



Youth Engagement as a Protective Factor for Rural & Urban Youth Suicidal Ideation

Dr. Laura Lynne Armstrong
Ph.D., C.Psych. (Supervised Practice)

Assistant Professor, Saint Paul University
School of Counselling, Psychotherapy, & Spirituality

Clinical Psychologist – Child, Adolescent, Family, & Adult Psychotherapy
Psychoeducational & Gifted Assessments

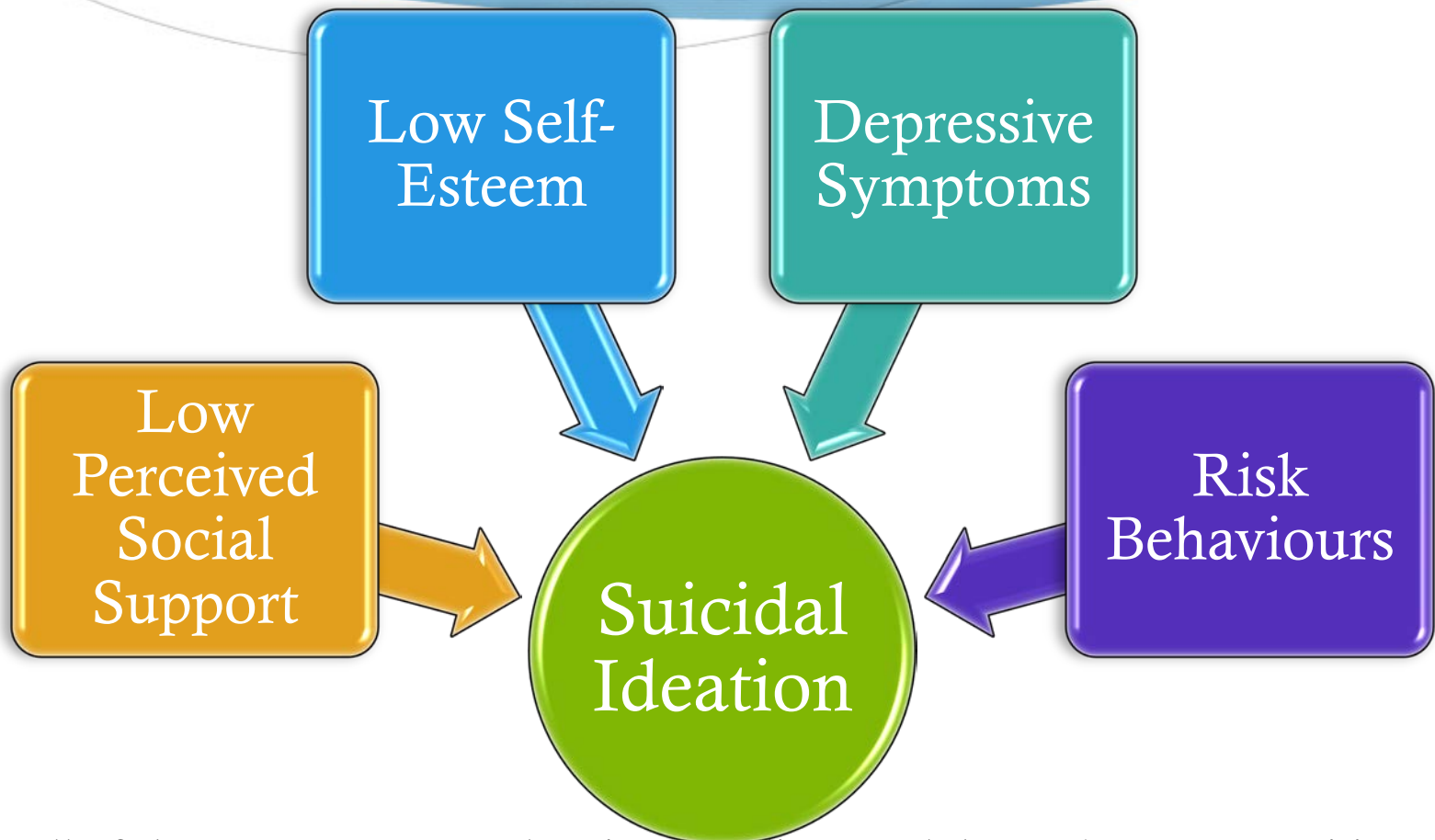


Youth Suicide in Canada

- ◆ Accounts for more deaths than **cancer**, **AIDS**, & all other natural causes of death
- ◆ 4-6x more likely to die in **rural** than **urban** regions



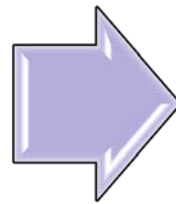
Risk Factors



All of these are more prevalent in Canadian rural than urban communities

Youth Engagement

Youth Engagement



- Fewer Depressive Symptoms
- Higher Self-Esteem
- Fewer Risk Behaviours
- Greater Social Support

Is Youth Engagement a Protective Factor?



💧 Breadth, Intensity, Meaningful Engagement

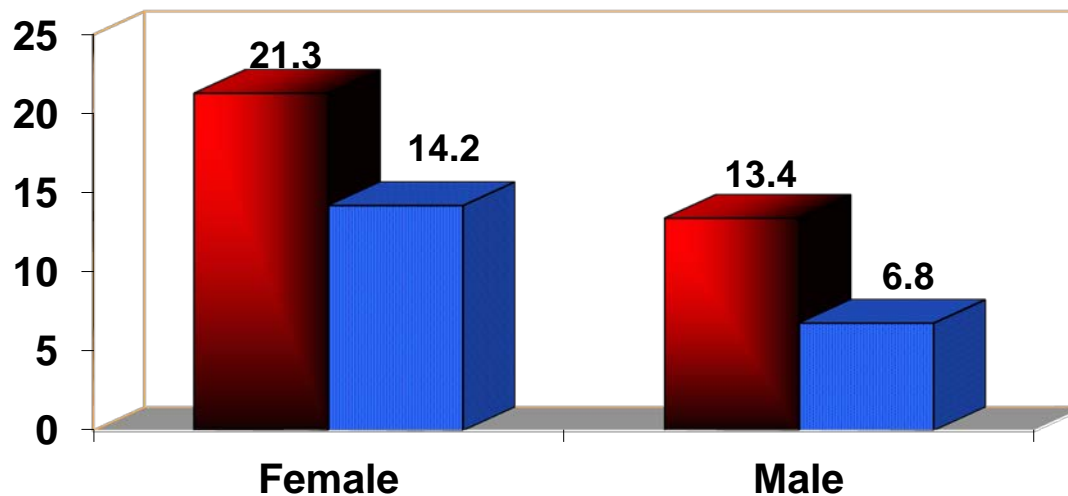
FINDING MEANING = DECREASED SUICIDE RISK (Frankl)

Methods

- ◆ Survey
- ◆ 813 rural & urban secondary school youth
- ◆ Non-remote rural (1-2 hours from a city centre)
- ◆ Measurement of meaningful engagement (Youth Engagement Matrix):
 - ◆ Structured extracurricular activity
 - ◆ Based on positive psychology literature
 - ◆ **Feeling successful, challenged, have fun, hard to give up activity, activity viewed as important (to society or self)**

% Current Suicidal Ideation

■ Rural ■ Urban



Gender: $F(1,762) = 5.40, p = .02$

Rural/Urban: $F(1,762) = 50.24, p = .002$

Findings: Rural Dwelling

Rural
Females



Youth
Engagement



Suicidal
Ideation

$F(1, 242) = 4.74, p = .03$

Rural
Males



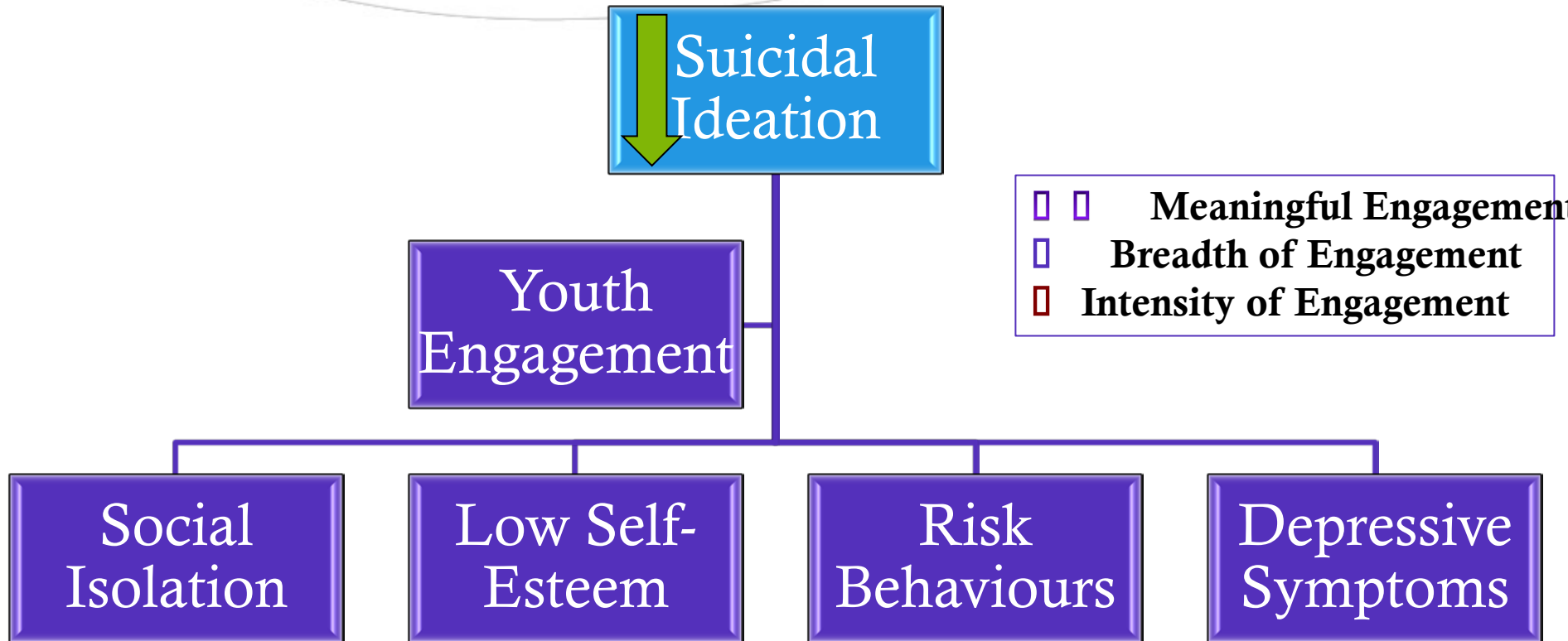
Youth
Engagement



Suicidal
Ideation

$F(1, 214) = 6.52, p = .01$

Findings: Risk Factors



Research Contributions

- 💧 **Non-remote** rural suicidal ideation
- 💧 Youth engagement as a **moderator**



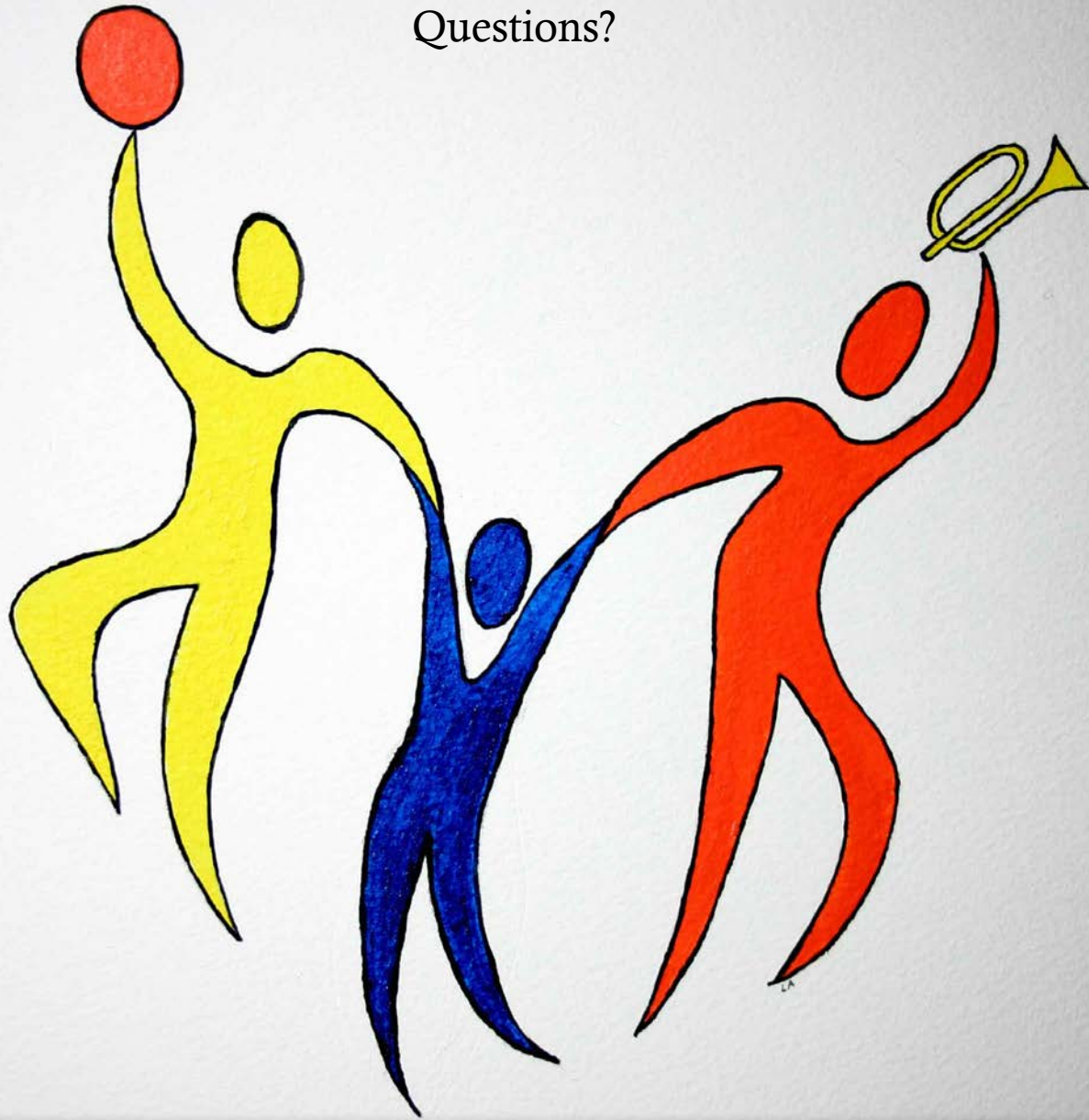
Implications

- 💧 **Meaningful engagement** → prospective avenue for prevention (rural dwelling / risk factors)
- 💧 Targeted approaches
- 💧 Facilitate prevention → rural females
- 💧 Reach youth before suicidal concerns emerge

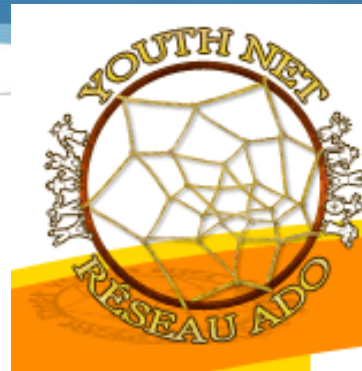
Where do we go from here?

- ◆ Feasibility – Invitations to engage those at risk; creation of rural opportunities for engagement
- ◆ Scalability
- ◆ What can you do?

Questions?



Acknowledgement



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