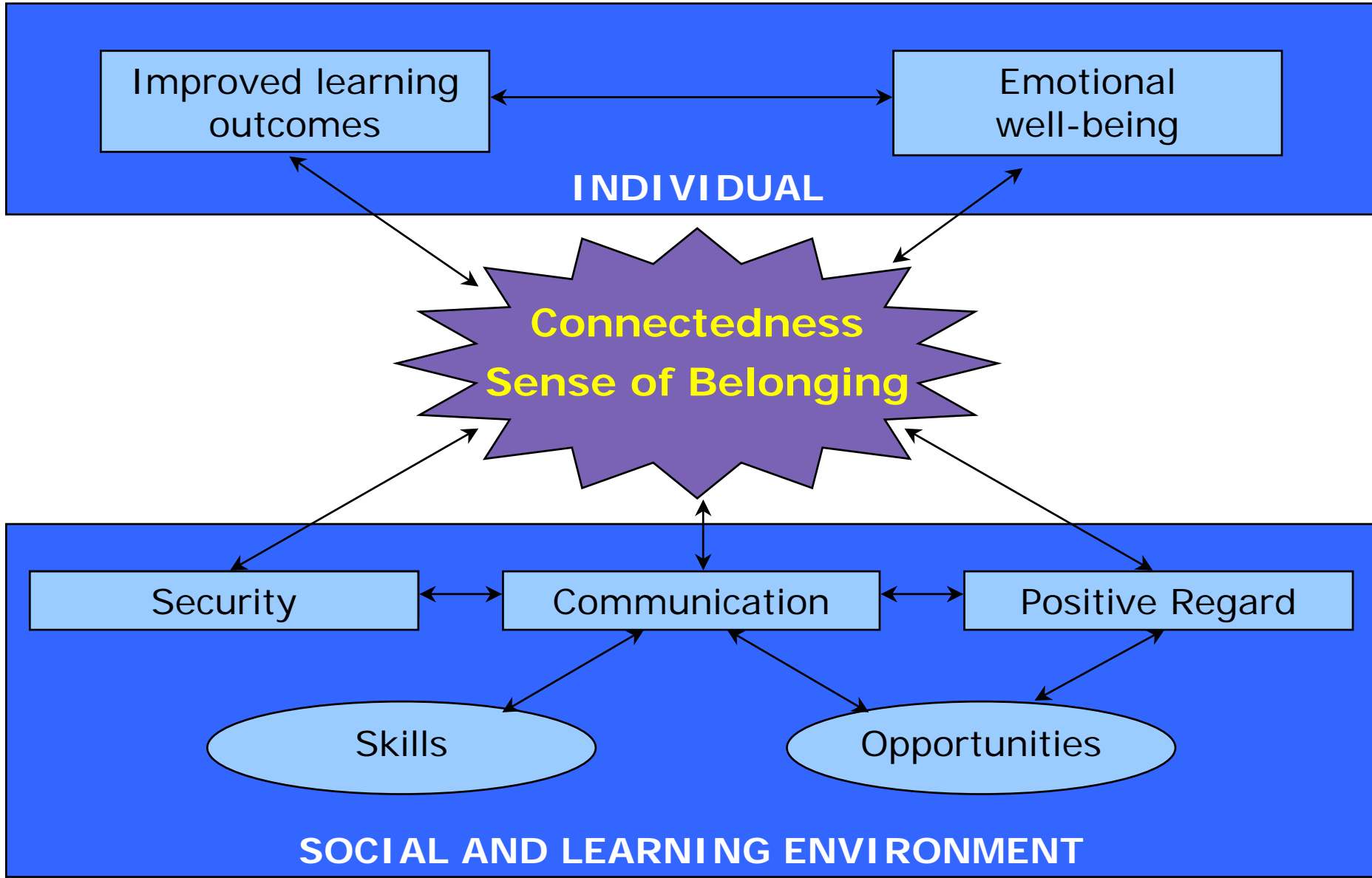
Trends in suicidal thoughts

HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS

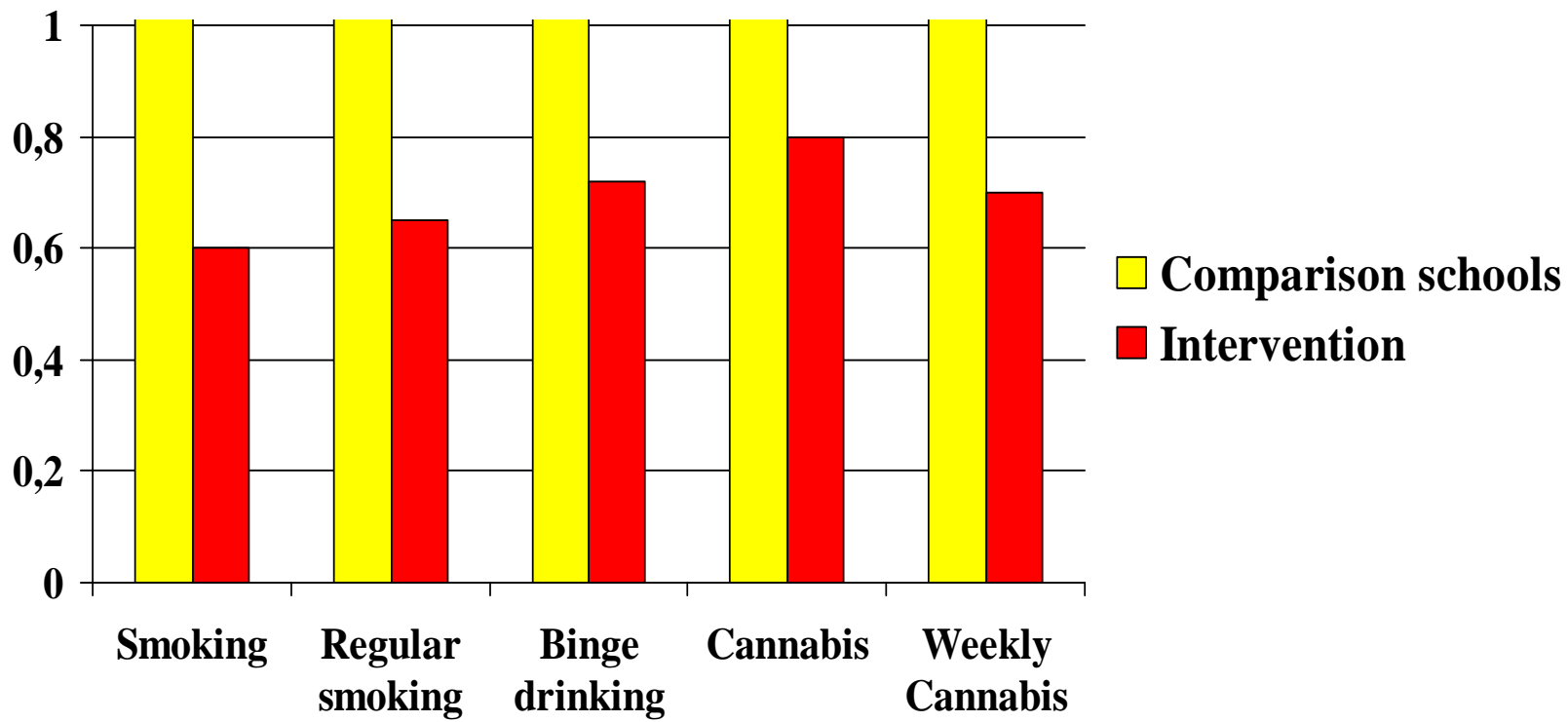
- Provide a healthy environment
- Promote individual, family and community responsibility for health
- Encourage healthy lifestyles in equipping pupils with knowledge and skills
- Plan a coherent health education curriculum
- Exploit the availability of community resources

THE SCHOOL SETTING:

The example of the Gatehouse project



THE GATEHOUSE PROJECT: TRENDS IN SUBSTANCE USE



Analyses adjusted for baseline school substance use