

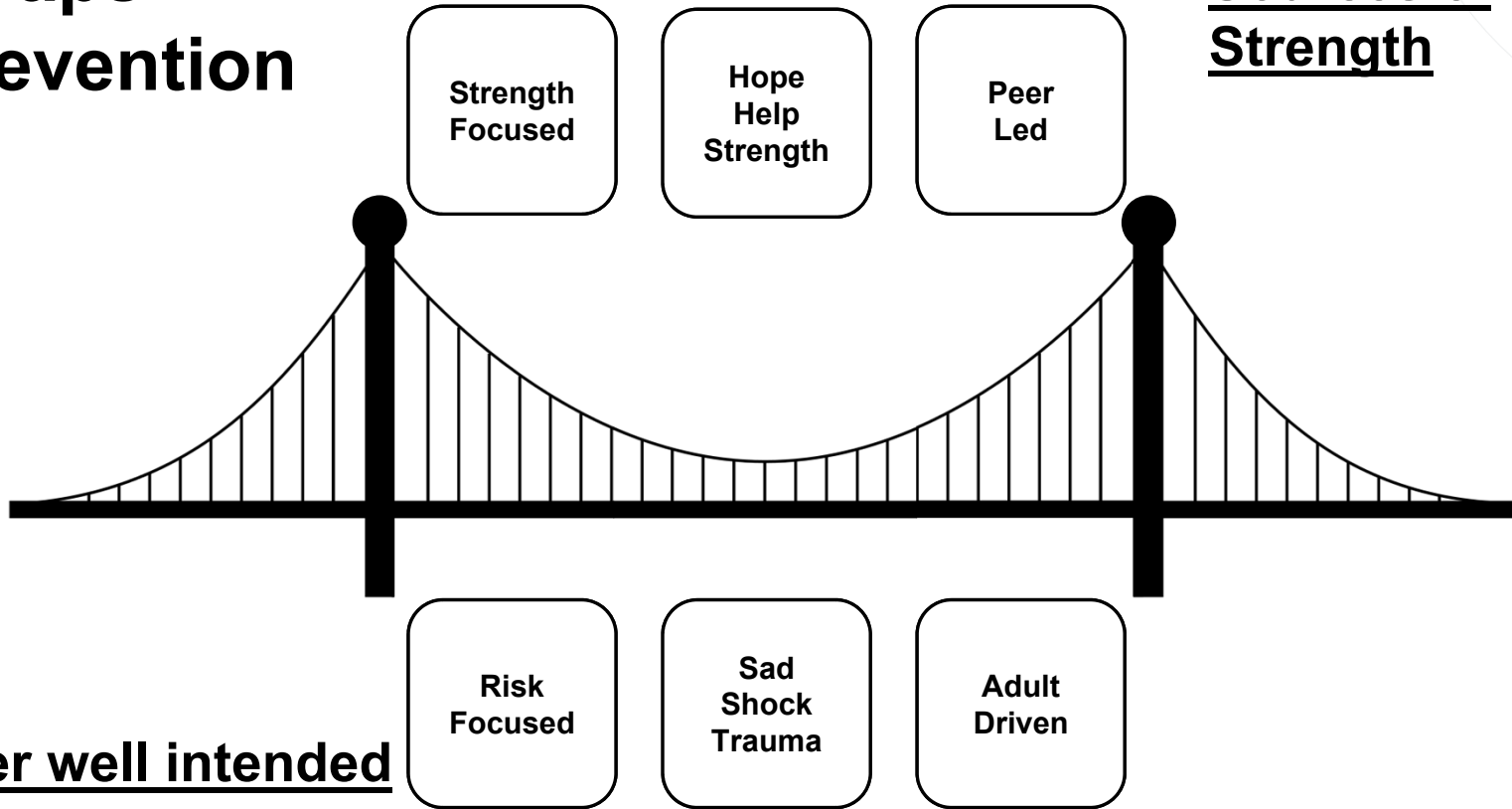


Sources of Strength is...

A best practice youth suicide prevention project designed to harness the power of **peer social networks** to **change unhealthy norms and culture**, ultimately preventing suicide, bullying, and substance abuse. The mission of Sources of Strength is to prevent suicide by **increasing help seeking behaviors** and **promoting connections between peers and caring adults**. Sources of Strength moves beyond a singular focus on risk factors by utilizing an **upstream approach** for youth suicide prevention. This upstream model strengthens **multiple sources of support (protective factors)** around young individuals so that when times get hard they have strengths to rely on.

• **Bridging
the Gaps
in Prevention**

**Sources of
Strength**



**Many other well intended
programs**

Sources of Strength Model

Supportive
Adult
Advisors

+

Diverse
Peer
Leaders

x

Strategic
Messaging
Campaigns

=

Positive
Culture
Change



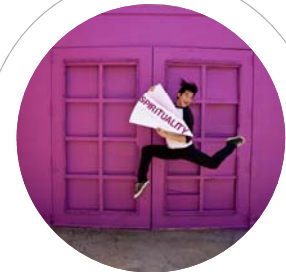
Caring
Connected
Positive



Influence
within
Social Group



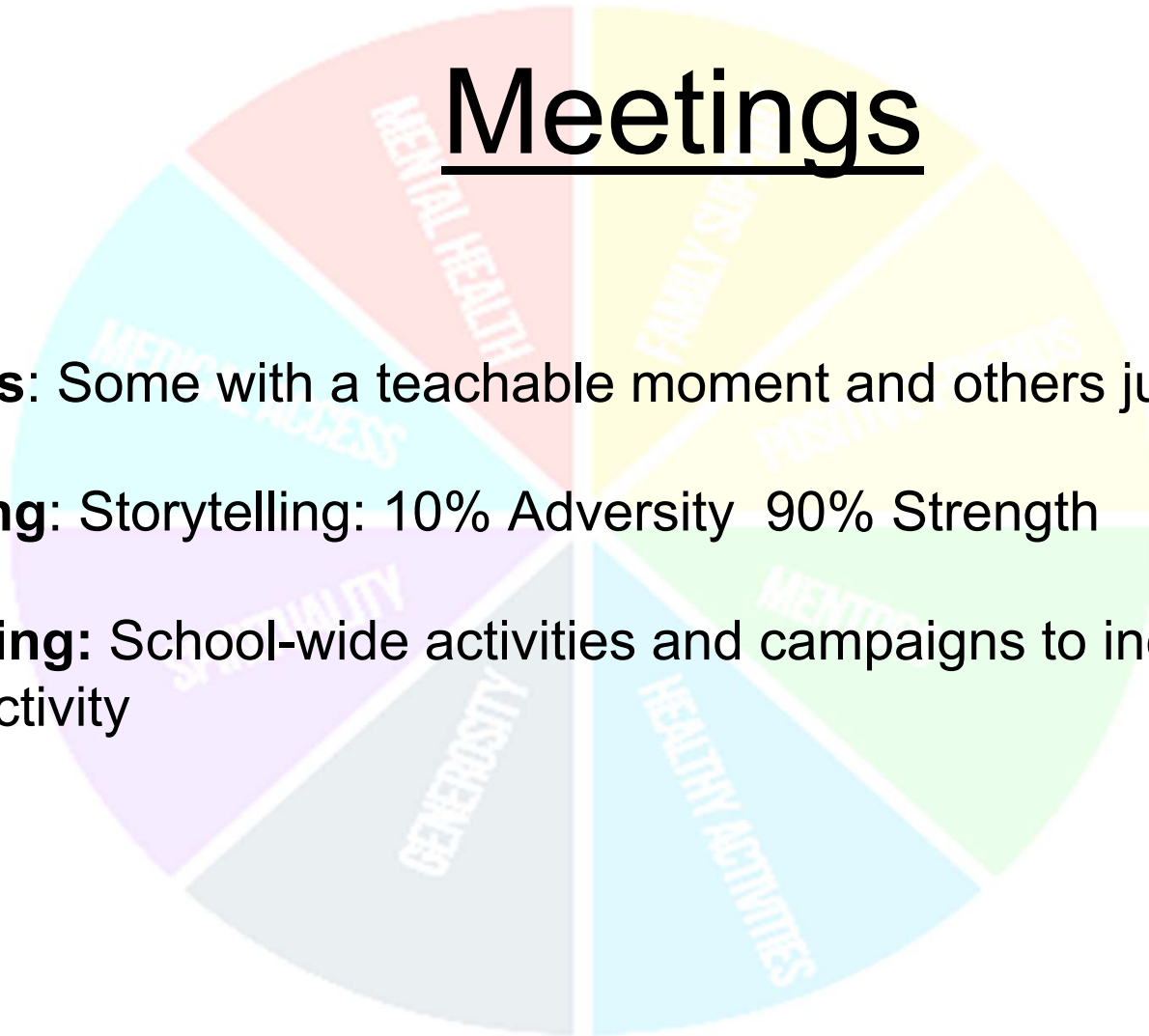
Engage
Interact
Apply



Positive
Social
Norming

Meetings

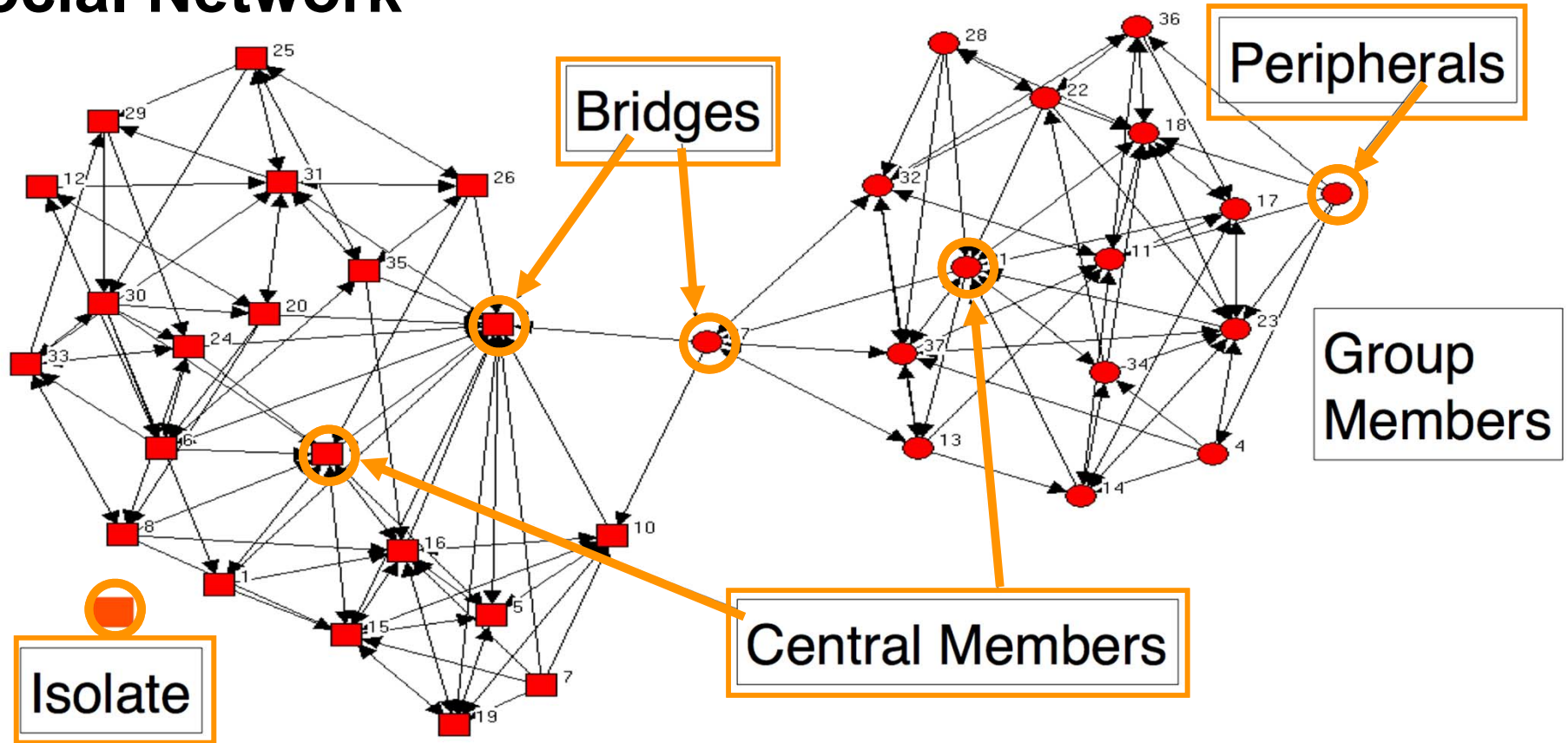
- **Games:** Some with a teachable moment and others just for fun
- **Sharing:** Storytelling: 10% Adversity 90% Strength
- **Planning:** School-wide activities and campaigns to increase connectivity



Sources of Strength
Wheel

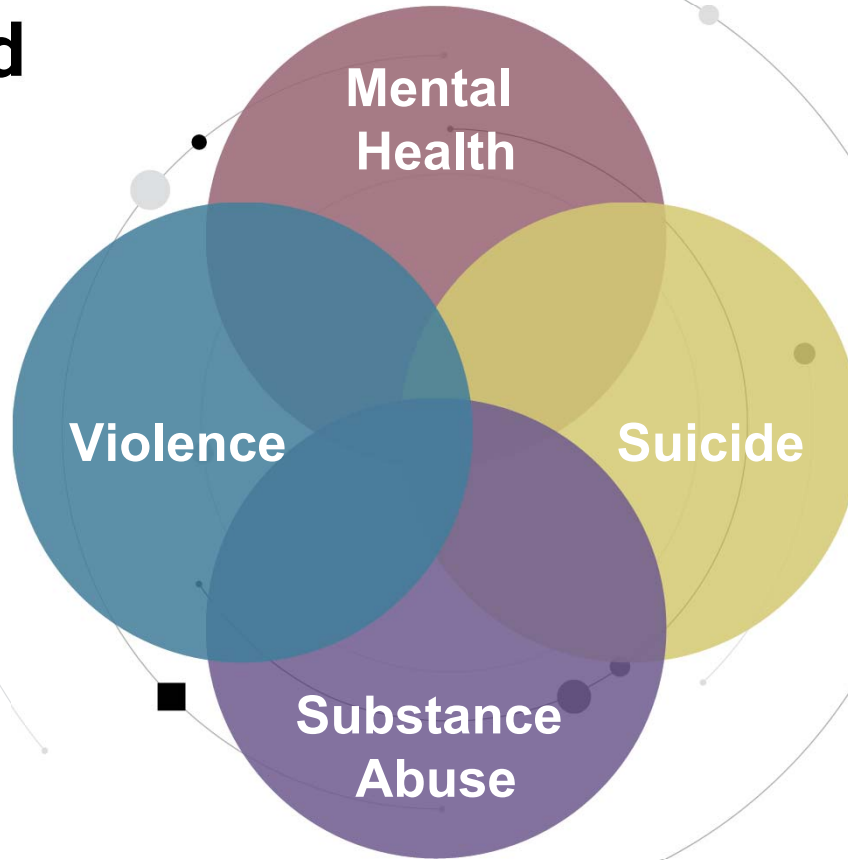


5th Grade Social Network



**Interconnected
Risks**

**Interconnected
Protective
Factors**





Impact of Sources of Strength

Cluster Randomized Control Trial (NIMH, SAMSHA Funding)

18 Schools; 465 Peer Leaders; 2,700 Students

Peer Leaders

- Increased healthy coping attitudes/norms
- More connections to adults (M +1 connection)
- 4X more likely to refer peer to adults
- Largest Gains for least connected/healthy peer leaders

School Population

- Increased help-seeking acceptability
- Increased perception that adults help suicidal peers
- Largest gains for students with a history of suicide attempts
- First suicide prevention program involving peer leaders to enhance protective factors associated with reducing suicide at the school population level.

Wyman et al. (2010). *American Journal of Public Health*

Research Partnerships

One of the most heavily researched peer leader programs

- **University of Rochester** - Dr. Peter Wyman Ph.D. - key researcher
- **National Peer Leadership Study** - funded by National Institute of Mental Health - data analysis phase
- **Stanford University** - suicide contagion in schools
- **University of Manitoba** - Swampy Cree - Canada 1st Nation trial
- **University of Rochester** - Wingman Connect Air Force Project
- **Australian National University & Black Dog Institute** - Australian Pilot
- **Sexual Violence Prevention Study** - funded by the CDC, in partnership with the Colorado Department of Public Health, the University of Rochester, and the University of Florida



Adult Advisor Recruitment

1-10 Ratio



1-7 ratio in schools with high levels of trauma or poor adult connectedness

Variety



**Admin
Counselors
Teachers
Staff
Security
Food Service
Librarian
Transportation**

Time Requirements



**45 min-1 hour meeting
2x a month
Potential 2hrs extra
per month for
implementing Peer
activities & campaigns**

Volunteer



**Adult Advisors
must want to
participate
NOT be ASSIGNED**

4-6 Week Campaigns

GETTING THE
WORD OUT

I AM
STRONGER

TRUSTED
ADULTS

THANKFULNESS
CHALLENGE

WHAT
HELPS ME

SOURCES OF
STRENGTH
WEEK



Presentations

Art/Walls Displays

Video

Social Media

Other Media

School-Wide Activities





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www.sourcesofstrength.org