

The National Academies of
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Board on Higher Education and Workforce

Committee on Supporting the Whole Student:
Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Well-Being in Higher Education

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Approaches to addressing substance use issues

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An NIH-funded prospective study of the nature and consequences of college student health-risk behaviors

PRE-COLLEGE

2004
Summer Orientation
(n = 3401)

— sampling →

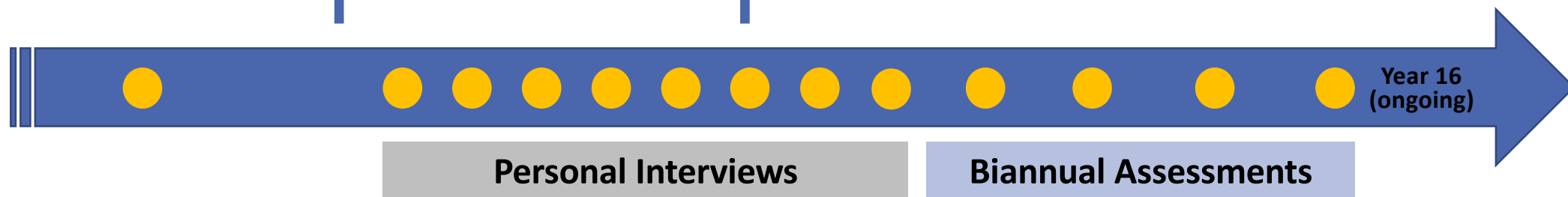
COLLEGE

2004-2010
Ages 18-23
(n = 1253)

POST-COLLEGE

Continuing through today
Ages 22-33

Annual follow-up rates of 90% +

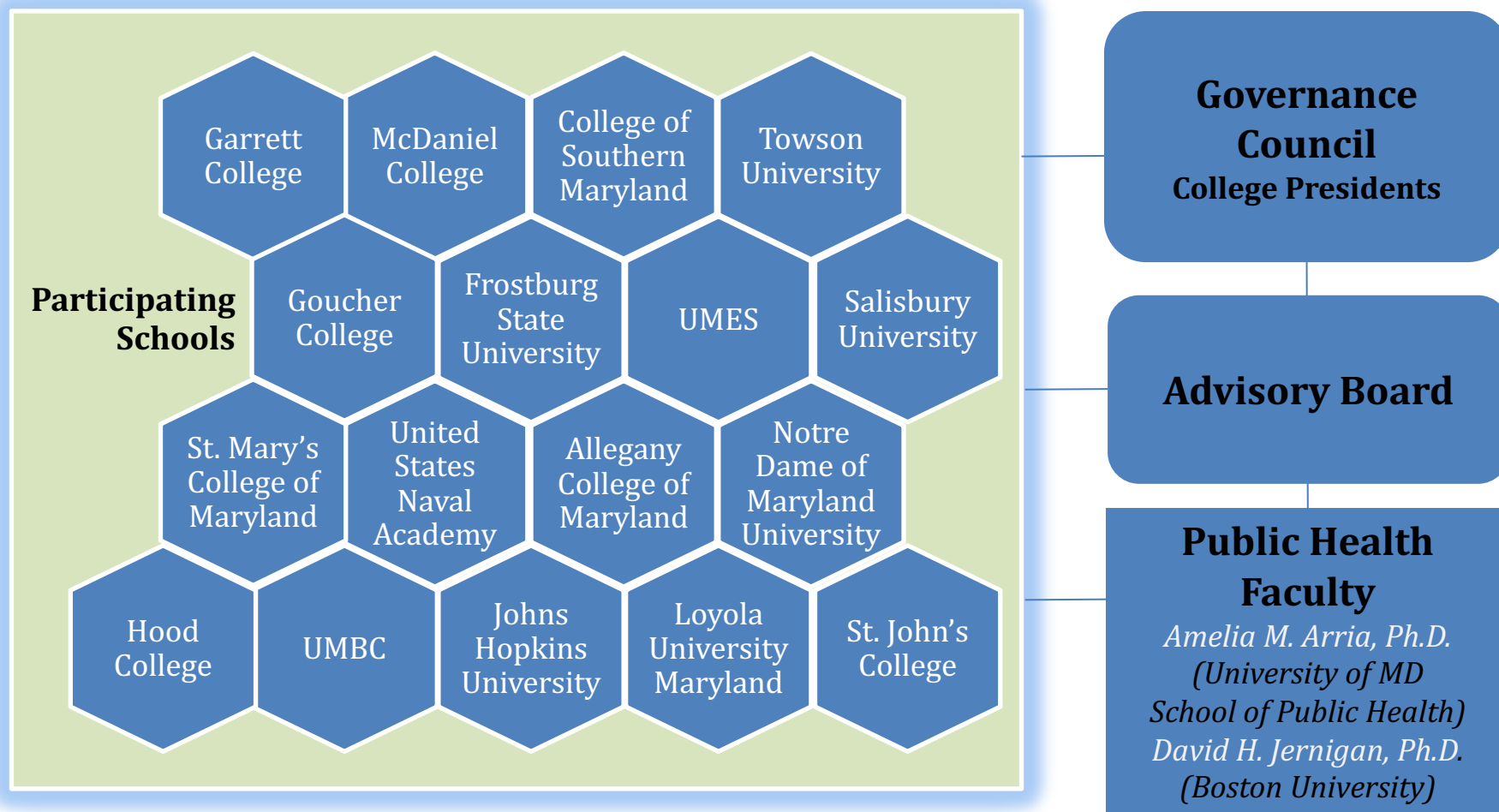


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THE MARYLAND COLLABORATIVE

TO REDUCE COLLEGE DRINKING AND RELATED PROBLEMS



Funding: Office of Population Health Improvement, Maryland Department of Health

For more information and resources, see: www.marylandcollaborative.org; www.collegeparentsmatter.org

Excessive Drinking and Other Substance Use among College Students: Key Concerns

Alcohol consumption and marijuana use most prevalent

Prescription stimulant misuse - an issue, but overlaps significantly with excessive drinking and marijuana use

Increased potency of THC – concerns with faster transition to addiction, more serious neurocognitive effects and mental health problems

Widespread availability of new products; new routes of administration; proliferation of misinformation, promotion, marketing and messaging



Alcohol consumption among college students: A National Snapshot

*Excessive
Drinking*

underage drinking and binge drinking

*Binge
Drinking*



5+ drinks
on one occasion
for males



4+ drinks
on one occasion
for females

38%

college students
during the past month

*High Intensity
Drinking*

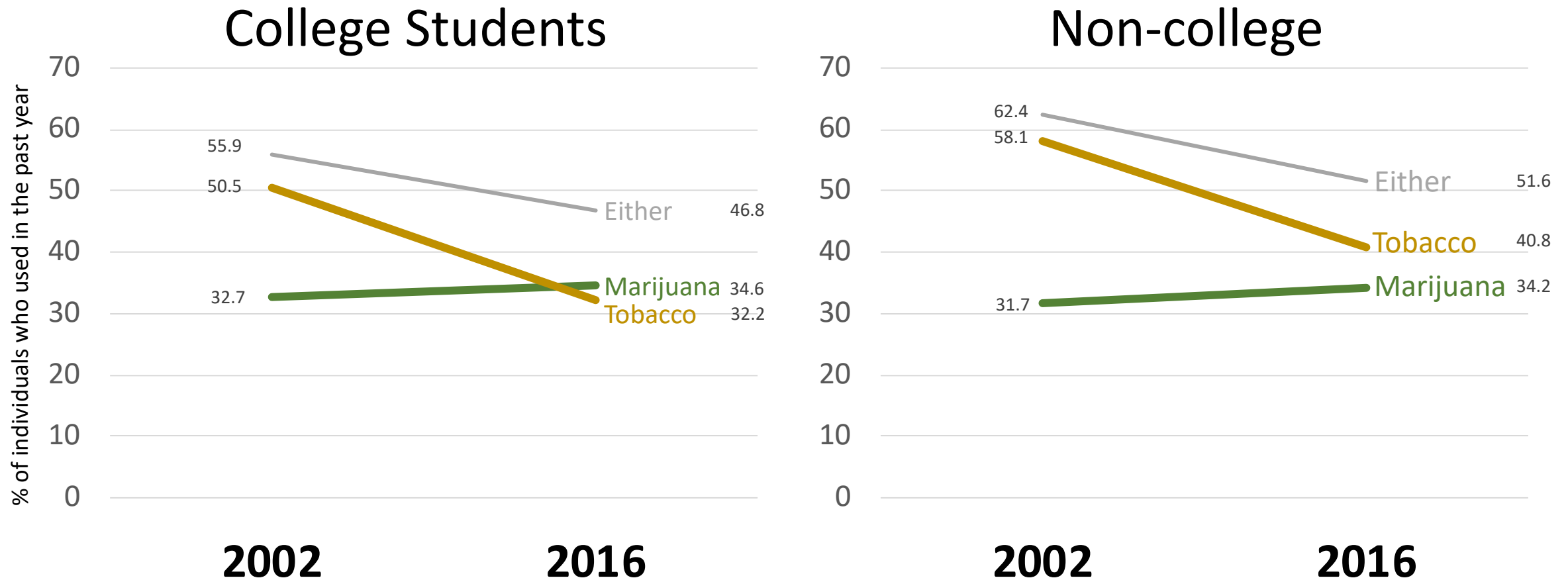


10+ drinks
on one occasion

1 in 10

college students
during the past two weeks

Marijuana and tobacco use during the past year



Substance Use and Mental Health

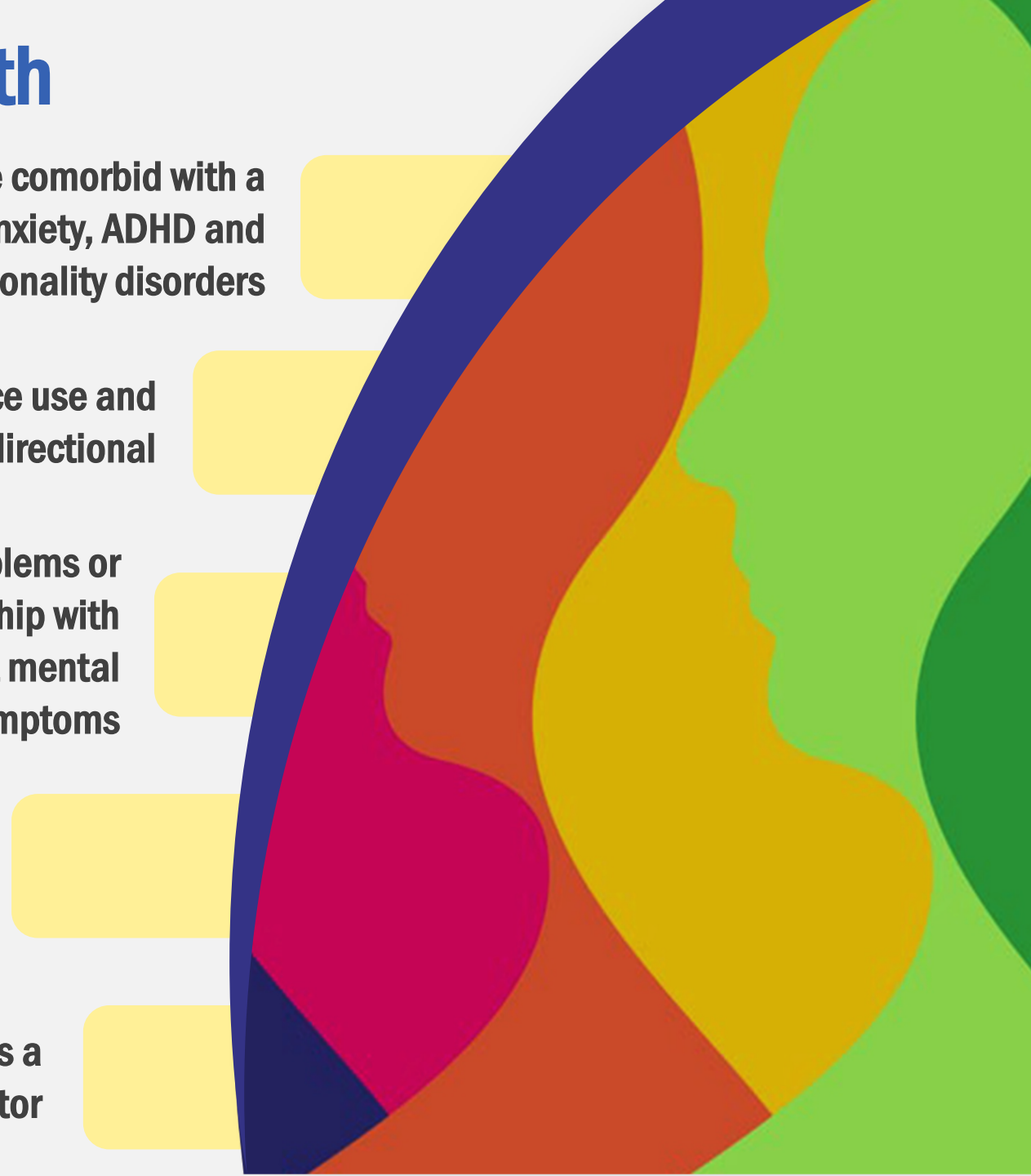
It is well known that substance use disorders are comorbid with a variety of mental disorders including depression, anxiety, ADHD and externalizing disorders, and personality disorders

Relationship between substance use and mental health is bidirectional

Cannabis use can precipitate new mental health problems or exacerbate existing mental health problems; strong relationship with psychosis; no evidence exists that cannabis can effectively treat mental health disorders or manage mental health symptoms

Substance use can be viewed as a maladaptive “avoidance” coping strategy to manage stress and negative emotional states

Research supports the role of emotional regulation as a transdiagnostic risk factor



Connections to Academic Performance

Substance use and mental health have independent adverse effects on academic performance

Skipping class is one important mediator of the relationship between excessive drinking, marijuana use, and academic performance

Preoccupation with getting, using, recovering from the effects of alcohol or any other drug can compromise academic performance and impede academic success

We have developed a method of assessing multiple barriers to academic success that holds promise for use in academic assistance centers (MOSAIC)



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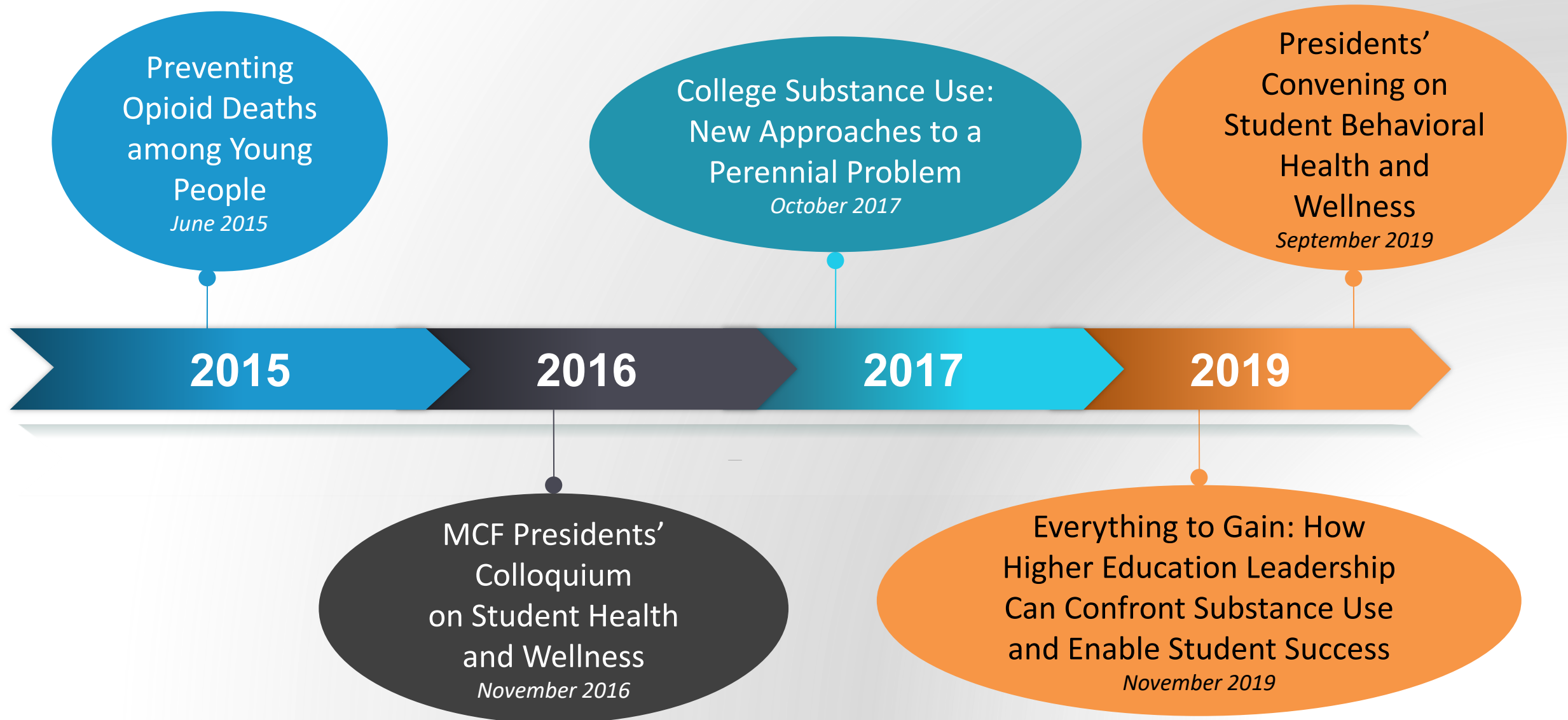
The Mary Christie Foundation is a thought leadership organization dedicated to the health and wellness of teens and young adults.



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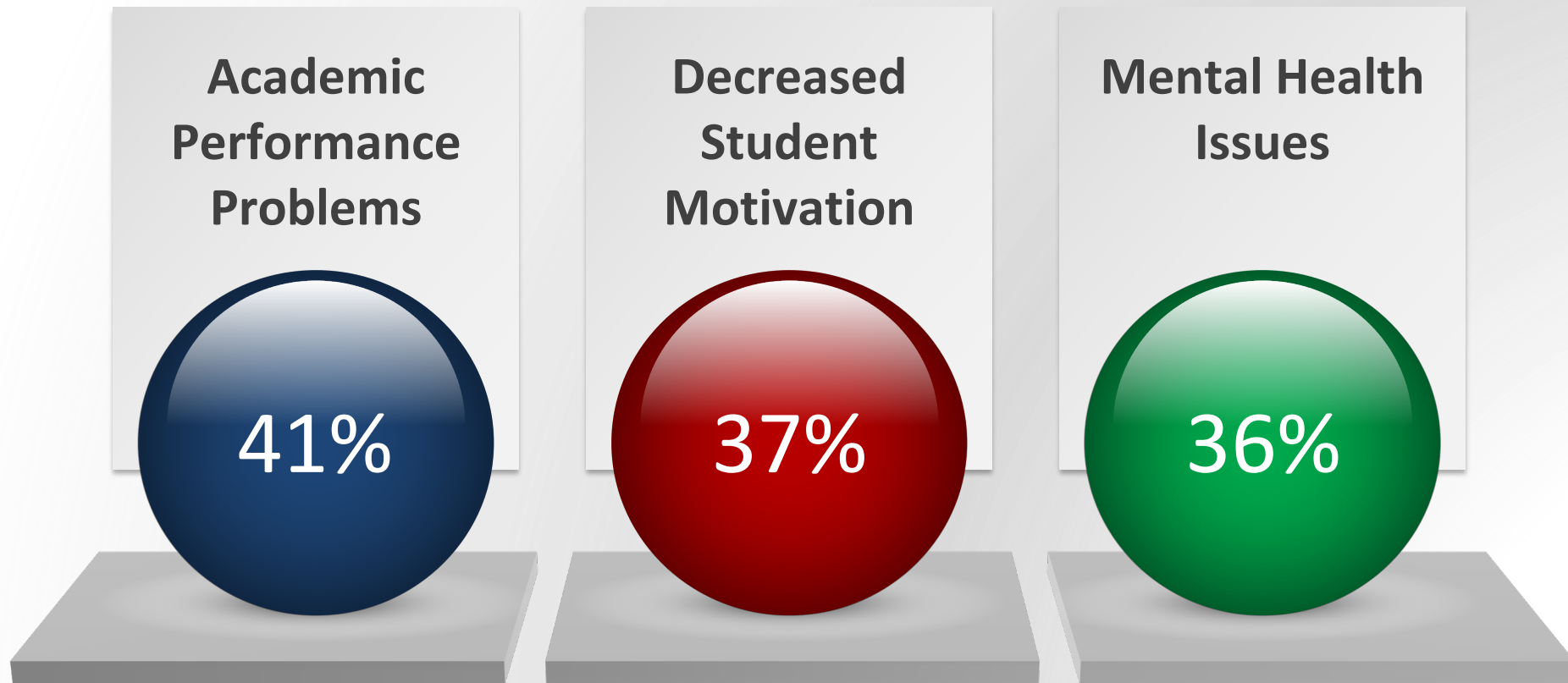
- Mary Christie Quarterly
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Thought Leadership



Example of MCF Survey Findings:

Cannabis Use Problems: Views from College Administrators



What we have consistently heard

Substance use and mental health issues are universal problems on colleges and universities throughout the country and are of great concern to all stakeholders – from presidents to parents.

(MCF's latest survey showed that 77% of parents see mental health as a serious problem on campus¹)

❑ Traditional and current forms of addressment are inadequate

- Not enough counseling capacity for individuals with need
- Counseling alone is not going to solve the problem; more upstream approaches necessary
- Alcohol education is relied upon, but is not enough

❑ Colleges and universities need guidance and assistance to solve the problem -- the stakes are too high

- What is the role of government?
- What is the role of health care?
- What is the role of the private sector?

¹Mary Christie Foundation. Supporting College Student Mental Health: Parents' Perspectives, September 2019.

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