



The Role of Mental Health in the Transition to Adulthood

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Transition to Adulthood

- Increased recognition as a distinct developmental period
- Diverse paths and outcomes
- Critical juncture



Transition Outcomes For Persons with IDD

- The service cliff



Transition Outcomes For Persons with IDD



- The service cliff
- Fundamentally different experience
- Pervasive Negative Outcomes

Mental Health & Social Support



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- Elevated rates of mental health problems in IDD
 - Estimates: 75% of adults with ASD
 - Estimates: 50% of adults with ID

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- Elevated rates of mental health problems in IDD
 - Estimates: 75% of adults with ASD
 - Estimates: 50% of adults with ID
- Diminished social support in IDD
 - Smaller network size
 - More reliance on professionals, less reliance on friends
 - Less connection and lower satisfaction

Predicting Successful Transitions in IDD

- Individual-level disability characteristics are most widely studied
 - IQ, Social-Communication Skills, ASD severity, Adaptive Behavior

Predicting Successful Transitions in IDD

- Individual-level disability characteristics are most widely studied
 - IQ, Social-Communication Skills, ASD severity, Adaptive Behavior
- Social, emotional, and systems factors yet to be thoroughly examined
- **Current research:** focus on the role of mental health and social support in the transition to adulthood

Current Research

- Collaborative Family Study – UCR & UCLA
- Three groups:
 - Typically developing
 - Intellectual disability
 - Autism spectrum disorder
- 93 families participated - (49 families of young adults with IDD)

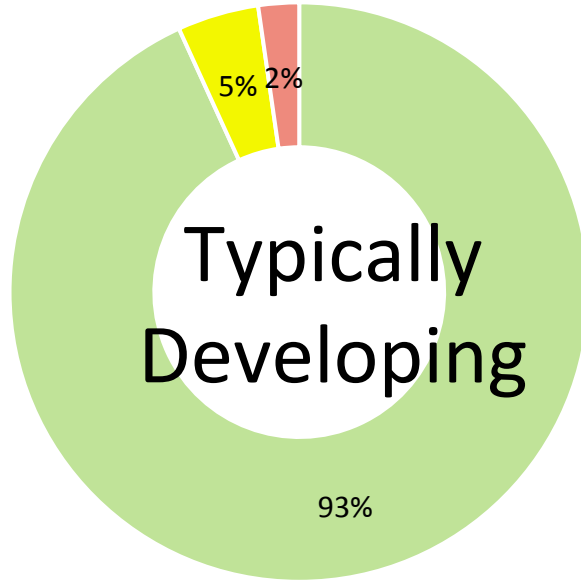
Data collection

- Young adults and their parents completed:
 - Questionnaires
 - Semi-structured interviews
- ASD and ID young adults came to our research centers to do assessment in person

Initial Results

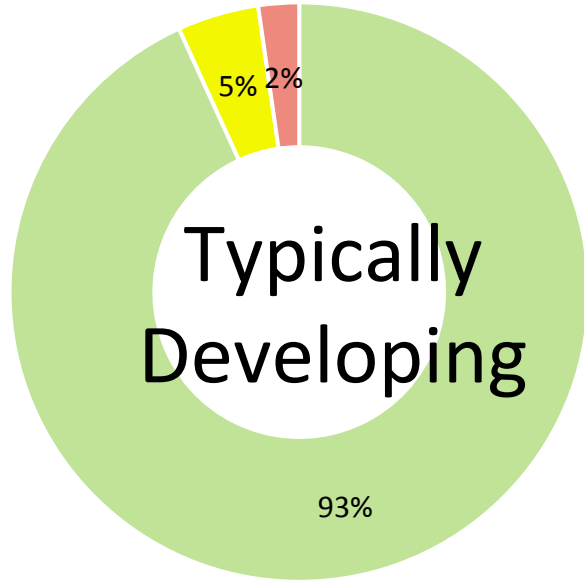
- Transition Outcome Composite (TOC)
 - Professional Activities:
 - higher education, paid employment
 - Independent Functioning:
 - living situation, autonomy
 - Social Relationships:
 - number of close friends, satisfaction with social network

Functional Outcomes (measured with TOC)

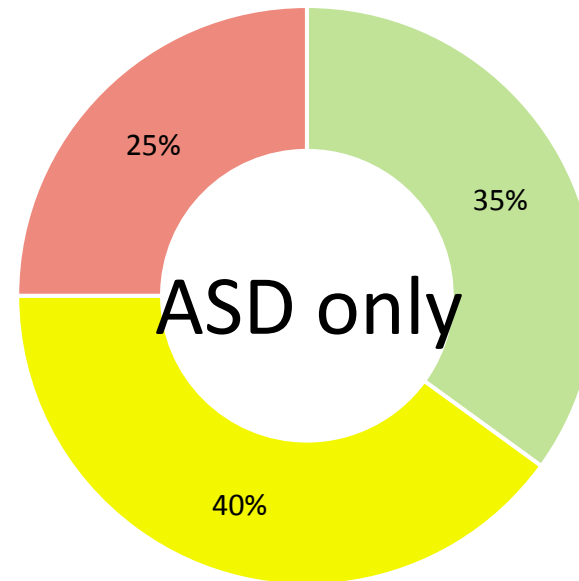
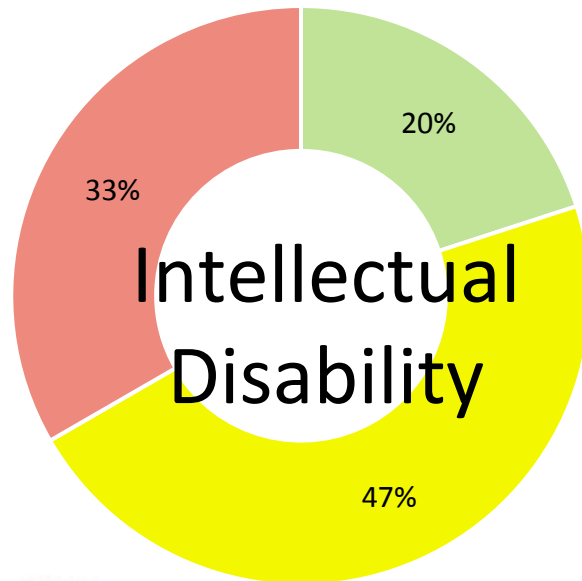


- Very Good or Good
- Fair
- Poor or Very Poor

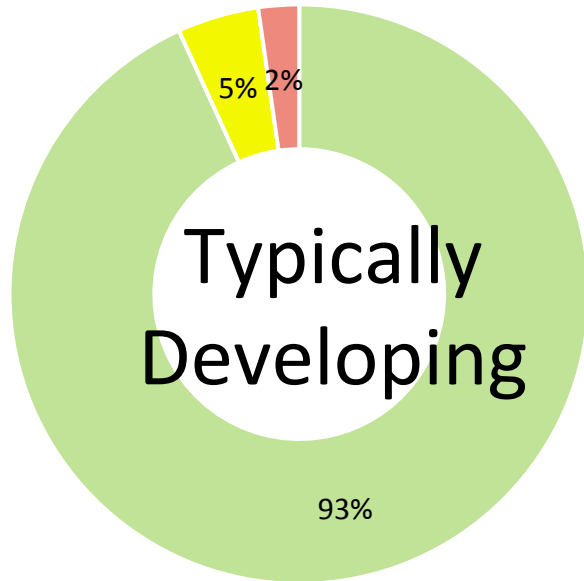
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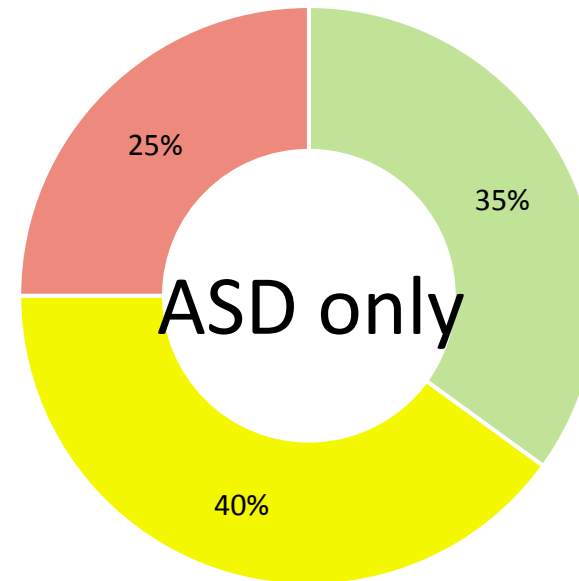
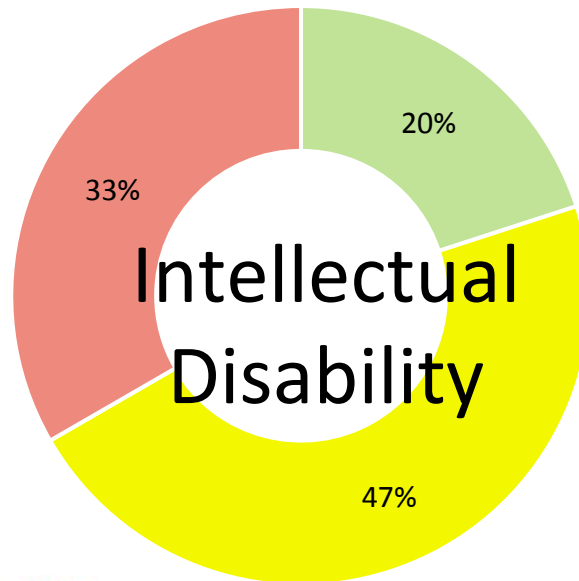
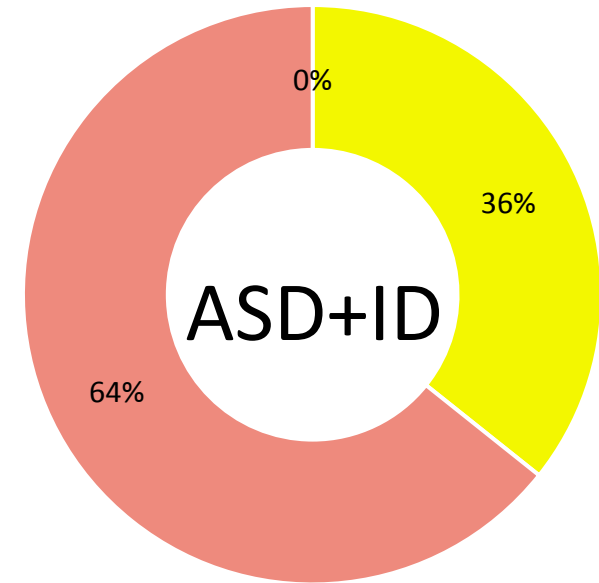
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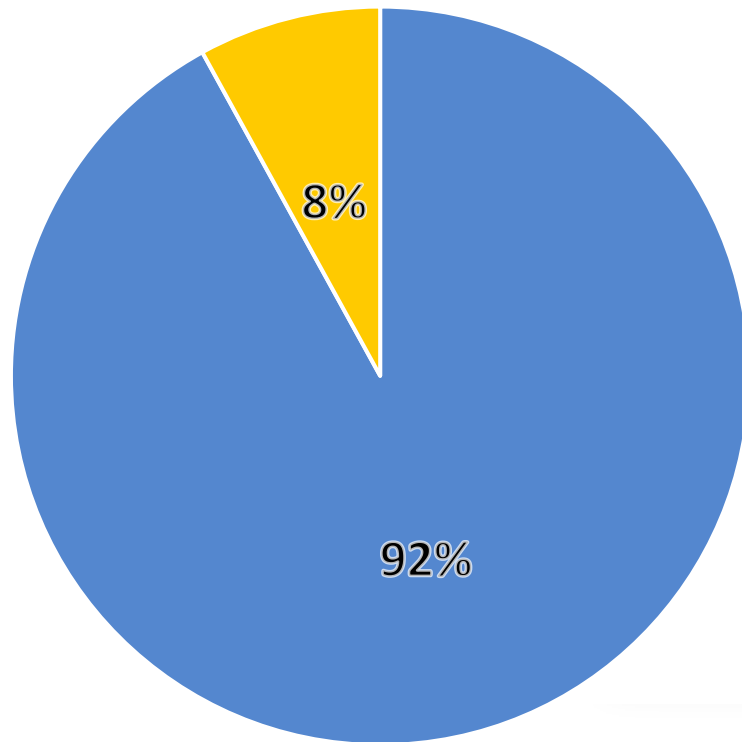


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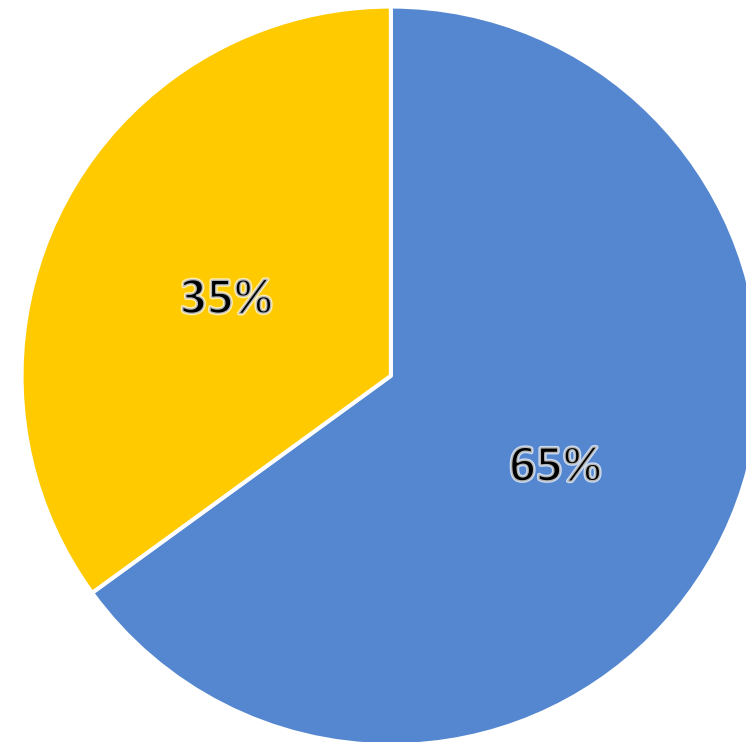


Mental Health – Parent Reported

Typically Developing



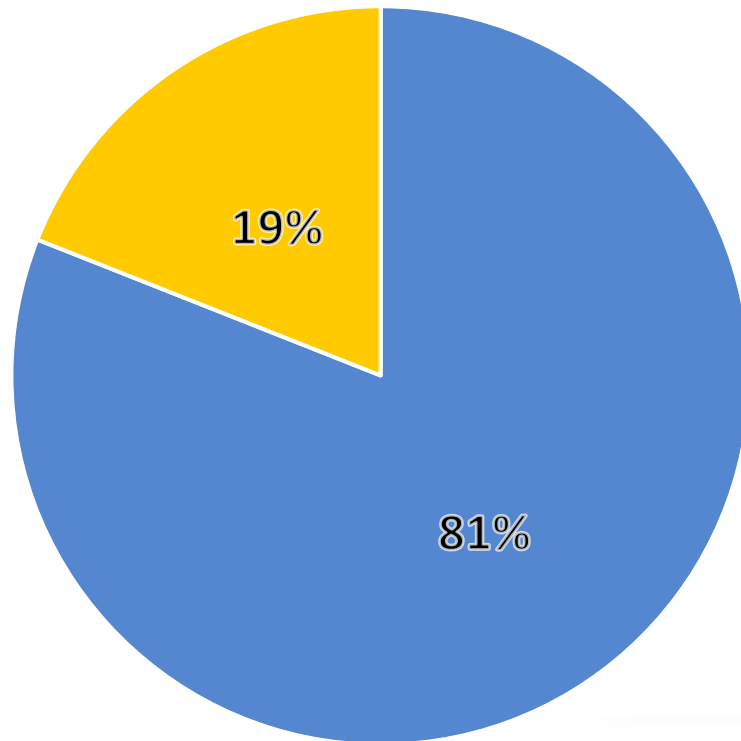
All DD (ASD and/or ID)



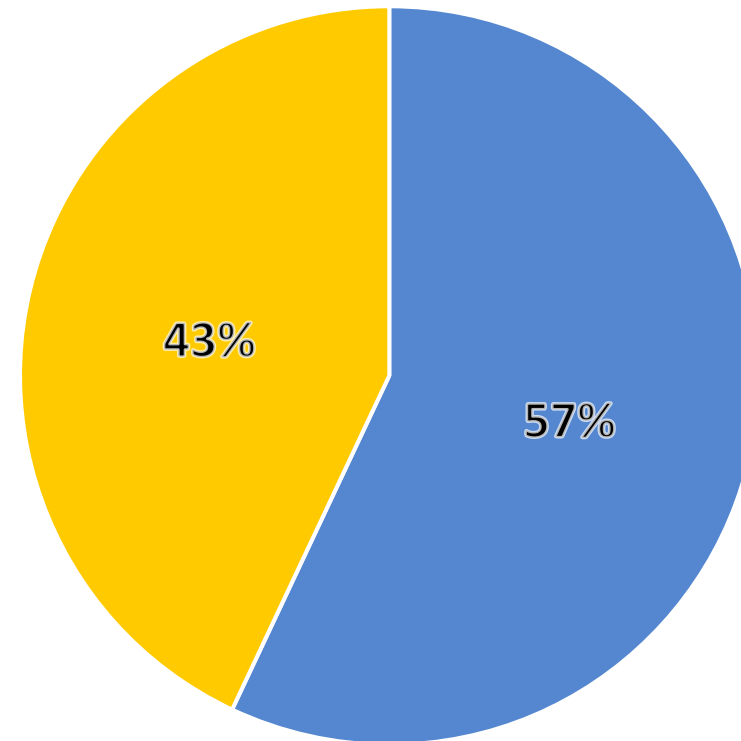
- Normative Range
- Clinically Elevated

Mental Health – Self Reported

Typically Developing

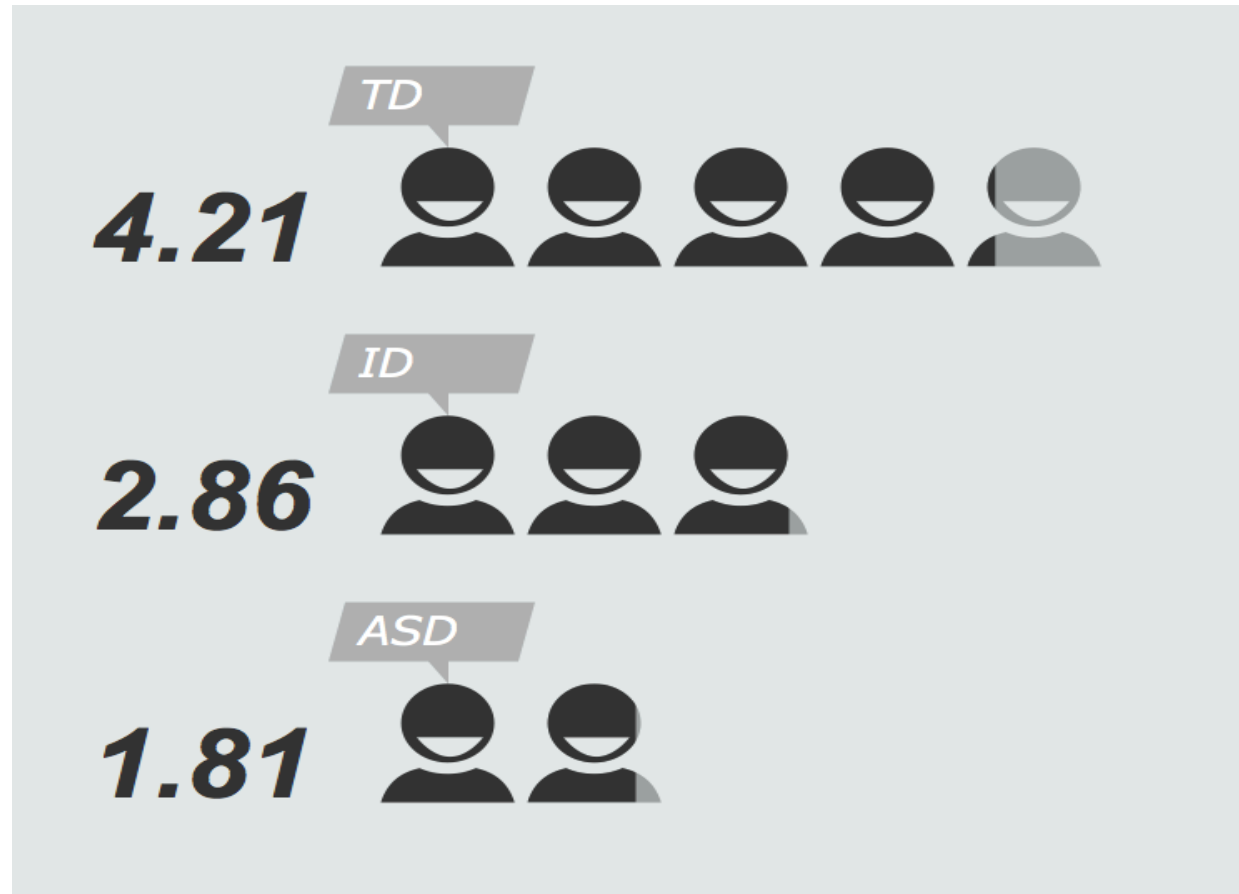


All DD (ASD and/or ID)

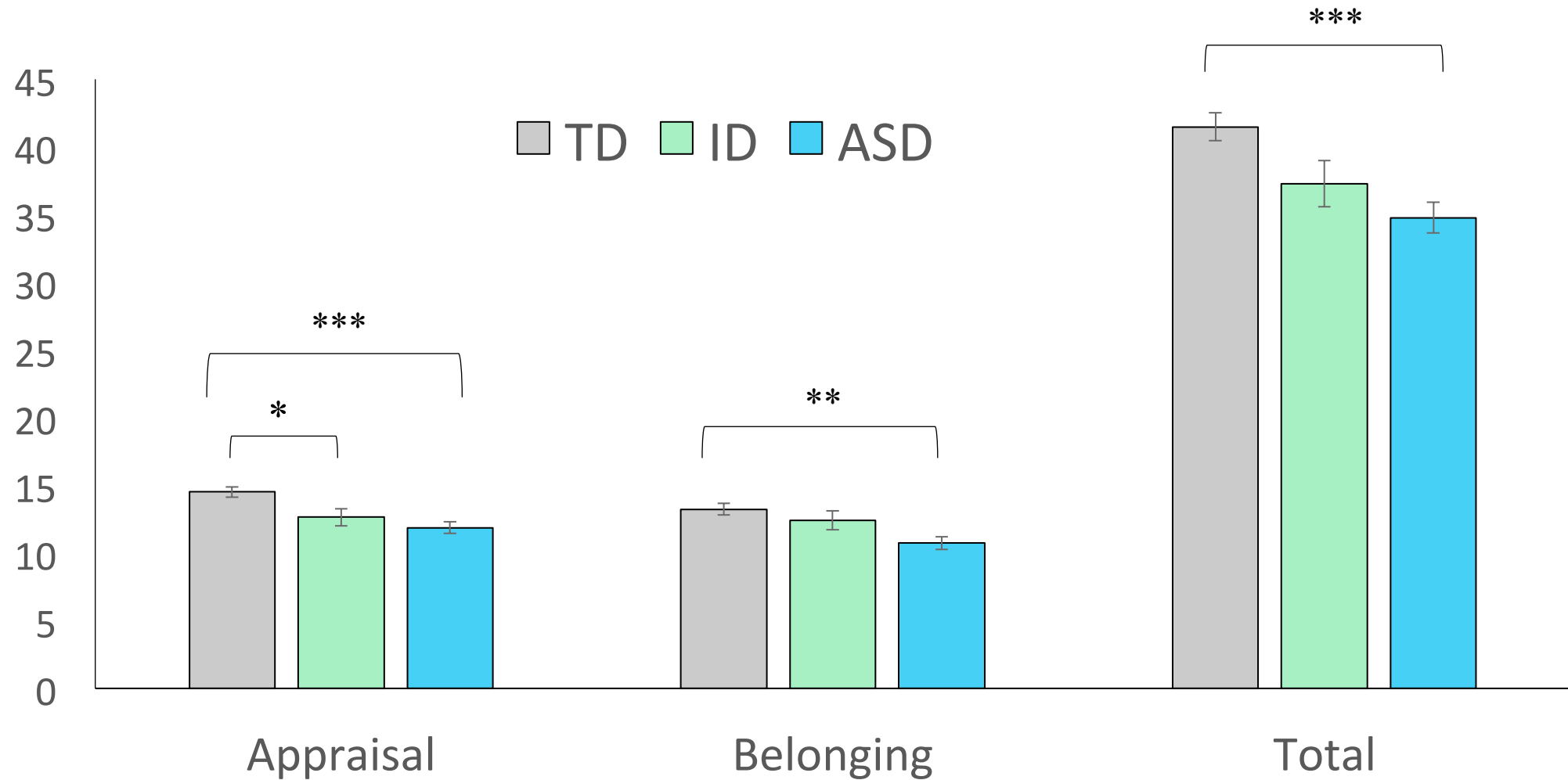


- Normative Range
- Clinically Elevated

Social Support - Friends



Social Support – Perceptions



Relating to Transition Outcomes



Relating to Transition Outcomes

- For ALL young adults (TD, ID, ASD):
 - higher levels of internalizing problems → lower quality of life and poorer functional outcome
 - lower perceived social support → more likely to fall in clinically elevated range for internalizing problems
 - Having more people in one's social support network → positive functional outcomes (e.g., paid employment)

Predicting Transition Outcomes from Adolescence



Predicting Transition Outcomes from Adolescence

- For ALL young adults (TD, ID, ASD):
 - Adolescents with higher hope → fewer mental health problems AND greater perceived social support
 - Being bullied in adolescence → greater mental health problems
 - Negative parenting behaviors → greater mental health problems
 - Behavior Problems → significantly fewer family members in their young adult social support networks.

Putting it all together

1. Young adults with IDD continue to be vulnerable in the transition to adulthood period
2. Relationships and Mental Health matter
3. Universal Processes across neurodiverse groups

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1. Young adults with IDD continue to be vulnerable in the transition to adulthood period
2. Relationships and Mental Health matter
3. Universal Processes across neurodiverse groups
4. Poor outcomes may be a culmination of multiple risk factors
5. Need for effective and accessible interventions

Takeaways in Young Adulthood

- Mental health problems, especially internalizing problems (e.g., depression and anxiety), are interfering
 - Monitoring of well-being
 - Seeking mental health treatment

Takeaways in Young Adulthood

- Social support is important, both in terms of the size of one's network and one's perceptions of it
 - Social Groups, Social Skills Programs
 - Establishing and maintaining connections

Takeaways in Adolescence

- **Hope**

- Help your child to see that there are multiple solutions to a problem – brain storm different ways to solve it with them
- Support your child to take action toward their goals – break it down into small steps that will build a sense of accomplishment

Takeaways in Adolescence

- **Hope**
- **Bullying**

Takeaways in Adolescence

- Hope
- Bullying
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Takeaways in Adolescence

- **Hope**
- Bullying
- Negative Parenting
- Behavior Problems



Thank you!

Time for Q&A