

The background features abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes in various shades, including light lime green, medium green, and dark forest green, creating a modern and dynamic feel.

Promoting Mental Health and Well-Being: The Evidence

A expedited review of current literature on promotion, protection and prevention initiatives aimed at improving the mental health and well-being of children and youth

Overview

- ▶ Introduction to review
- ▶ Approach and methodology
- ▶ Fundamental premises for promoting the mental health of children and youth
- ▶ Theoretical background
- ▶ A socio-ecological framework
- ▶ Issues in Surveillance
- ▶ Prevalence and burden of mental disorder
- ▶ Mental health promotion for children and youth: the case for it

Introduction

Purpose

- ▶ The purpose of the review was to complete a literature review and environmental scan of recent research on youth mental wellbeing and mental wellness (for the purpose of this event, youth will refer to children from ages 0 to 25) to serve as a basis of knowledge for the event.

Approach

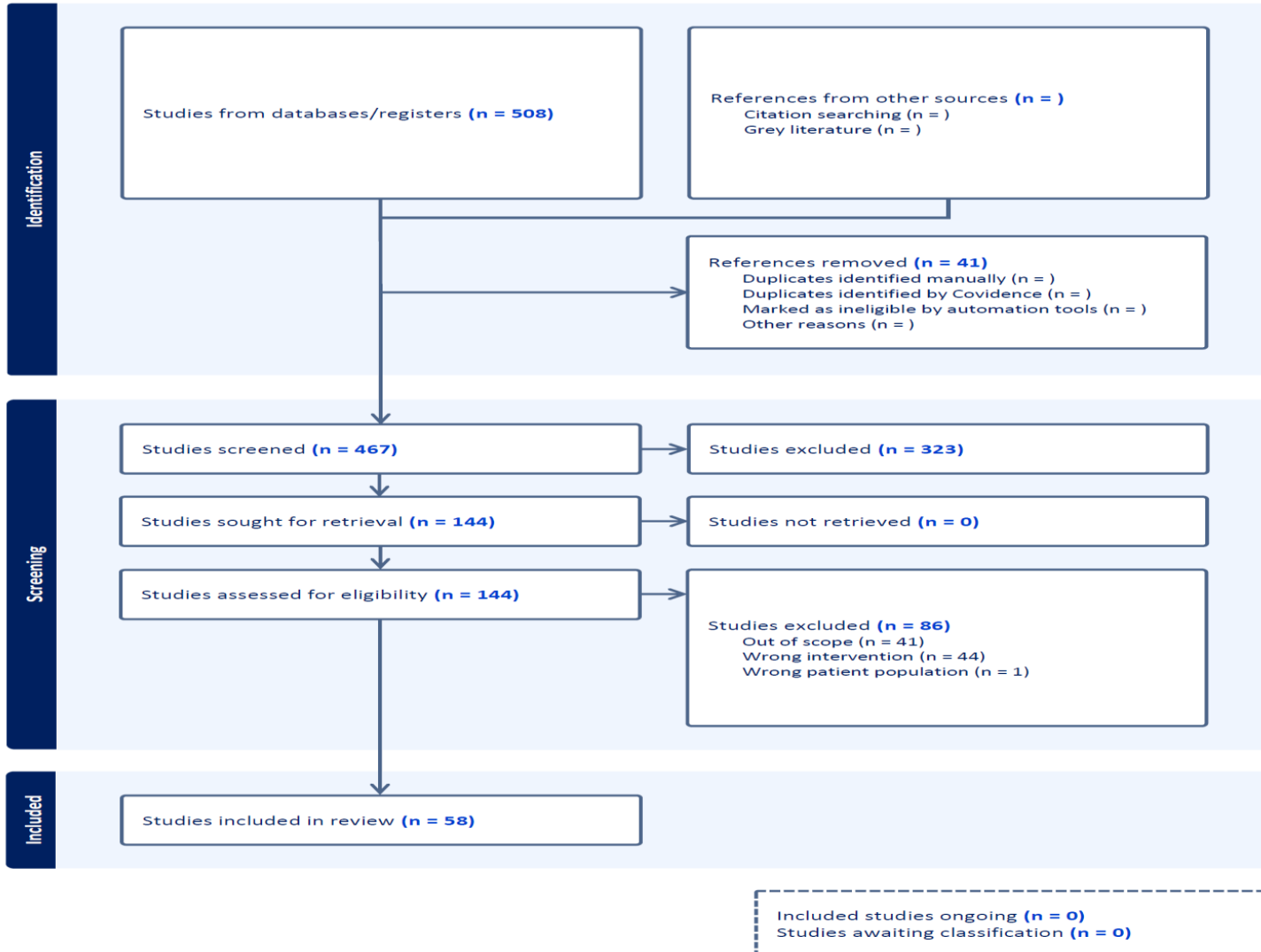
- ▶ Given the timeline and the purpose, this review was expedited and abbreviated to look mainly at very recent literature from the last five years, and mainly at systematic reviews and meta-reviews of evidence relevant to the topic, along with high level grey literature that itself synthesized relevant evidence.

Methodology

- ▶ This review of evidence was carried out over a short period from February 1-March 31st, 2023.
- ▶ This involved clarifying scope with an Advisory Panel, identifying search terms and databases, and conducting the review using *Covidence.
- ▶ The review of the academic literature was abbreviated by using a simplified set of search terms focused on policies, interventions and strategies for promoting mental health and preventing mental illness for children and youth, along with a focus on systematic reviews only.
- ▶ Databases searched included MEDLINE, CINAHL, APA PsycInfo, Social Science Abstracts and PubMed. Below is the Prisma diagram of the review process.
- ▶ The review identified an initial 58 academic articles for data extraction, along with several additional key documents retrieved via a grey literature search and expert suggestions. With additional snowball citation tracking, this led to a total of 107 articles for the review.

Prisma Diagram

Child and Youth Mental Health and Wellness Promotion



Fundamental premises for promoting the mental health of children and youth

The promotion of mental wellness for children and youth should:

- ▶ focus on the *positive* concept of mental health, not only the absence of mental illness, integrating a dual continua model;
- ▶ understand mental health and wellness as a *human right*, and therefore its attainment for all people as a matter of fundamental *social justice*
- ▶ use a *universal* approach to interventions aimed at the whole population, with proportionate intensity and targeting for groups at higher risk.
- ▶ take a *socio-ecological* approach;
- ▶ involve the genuine, *meaningful participation* of children and youth in the research on their own mental wellness, the planning of population mental wellness interventions, their implementation and the evaluation of their impact;
- ▶ aim to *empower* individuals and communities to have control over the determinants of their own mental wellness

Fundamental premises cont'd

- ▶ improve *mental health equity*, addressing both social gradients in mental health and disparities in mental health for specific populations;
- ▶ confront the underlying negative sociocultural *power relations* in society that cause inequitable mental wellness (e.g. colonialism, inequitable class relations, gender inequity, racism, homophobia and transphobia)
- ▶ use a *lifecourse approach* to mental health development:
- ▶ pay attention to the specific *settings* in which mental wellness is produced and in which we intervene;
- ▶ have *intersectoral collaboration* as a fundamental principle, with a Mental Health in All Policies (MHiAP) framework for guiding policy development to support mental wellness for children and youth;
- ▶ support the *adults* that work with and care for children and youth, in various settings, to develop the skills and capacities to implement effective, evidence-based interventions;
- ▶ direct *adequate resources* to support the research, planning, implementation and evaluation of interventions that meet all the above.

Theoretical Background: Alma Ata

- ▶ Since 1978, when the World Health Organization published the Alma Ata Declaration (WHO, 1978), the holistic concept of health “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” was linked to several other key ideas, including that this *positive* concept of health and flourishing was a fundamental *human right*, and that therefore, gross inequities in outcomes both between and within countries was a matter of acute *social injustice* and must be addressed as a top priority.

Theoretical Background: Alma Ata

- ▶ The Declaration also advocated for an understanding of health as being caused by broader determinants, and therefore must be addressed by all sectors of society, not just the health sector.
- ▶ Furthermore, it made it crystal clear that solutions and interventions must be planned, in a participatory way, both individually and collectively *by the people*.

Theoretical Background: Ottawa Charter

- ▶ Health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love. Health is created by caring for oneself and others, by being able to take decisions and have control over one's life circumstances, and by ensuring that the society one lives in creates conditions that allow the attainment of health by all its members.
- ▶ Caring, holism and ecology are essential issues in developing strategies for health promotion. Therefore, those involved should take as a guiding principle that, in each phase of planning, implementation and evaluation of health promotion activities, women and men should become equal partners.

Theoretical Background: World Mental Health Report 2022

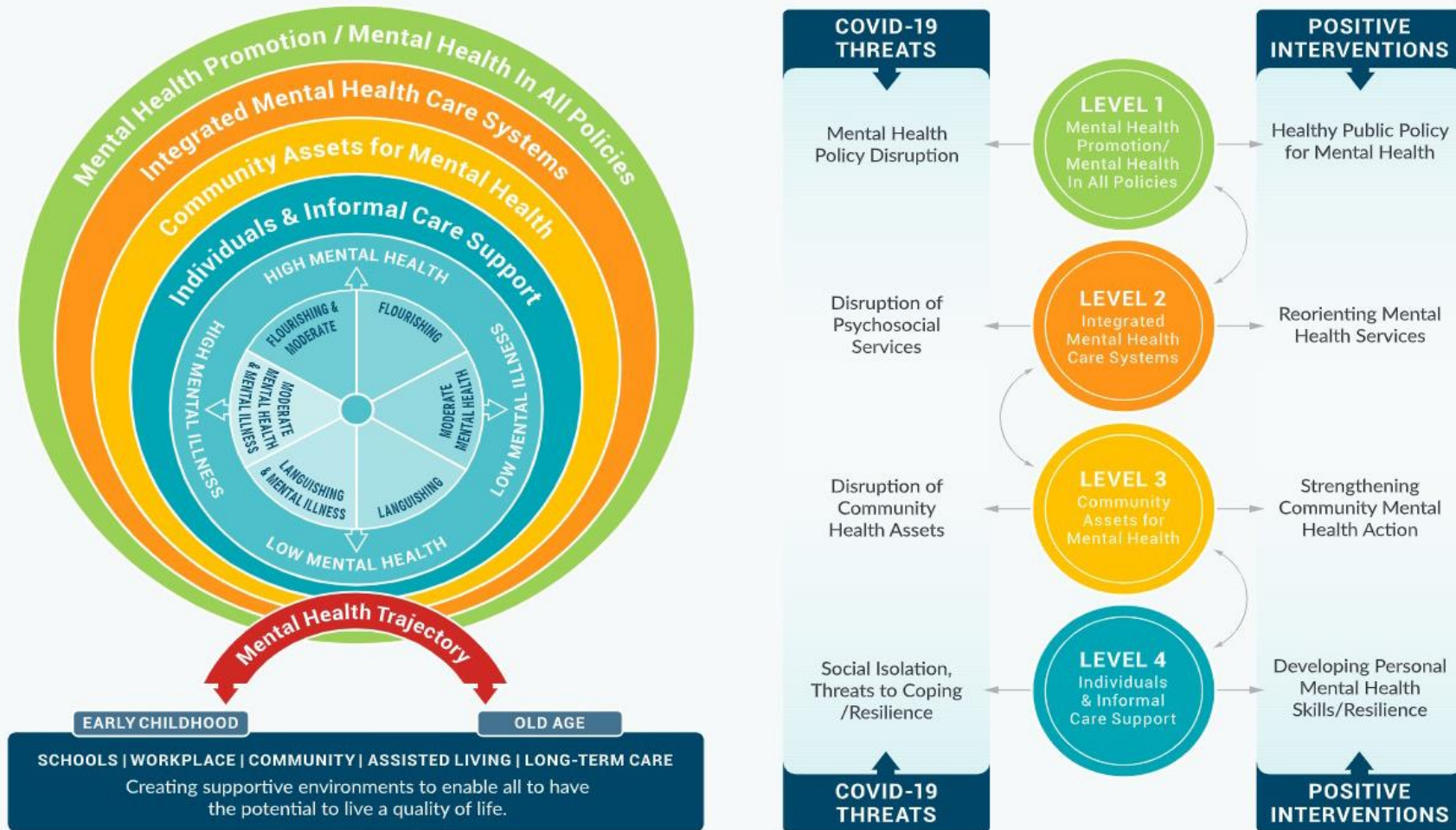
- ▶ “Mental health is an integral part of our general health and well-being and a basic human right. Having good mental health means we are better able to connect, function, cope and thrive.”

A Socio-ecological approach

- ▶ Rooted in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979), as adapted and refined by community health promotion scholars in the 1990s (Stokols, 1996).
- ▶ Linked foundationally with a broader systems understanding implicit in Alma Ata and explicitly in the Ottawa Charter.
- ▶ Interdependent and 'inextricable links' between people and their environments
- ▶ Nested ecological system levels
- ▶ Beyond the dichotomy of individual behavior change and environment enhancement approach to public health
- ▶ Focused on bi-directional causal feedback loops between different system levels

Socio-ecological models for mental health promotion: a recent example (Carroll et al., 2020)

A FRAMEWORK OF MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION INTERVENTIONS¹⁻⁷



The Two Continua Model (Keyes, 2010)

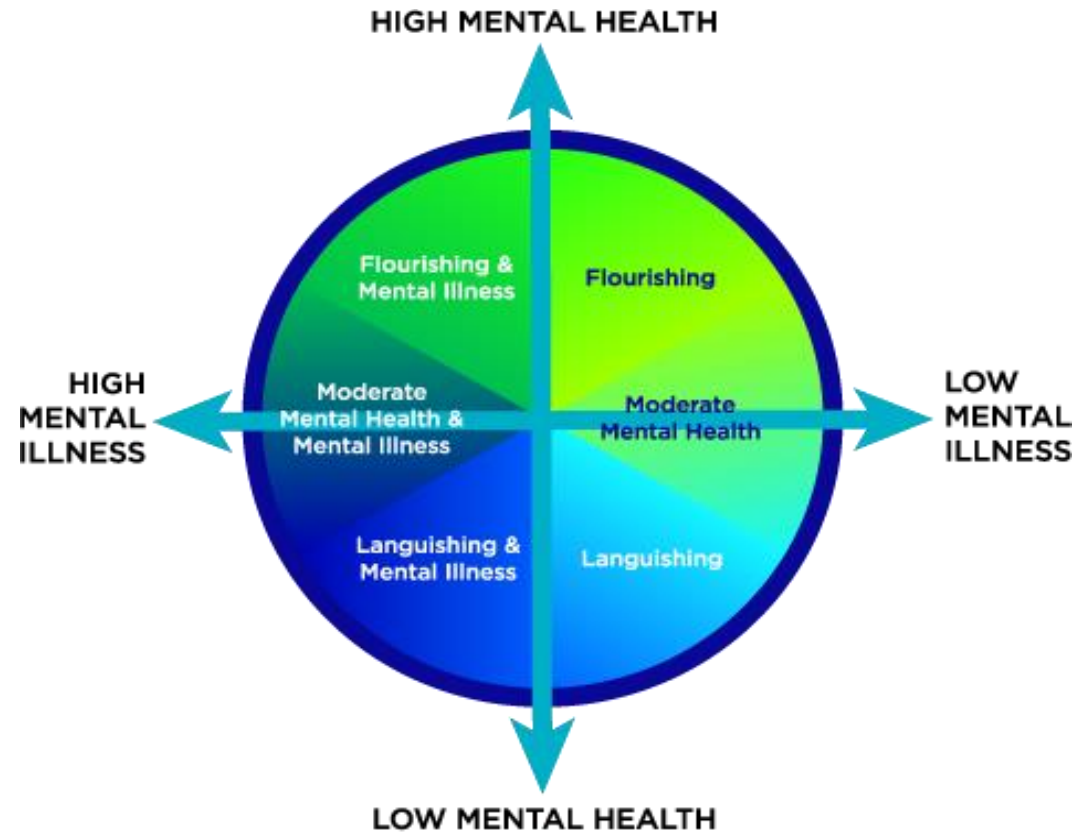


Figure 1. The two continua model of mental health and mental illness.¹³

Issues in Surveillance

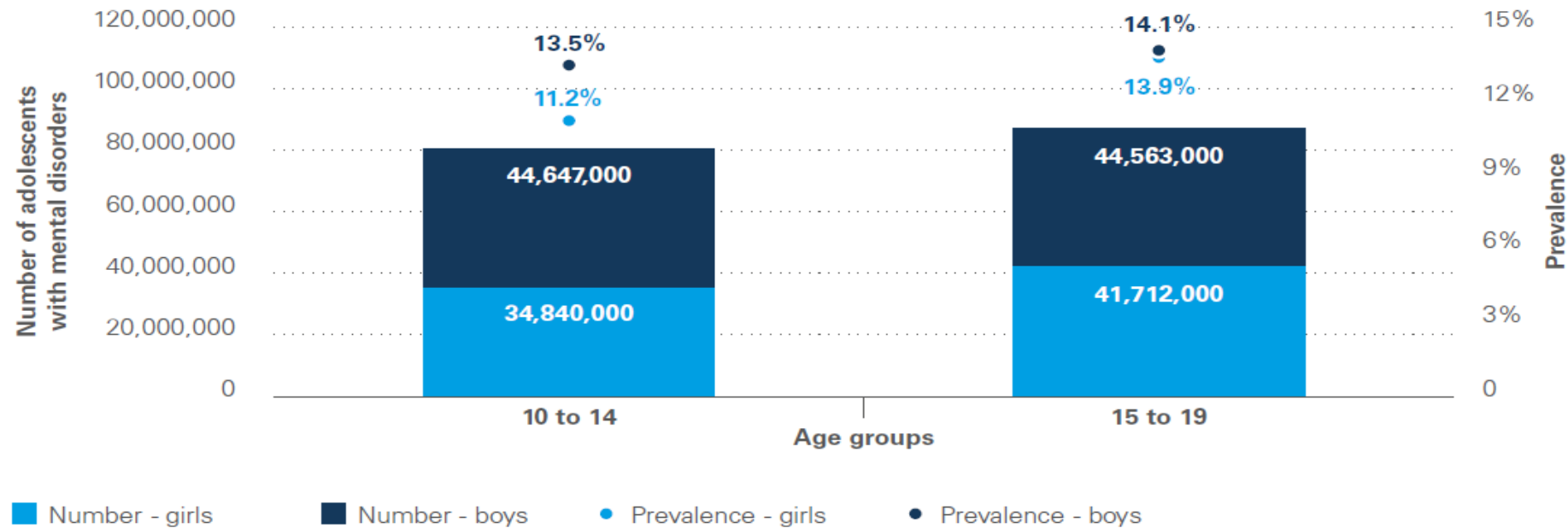
- ▶ The surveillance of positive mental health and wellness is still dwarfed by efforts to track the epidemiology of mental illness disorders.
- ▶ Although there are currently major efforts to redress this imbalance, there are still major gaps, particularly in looking at infancy and early childhood, where there are some good sources of data (e.g the Early Development Index) on overall child development, but not enough looking more specifically at mental health (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2021).

Prevalence and burden of mental disorder

- ▶ Despite some dispute within the literature around details, the overwhelming evidence, from a variety of jurisdictions is that since the end of the first decade of the millennium (some data shows more precisely from 2012), there has been a steady secular trend in increases in reported mental illness among children and youth and decreases in reported mental health and well-being.
- ▶ This trend seems to have been exacerbated sharply by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Global prevalence: UNICEF 2021

FIGURE 1.1. Estimated prevalence and number of adolescents with mental disorders globally, 2019

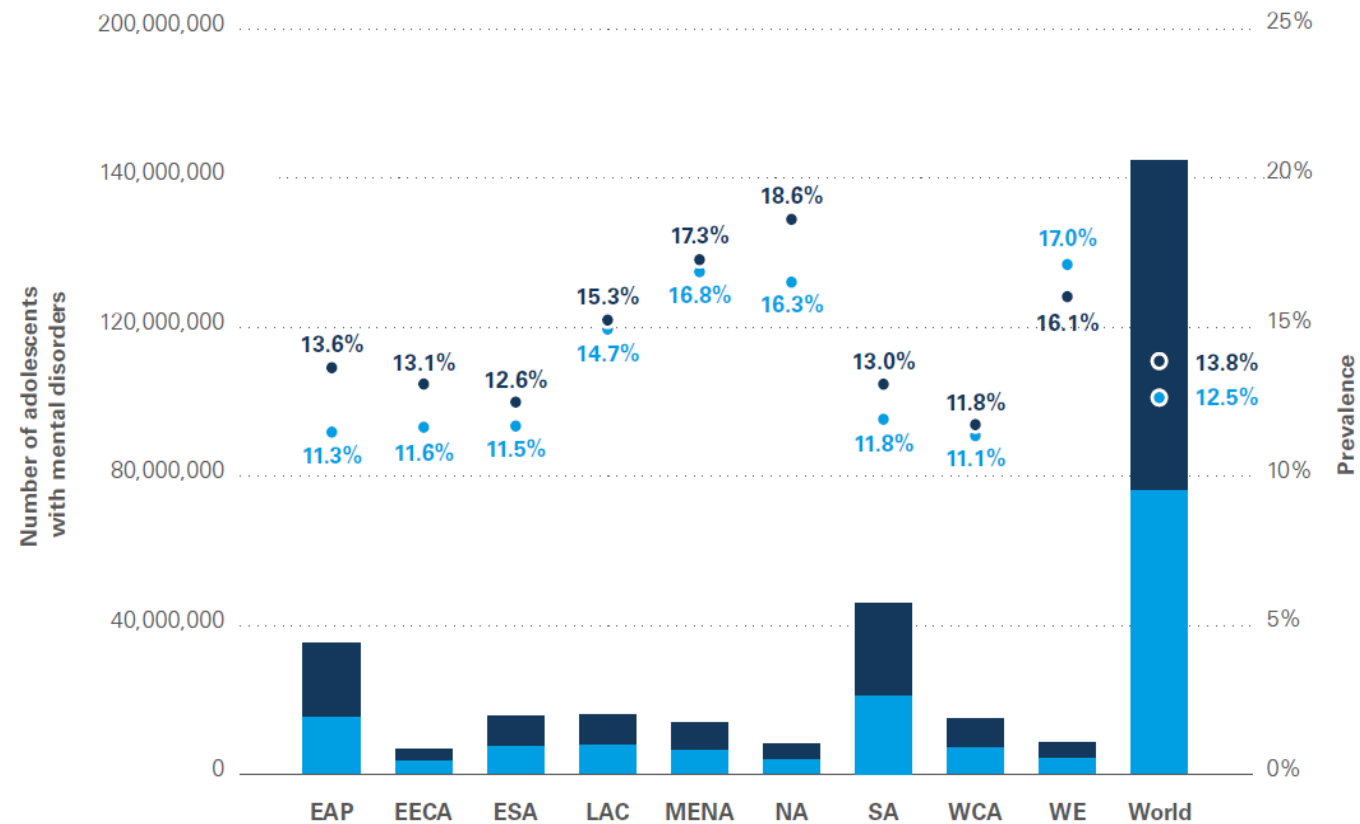


Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest 1,000; calculations are based on these disorders: depression, anxiety, bipolar, eating, autism spectrum, conduct, schizophrenia, idiopathic intellectual disability, attention deficit/hyperactivity (ADHD) and a group of personality disorders.

Source: UNICEF analysis based on estimates from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), Global Burden of Disease Study, 2019.

Global prevalence: UNICEF, 2021

FIGURE 1.2. Estimated prevalence of adolescent boys and girls aged 10–19 with mental disorders globally and by UNICEF regions, 2019

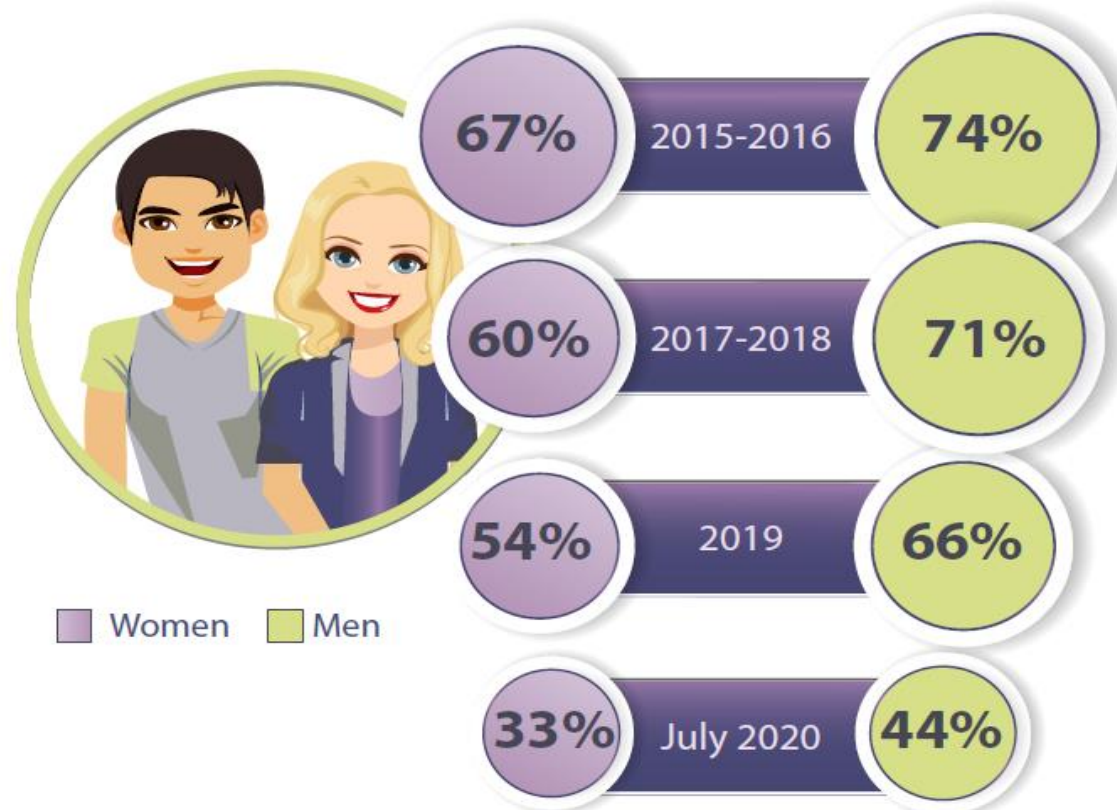


Youth Mental Health in Canada

(Portrait of youth in Canada: Data report Chapter 1: Health of youth in Canada)

tl

Excellent or very good self-reported mental health, population aged 15 to 30, 2015 to 2020



Increases in Depressive symptoms: US data (Keyes et al., 2019)

Fig. 1 Mean depressive affect symptoms by year among US adolescent girls and boys, 1991–2018

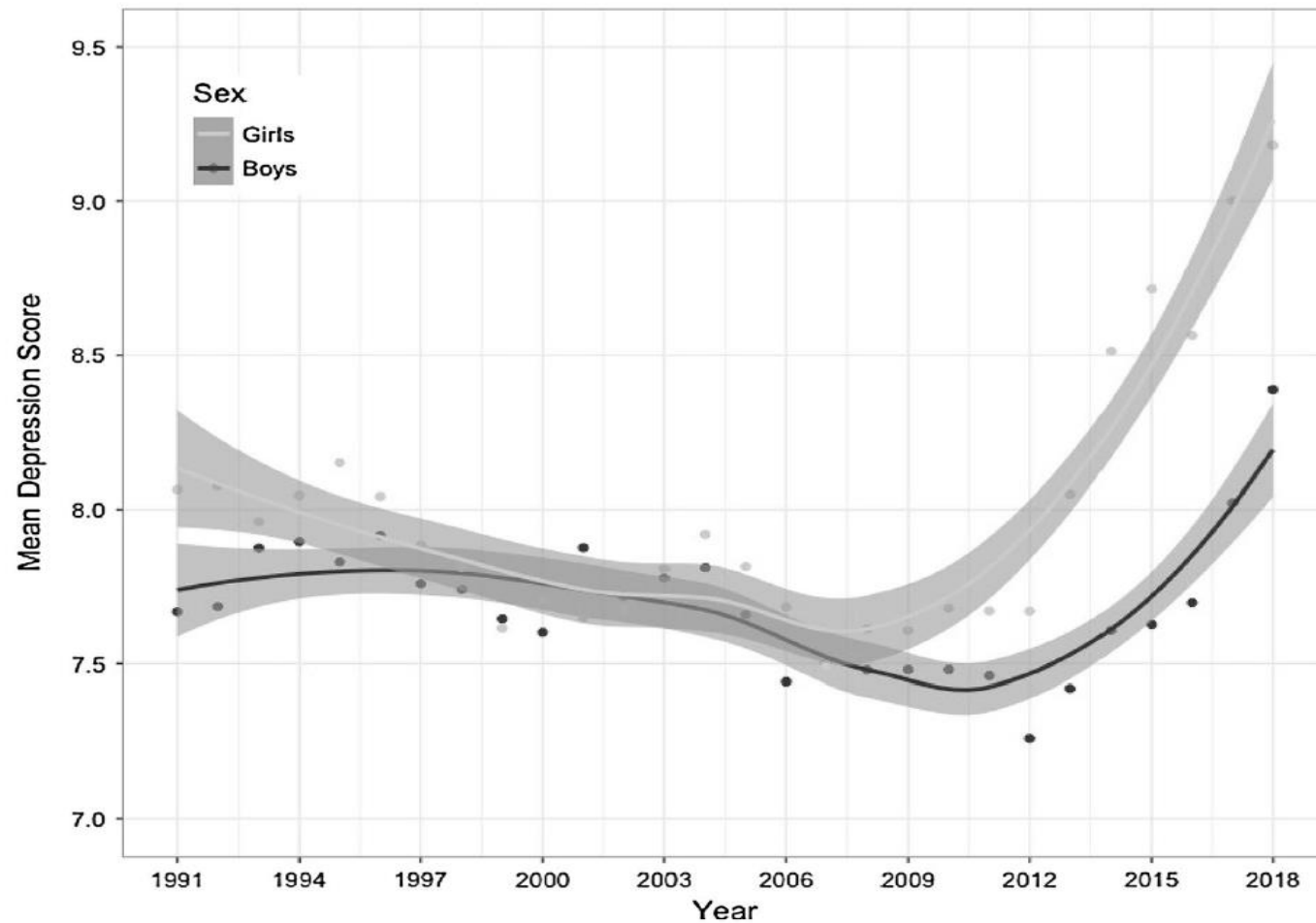
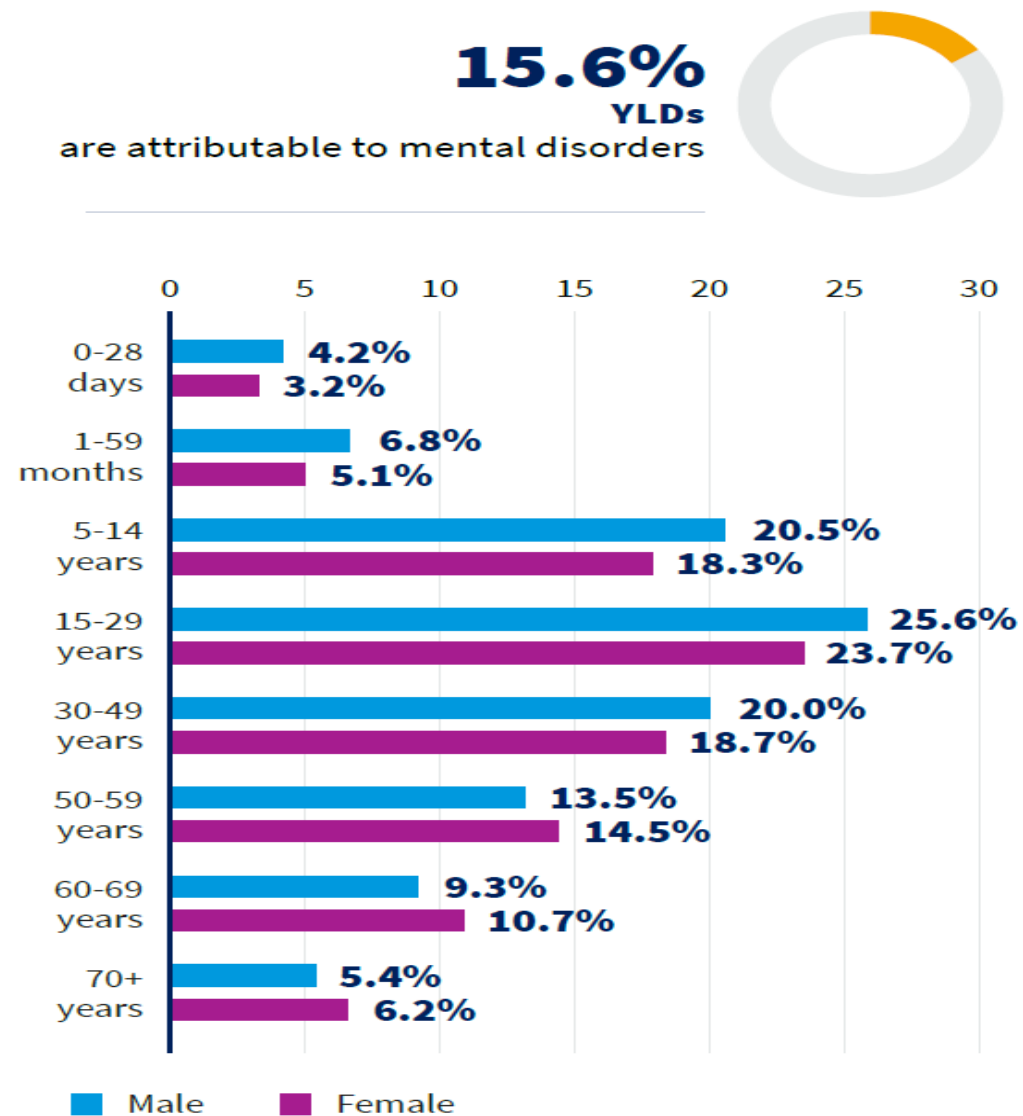


FIG. 3.6

Proportion of all-cause years lived with disability (YLDs) attributable to mental disorders, across the life-course, 2019

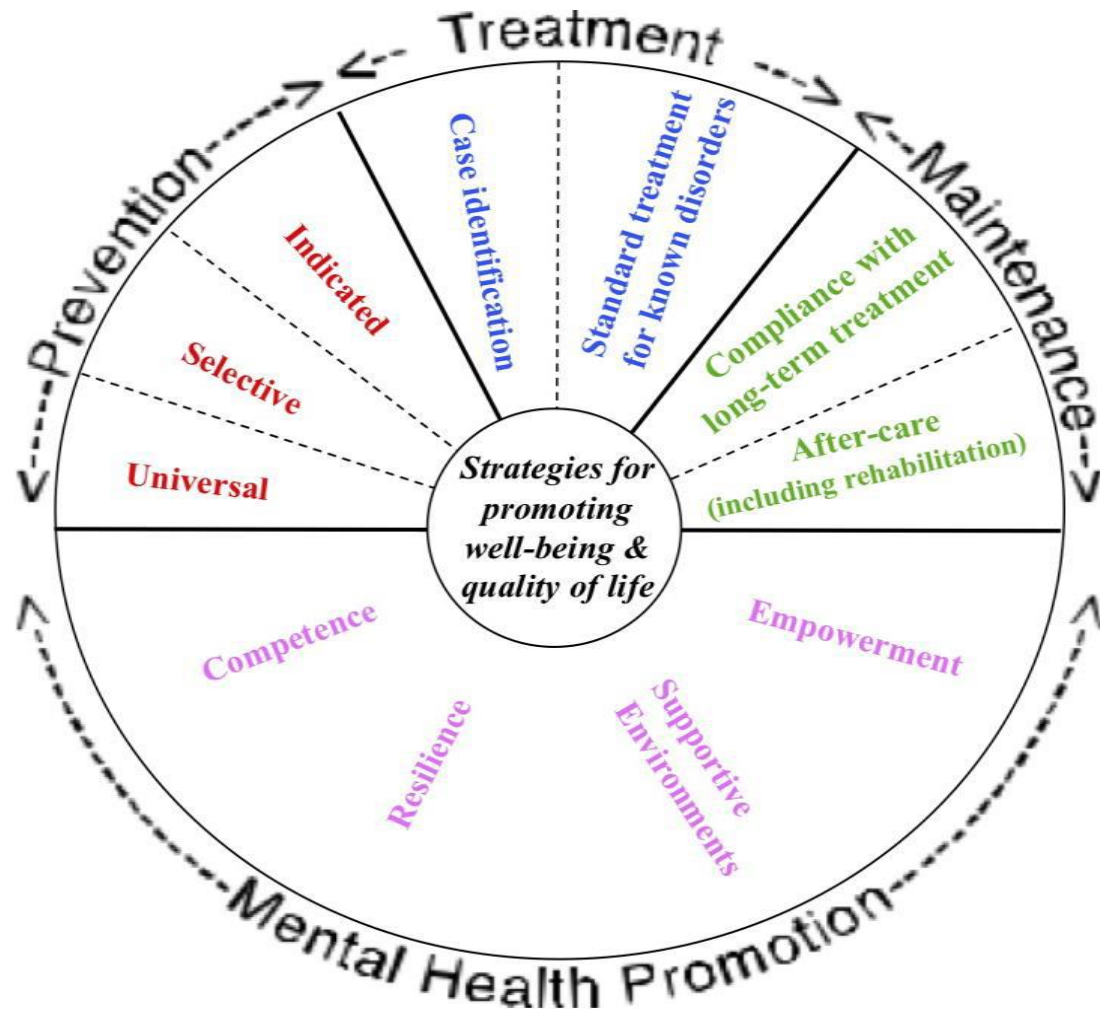


Source: WHO, 2019 (129).

Mental Health Interventions

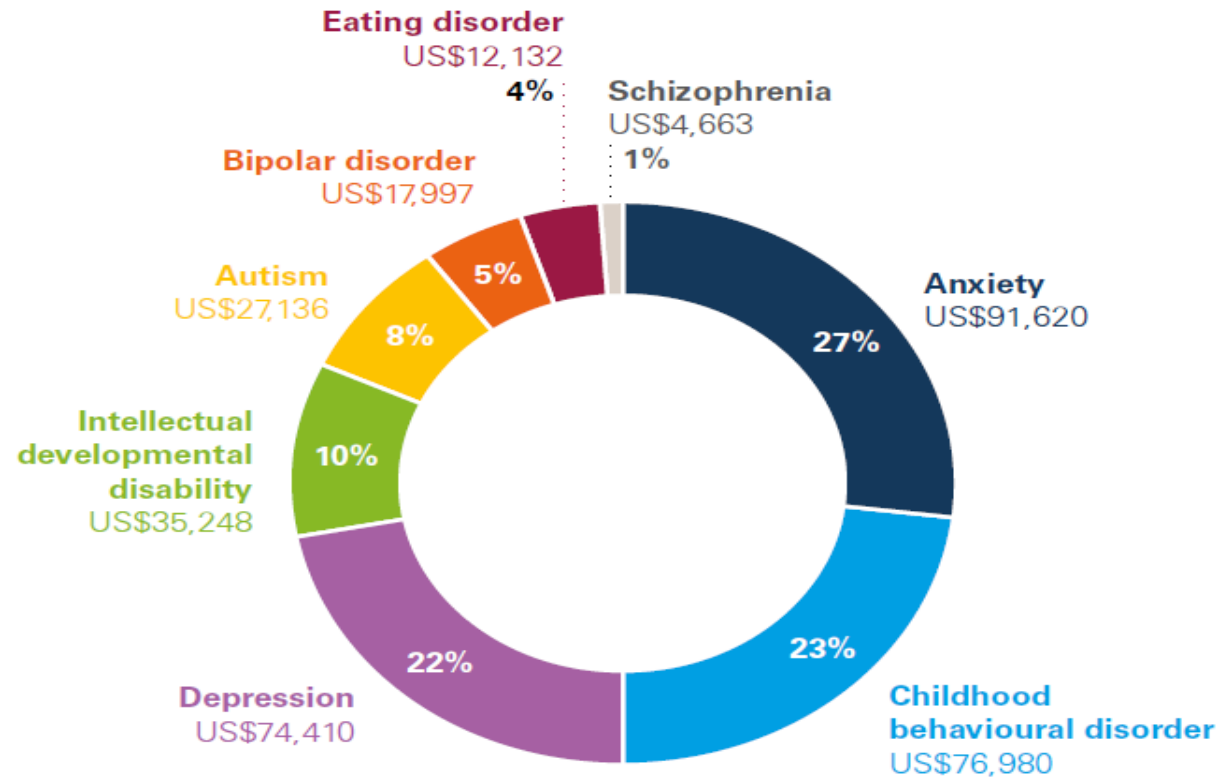
- ▶ We should be taking an approach to mental wellness that integrates the full range of interventions that support population mental wellness for children and youth.
- ▶ Below is an adapted framework borrowed from Barry, 2001, that demonstrates the relationship between the broader conception of mental health promotion and the range of interventions.

Modified Mental Health Intervention Spectrum



Mental health promotion: The case for it

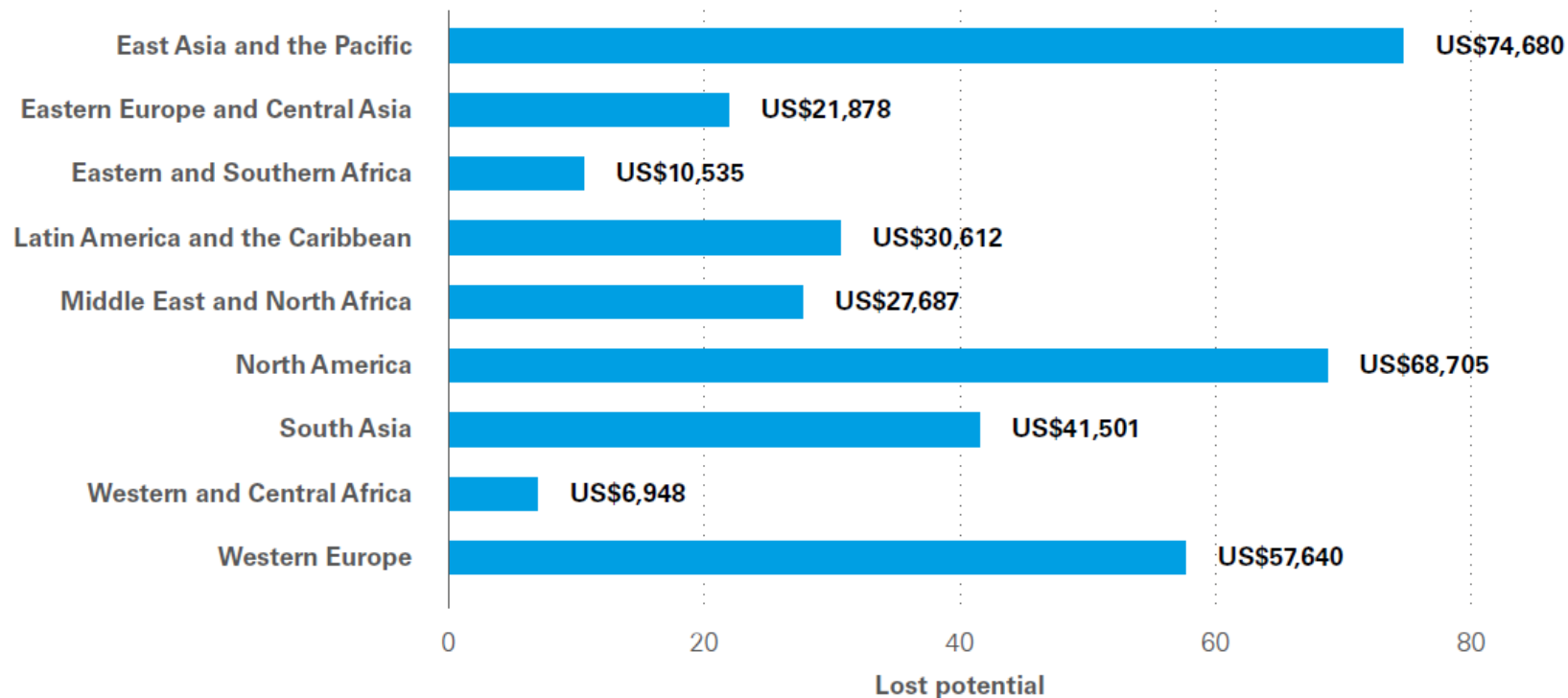
FIGURE 1.7. Cost of mental disorders based on country-specific GDP per capita adjusted for PPP, in US\$ millions



Source: McDaid, David and Sara Evans-Lacko, 'The Case for Investing in the Mental Health and Well-being of Children', background paper for *The State of the World's Children 2021*, United Nations Children's Fund, May 2021.

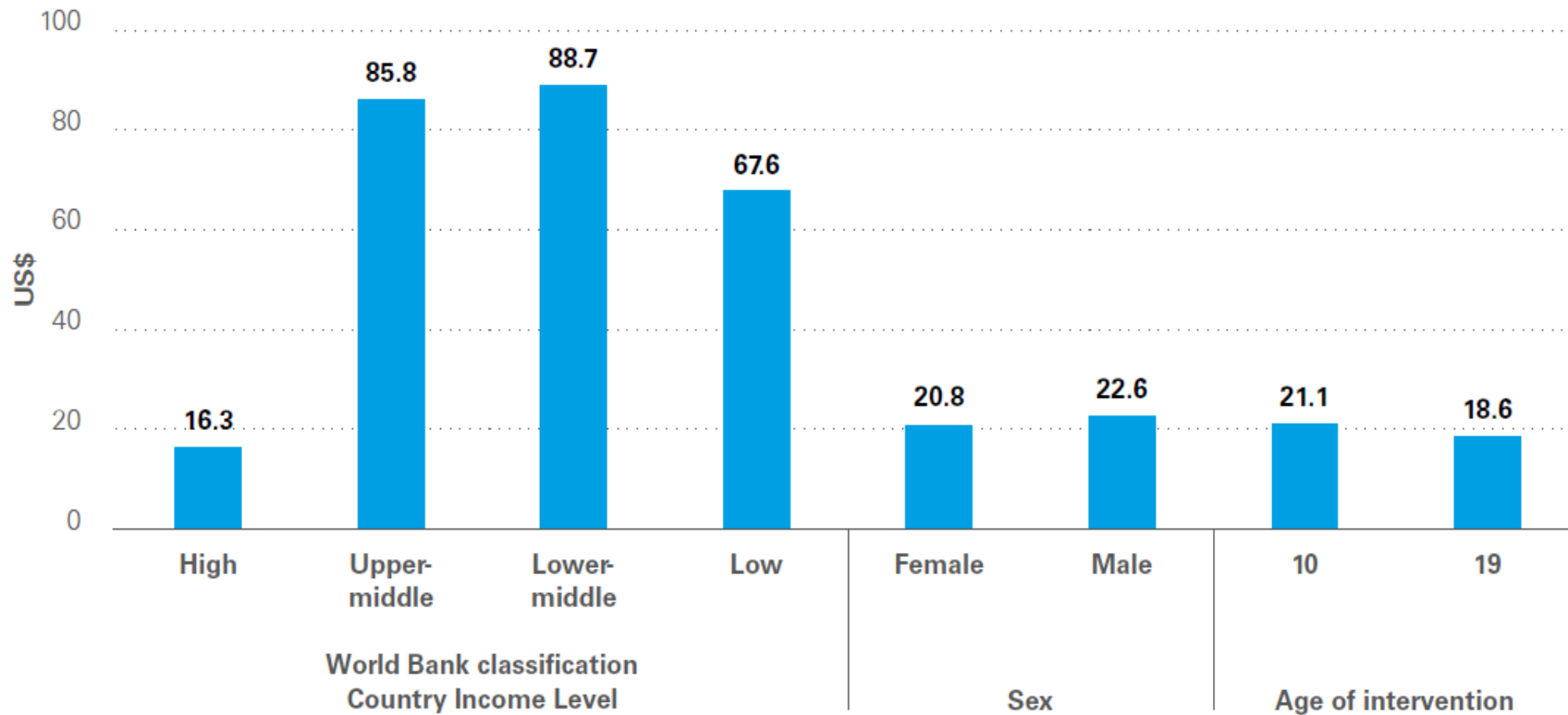
Mental health promotion: The case for it

FIGURE 1.8. Lost human capital from mental disorders by UNICEF region based on country-specific value of DALYs, in US\$ millions (PPP)⁶⁷



Mental health promotion: The case for it

FIGURE 1.9. Return on investment in school-based adolescent mental health interventions, in US\$



Source: RTI International, 'The Return on Investment for School-based Prevention of Mental Health Disorders', background paper for *The State of the World's Children 2021*, United Nations Children's Fund, May 2021.

References

- ▶ Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard university press.
- ▶ Carroll, S., Chen, J., Cheung, R., Collins, B., Colautti, J., D'Andreamatteo, C., ... & Yahya, S. (2020). Interventions to Mitigate COVID-19 Related Mental Health Risks for Those with Pre-Existing Chronic Health Conditions: A Knowledge Synthesis Based on the English and Chinese Language Literature.
- ▶ Garriguet, Didier. (2021). "Health of youth in Canada." Portrait of Youth in Canada: data report. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 42280001; Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2015 to 2019, Canadian Perspectives Survey Series, July 2020.
- ▶ Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2021). Performance measurement in infant and early childhood mental health and wellbeing in Canada: Key messages and resources from a rapid scoping review © 2021 . Ottawa, Canada: Mental Health Commission of Canada.
- ▶ Keyes, C. L. M. (2010). The next steps in the promotion and protection of positive mental health. *CJNR (Canadian Journal of Nursing Research)*, 42(3), 17-28.
- ▶ Kuosmanen, T., Keppler, T., Dowling, K., Barry, M. M. (2022). *Evidence Synthesis of Impact of Mental Health Promotion: A systematic rapid evidence assessment of the effectiveness of mental health promotion interventions across the lifecourse*. Health Promotion Research Centre, National University of Ireland Galway.
- ▶ Keyes, K.M., Gary, D., O'Malley, P.M. *et al.* (2019). Recent increases in depressive symptoms among US adolescents: trends from 1991 to 2018. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol* 54, 987-996 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-019-01697-8>
- ▶ Slee, A., Nazareth, I., Freemantle, N., & Horsfall, L. (2021). Trends in generalised anxiety disorders and symptoms in primary care: UK population-based cohort study. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 218(3), 158-164. doi:10.1192/bjp.2020.159
- ▶ Stokols, D. (1996). Translating social ecological theory into guidelines for community health promotion. *American Journal of Health Promotion : AJHP*, 10(4), 282-298.
- ▶ United Nations Children's Fund, The State of the World's Children 2021: On My Mind - Promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health, UNICEF, New York, October 2021.
- ▶ World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. (1978). Declaration of Alma-Ata. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/347879>
- ▶ World Health Organization (1986). *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion*. WHO.
- ▶ World Health Organization (2022). *World mental health report: transforming mental health for all*.