

*Brief Strategic Family Therapy
in the Treatment of
Problem Behavior Youth*

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June 6, 2005





Brief Strategic Family Therapy
Program of Research

Winner
2000 Presidential Award
Society for Prevention Research



Brief Strategic Family Therapy

Federal Seal of Approval

Tommy G. Thompson

U.S. Secretary, Health and Human Services

May 17, 2001



Brief Strategic Family Therapy

*National Registry
of
Effective Prevention Programs*

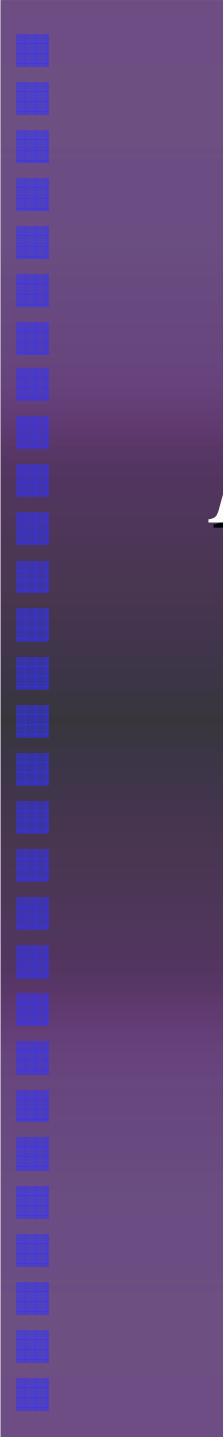
Brief Strategic Family Therapy for Adolescent Drug Abuse

*Treatment Manual Series
National Institute on Drug Abuse*

'www.health.org' (hard copies)

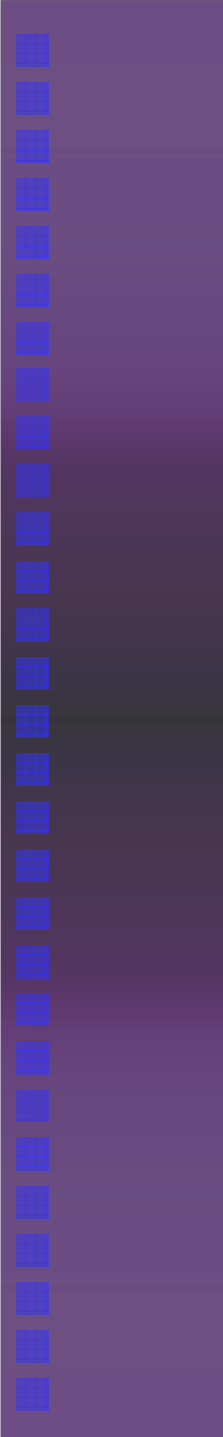
'www.drugabuse.gov' (download)

When adolescents develop behavior problems, families are in great pain, in part because family members inflict pain on each other.



*Pain is a powerful connection
that can be transformed into
an equally powerful loving
relationship.*

BSFT increases parents' and adolescents' skills in being loving and respecting with each other.



*BSFT helps parents
become more effective
leaders of their family*

Brief Strategic Family Therapy

- Theory of the problem
- Theory of the behavior change
- BSFT outcome studies
- BSFT-Engagement

Theory or the Problem: Patterns of Interactions

Organization

Resonance

IP-hood

**Developmental
Stage**

**Conflict
Resolution**



How to bring about change in family interactions?

 **Capitalize on strengths and change maladaptive patterns of interactions using:**

 **strategic interventions (Haley)**

 **structural family therapy techniques (Minuchin)**

How to QUICKLY bring about improvement in family interactions and adolescent problem behavior?

Strategic

 Planned

 Problem focused

 Practical – what works

Planned

Organization

Resonance

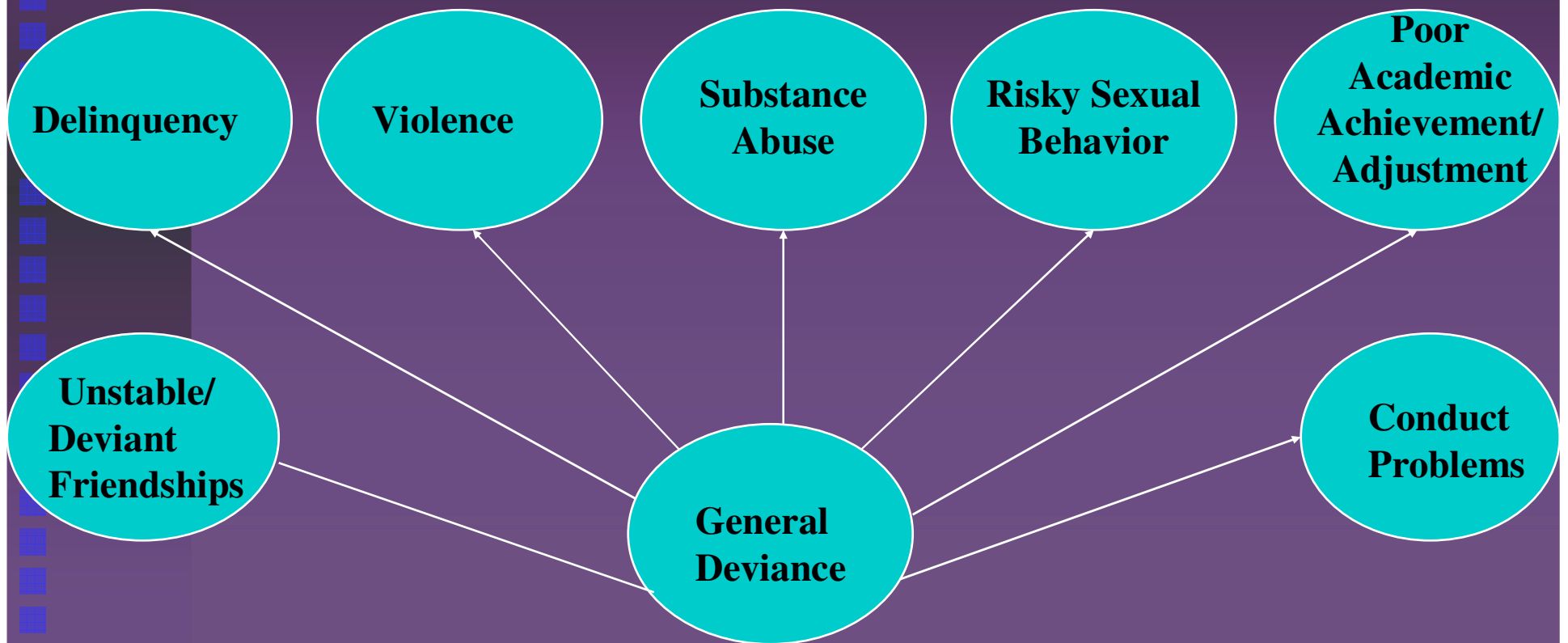
IP-hood

Developmental
Stage

Conflict
Resolution



Problem Focused



(Modified from McGee & Newcomb, 1992)

Practical


- **Respect the family's organizational structure - Ally with the powerful member of the family**
- **Offer to give every family member something that is dear to them**
- **Choose those aspects of reality that help move the therapy forward**

What else makes the therapy brief?

Structural family therapy techniques

 **Joining – working from within**

 **Diagnosing – focusing on interactions not content**

 **Restructuring – specific techniques to bring about change- changing affect from negative to positive, developing parent leadership, communication and conflict resolution skills**



**Brief Strategic Family Therapy &
Group Counseling
A Randomized Trial**

Santisteban, et al. (2003)

This work was funded by NIDA Grant No. DA 053341

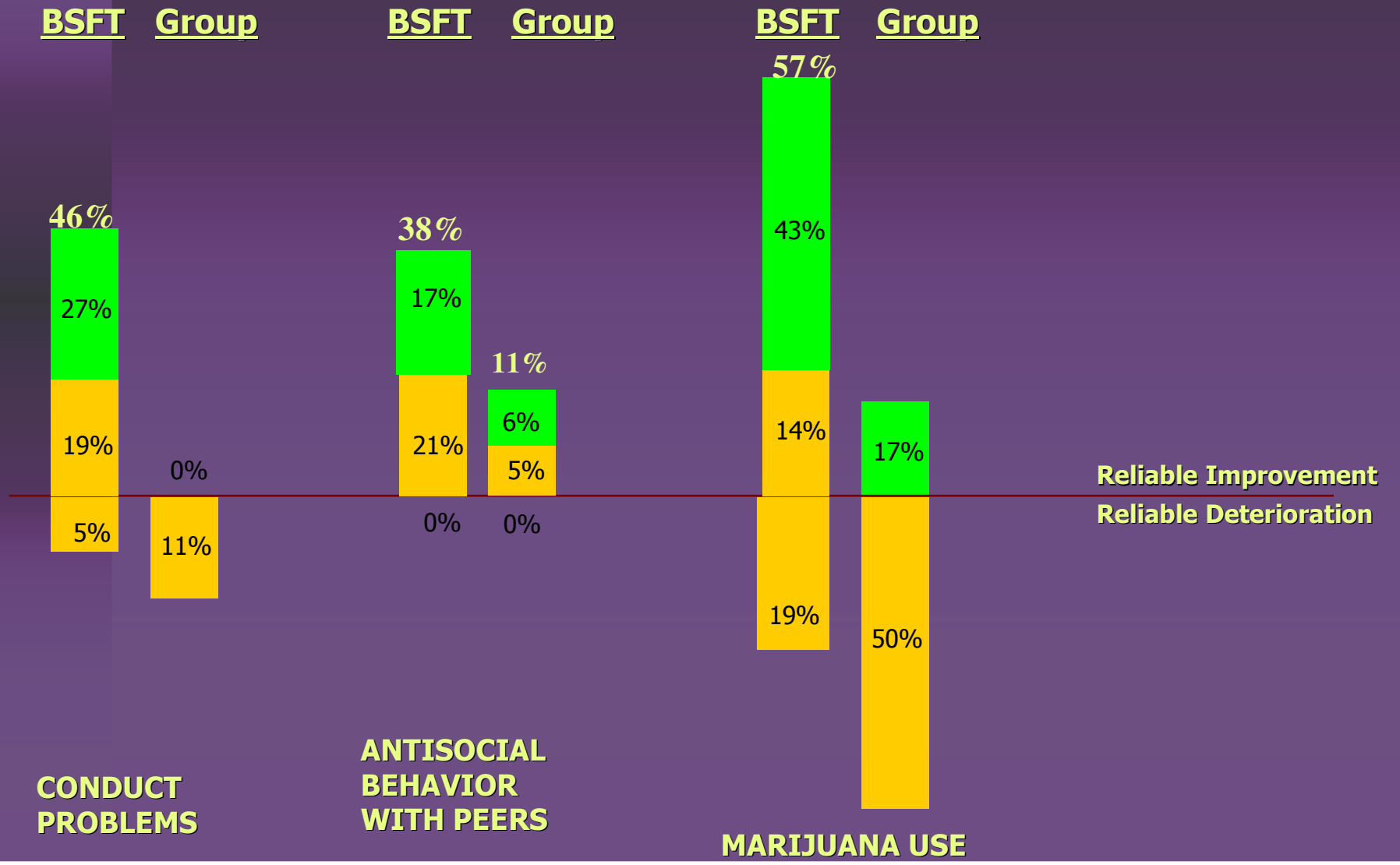
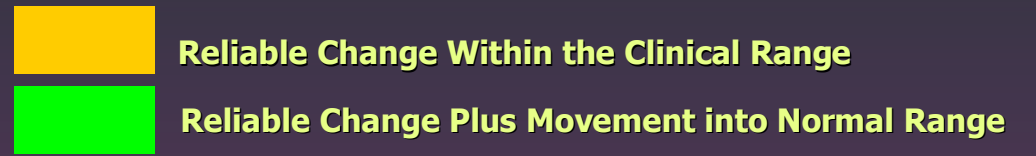
METHODS

12-15 year old Hispanic adolescents with moderate deviant behaviors were randomized to:

- ~ **Brief Strategic Family Therapy**
- ~ **Group Counseling (usual treatment in Miami community for troubled adolescents)**

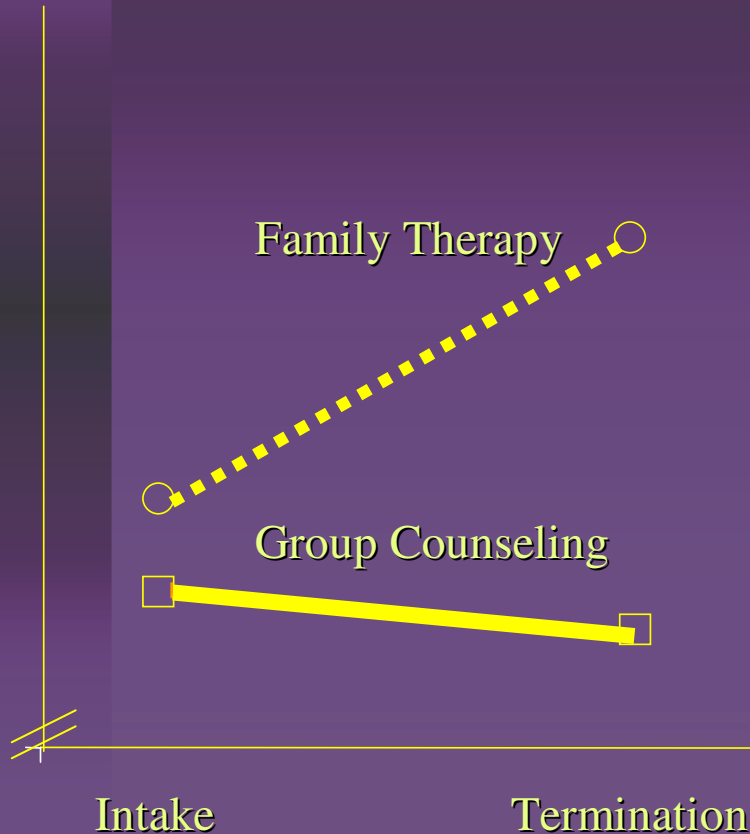
Assessed at baseline and termination

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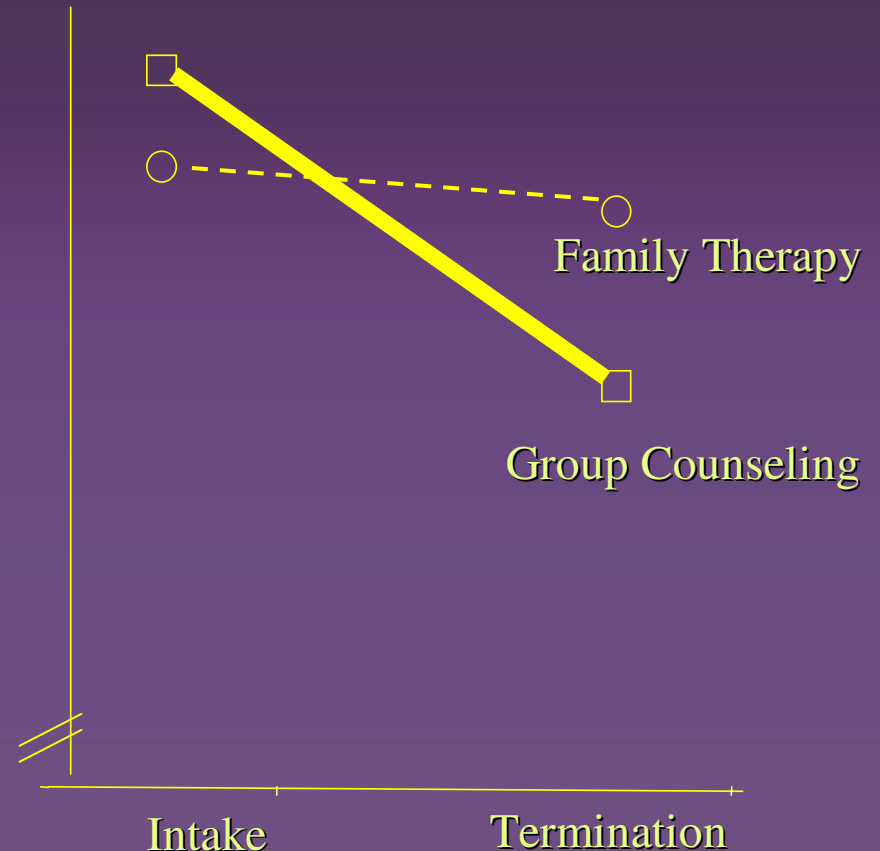
Impact of Family Therapy and Group Counseling on Family Functioning (independent ratings)

Family Functioning



**Poor family functioning
at admission**

Family Functioning



**Good family functioning
at admission**

(Santisteban et al., 2003)

*BSFT with and without
Specialized Engagement*
with Hispanic drug using adolescents

A Randomized Trial

Szapocznik et al., 1988

Funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse
Grant No. DA 0322

What keeps the family out of therapy?

The family' repetitive patterns of interactions that are linked to the adolescent problem behaviors, are also linked to the family's inability to come into treatment.



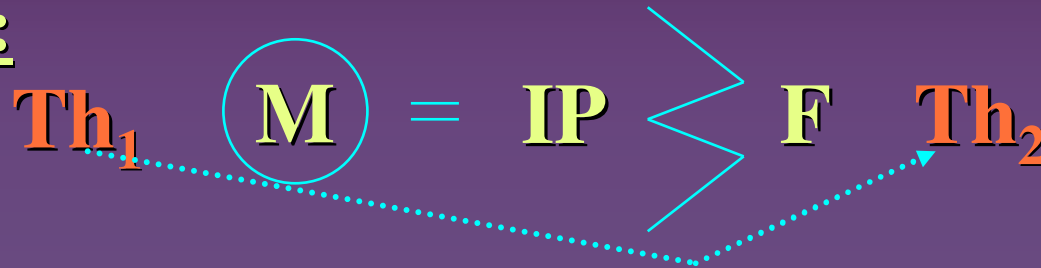
Specialized Family Engagement in Brief Strategic Family Therapy

Disengaged Parent

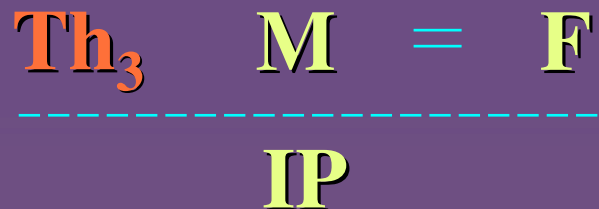
Presentation



MOVE:



BECOMES:



Engagement as Usual

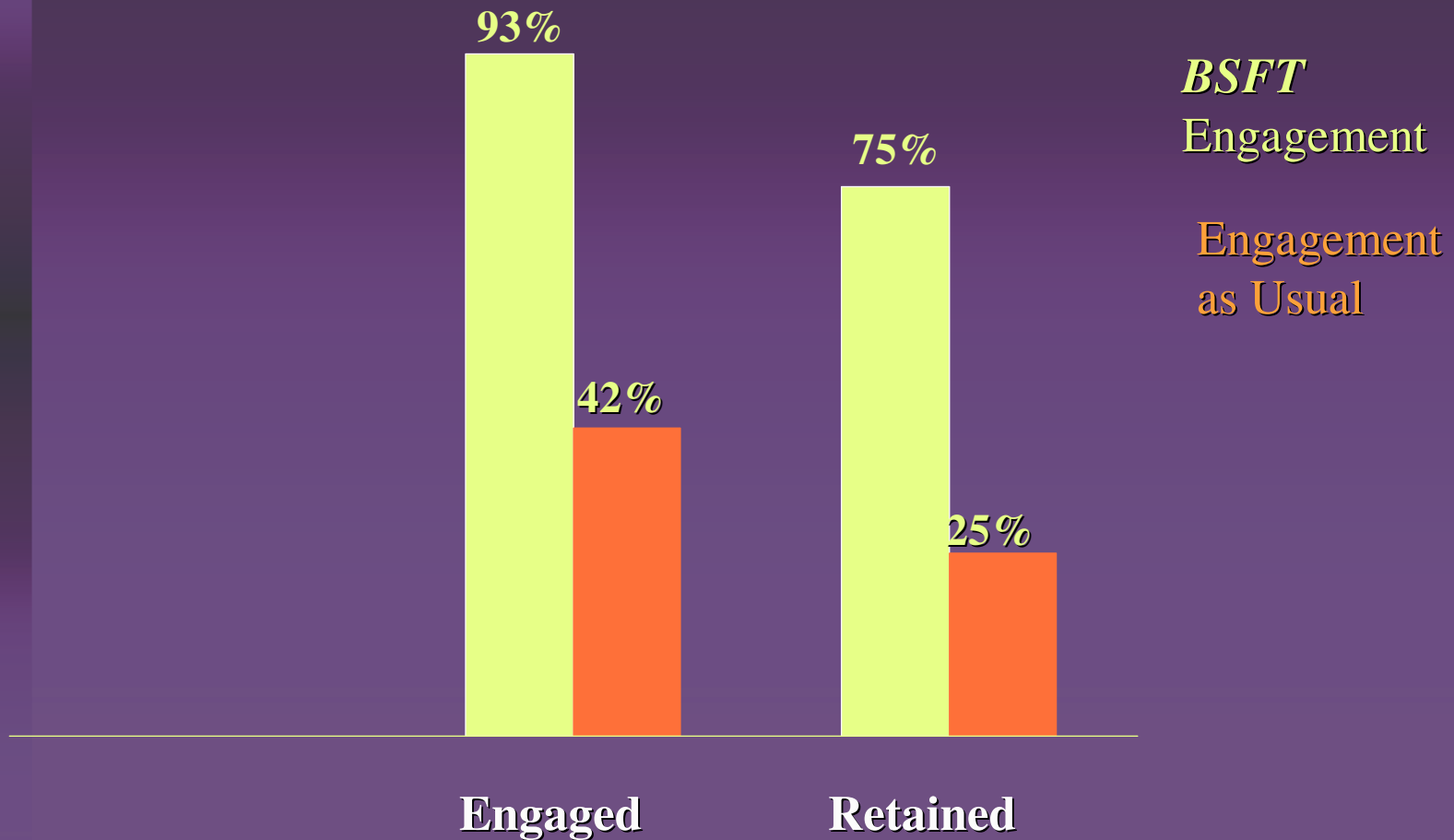
“Please come with your family into the office.”

“If youth does not want treatment, we cannot help you.”

METHODS

- **12-21 year old Hispanic drug using adolescents were randomized to:**
 - ~ **BSFT Specialized Engagement**
 - ~ **BSFT Engagement as Usual**
- **Families were assessed at baseline and termination**

Engagement and Retention for *BSFT* Engagement and Engagement as Usual



(Szapocznik, et al., 1988)



*for copies of the Manual on
Brief Strategic Family Therapy*

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'www.drugabuse.gov' (download)



The End