



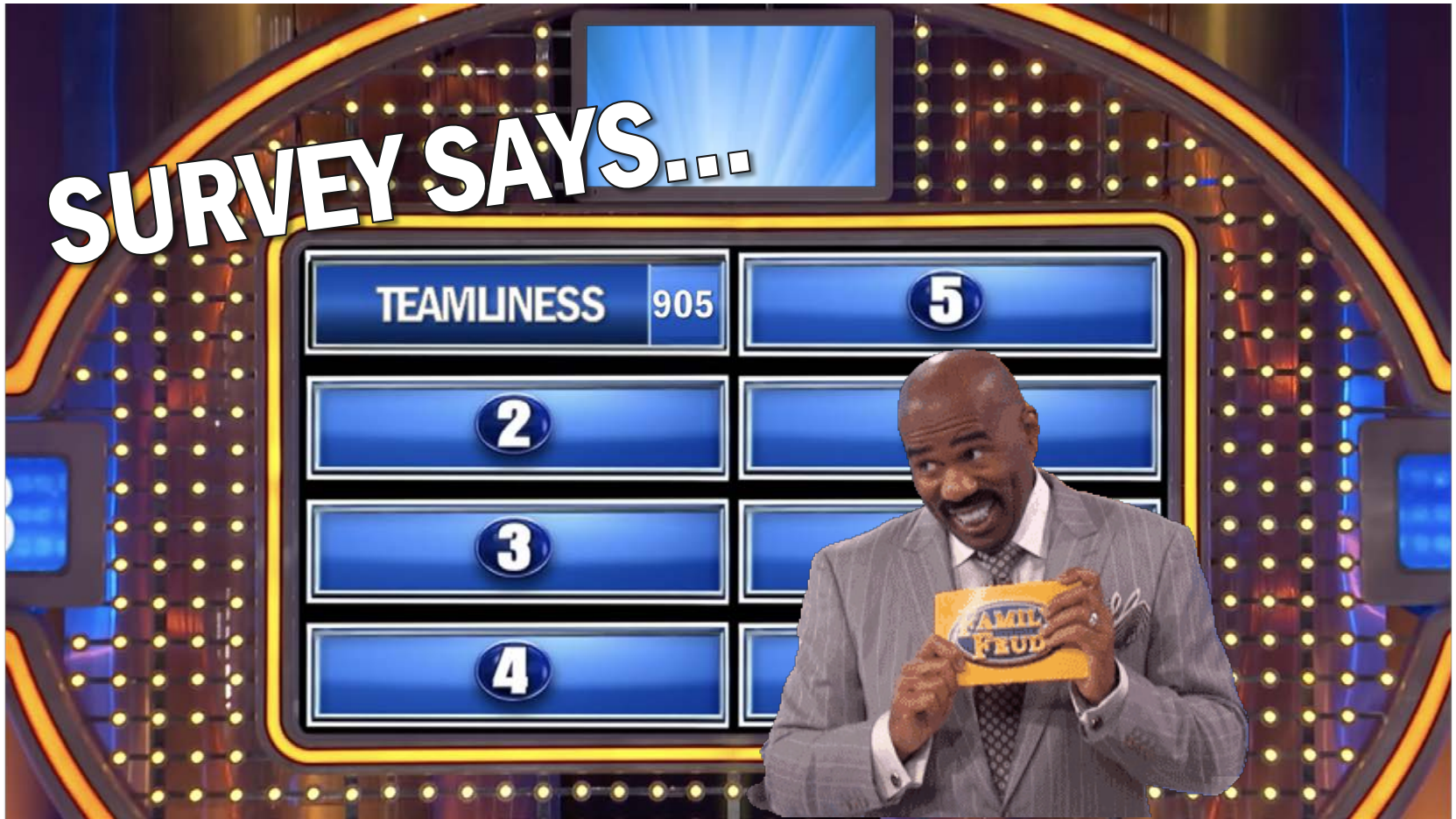
TEXAS  
JUVENILE JUSTICE  
DEPARTMENT

# Survey Says—Teamliness :

*Texas Model Research and the  
Importance of Connection*

Emily Knox, Ph.D.

May 2021



## *Texas Model Research and the Importance of Connection*

Emily Knox, Ph.D.

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May, 27 2021

# Overview

- What's the Texas Model?
- How do we know if the Texas Model works?
- Why does connection matter for anyone?
- What's "teamliness" and why should I care?
- How do we improve staff morale?
- What difference does it make if kids feel supported?
- What gets in the way of connection?
- Where do we go from here?

# Texas Model 101

What are the principles of the Texas Model?

- Connection
- Felt Safety
- Empowerment
- Correction
- Individualization as needed
- Emotional Regulation
- Skill Building
- Successful community (re)integration

# Texas Model 101

## What are the goals of the Texas Model?

- Create safer environments for kids and staff
- Help staff understand behaviors that are survival behaviors vs. willful acts, and upstairs vs. downstairs brain
- Creating appropriate, safe, and supportive youth/ staff relationships, establishing healthy boundaries.
- Establish a healthy balance between nurture and structure.

# Texas Model Dorms

What do these principles and goals look like in practice?

## Physical:

- Softened Environment
- Stable dorm assignments
- Sensory Activities
- Nutrition & Hydration
- Regulation & Safety Unit

## Interpersonal:

- Positive prompts instead of negative commands
- I.D.E.A.L. Response
- Levels of Engagement
  1. Playful Engagement
  2. Structured Engagement
  3. Calming Engagement
  4. Protective Engagement
- Repairs
- Nurture groups

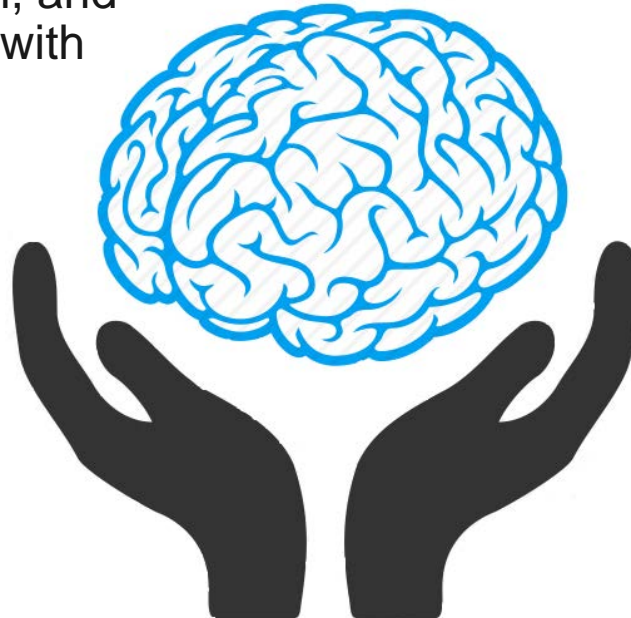


# Integration vs. Isolation

## Why does connection matter?

### Connection:

- Strengthens your immune system
- Increases longevity
- Helps you recover from disease more quickly
- Decreases stress overall, and improves ability to cope with stressful situations
- Enhances self-esteem
- Strengthens emotion regulation skills
- Increases compassion



### Loneliness:

- Increases instances of depression and anxiety
- Higher likelihood of suicide
- Later-life cognitive decline
- Increased risk of cancer, neurodegenerative diseases, and viral infections
- Increased antisocial behavior and violence

# Design

## How do we measure Texas Model success?

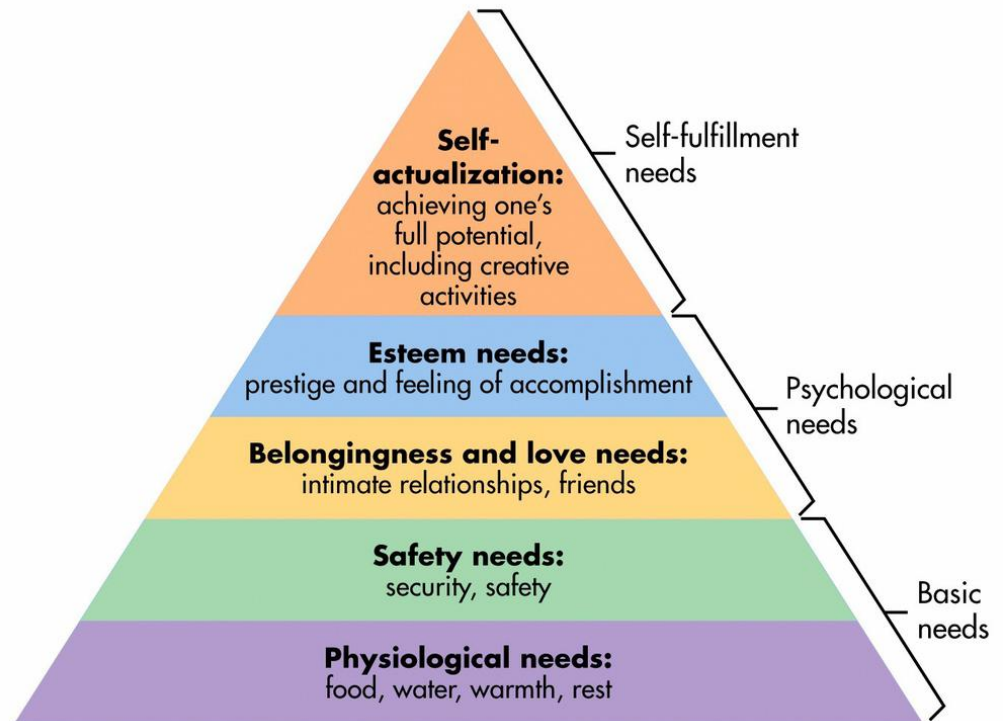
- **3 Pillars of Trauma-Informed Care**

- Felt-Safety
- Emotional Regulation
- Connection

- **TBRI Principles**

- Empowering
- Connecting
- Correcting

- **Maslow's Hierarchy**



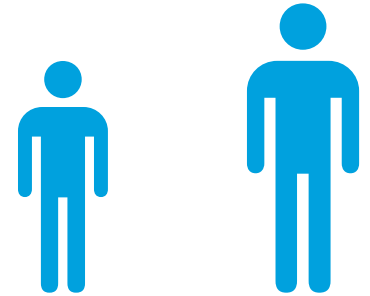


# Measuring Connection

How is it different for kids and staff?

## Youth Survey:

- Perceived Social Support
- Actually Received Social Support



## Staff Survey:

- Collective Efficacy or “Teamliness”



# Survey Response Rates

Who all participated in the evaluation?

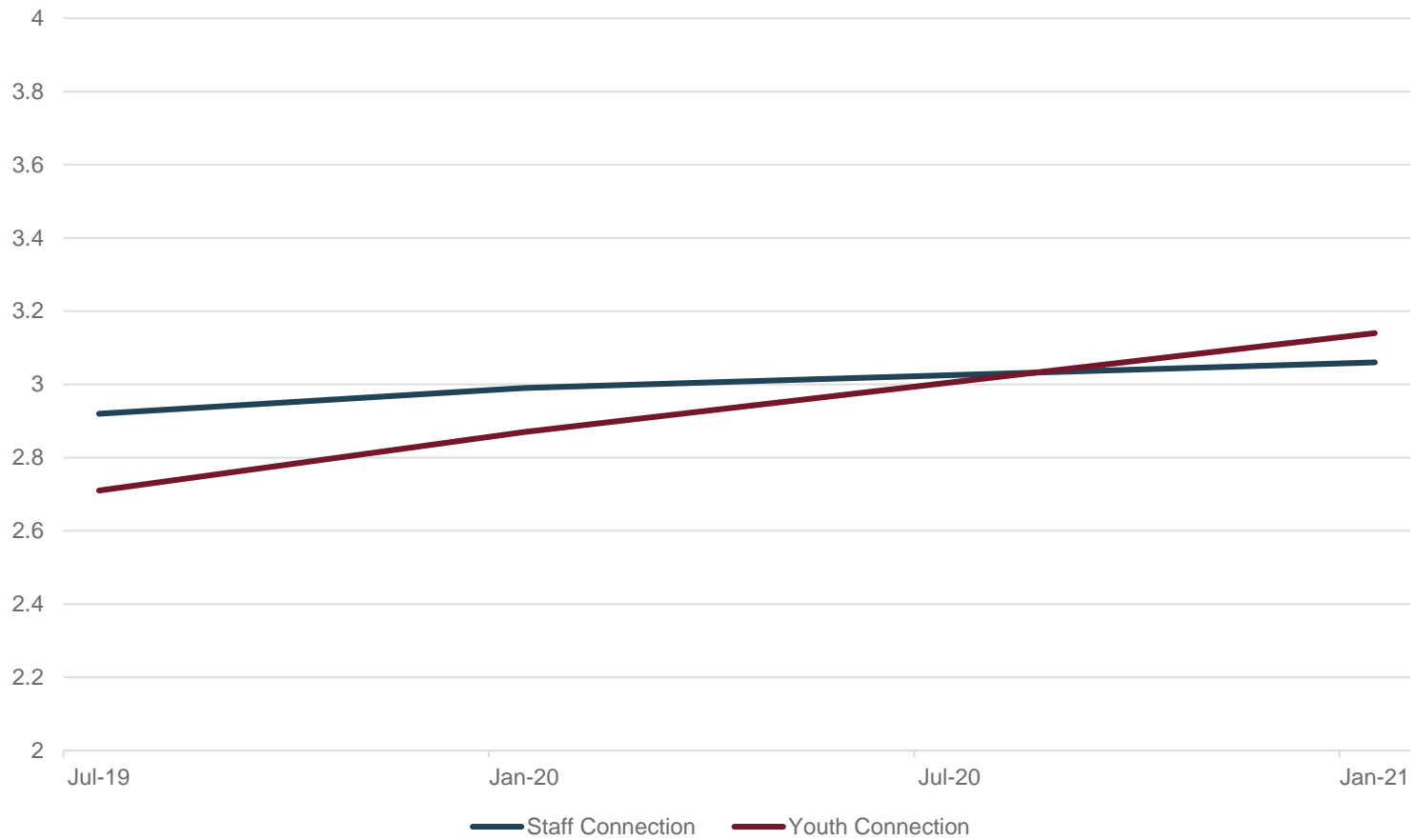
## Staff Response Rate:

- **Wave 1 (July 2019): 25%**
  - 385 participants
- **Wave 2 (Jan. 2020): 32%**
  - 466 participants
- **Wave 3 (Jan. 2021): 63%**
  - 905 participants
- **Participants are distributed throughout all facility job functions: teachers, coaches, administrators, case managers, maintenance and food prep staff, and facility leadership**

## Youth Response Rate:

- **Wave 1: 76%**
  - 636 participants
- **Wave 2: 80%**
  - 661 participants
- **Wave 3: 67%**
  - 405 participants
- **Facility Demographics:**
  - Youth between ages 12 and 18
  - Average age: 16.4
  - Race Category: 20% White; 43% Black; 36% Latino/a; <1% Other races
  - Sex Category: 92% Male; 8% Female

Staff & Youth Connection, 2019-2021



# Staff Survey: Findings

What does the data tell us about trust among teammates?

**HIGH COLLECTIVE EFFICACY**

- Lower levels of reported burnout
- Higher positive affect (happy feelings)
- Lower negative affect (sad feelings)
- More felt safety
- Greater job satisfaction
- Higher commitment to the agency and facility
- More perceived input into facility decision making
- Higher self-efficacy (or feeling more in control and effective) at work

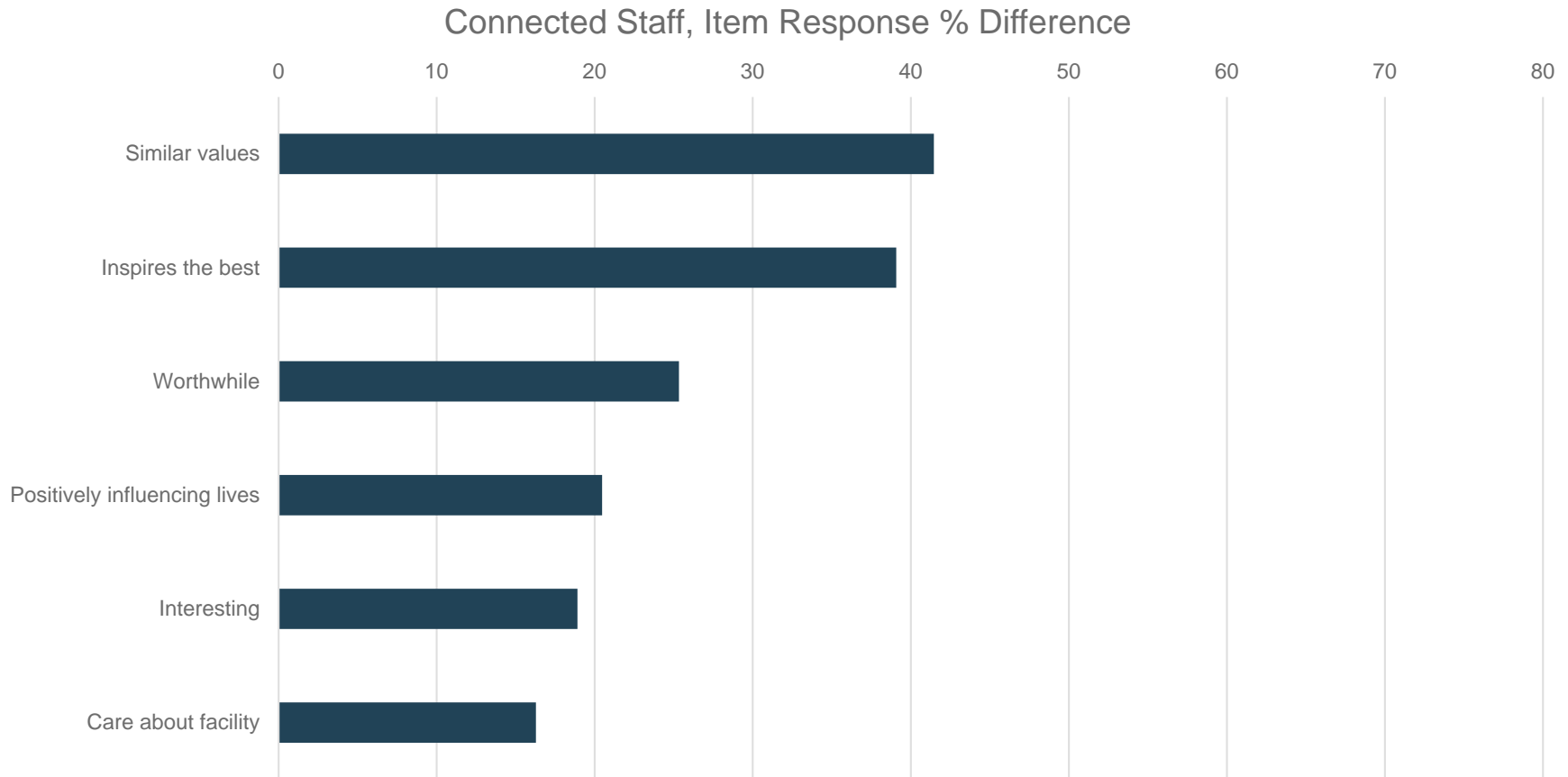
# Staff: Control Variables

What doesn't impact connection between staff members?

- Race
- Gender
- Age
- Facility
- Tenure at TJJD
- Job Function
  - Coach or Education Staff

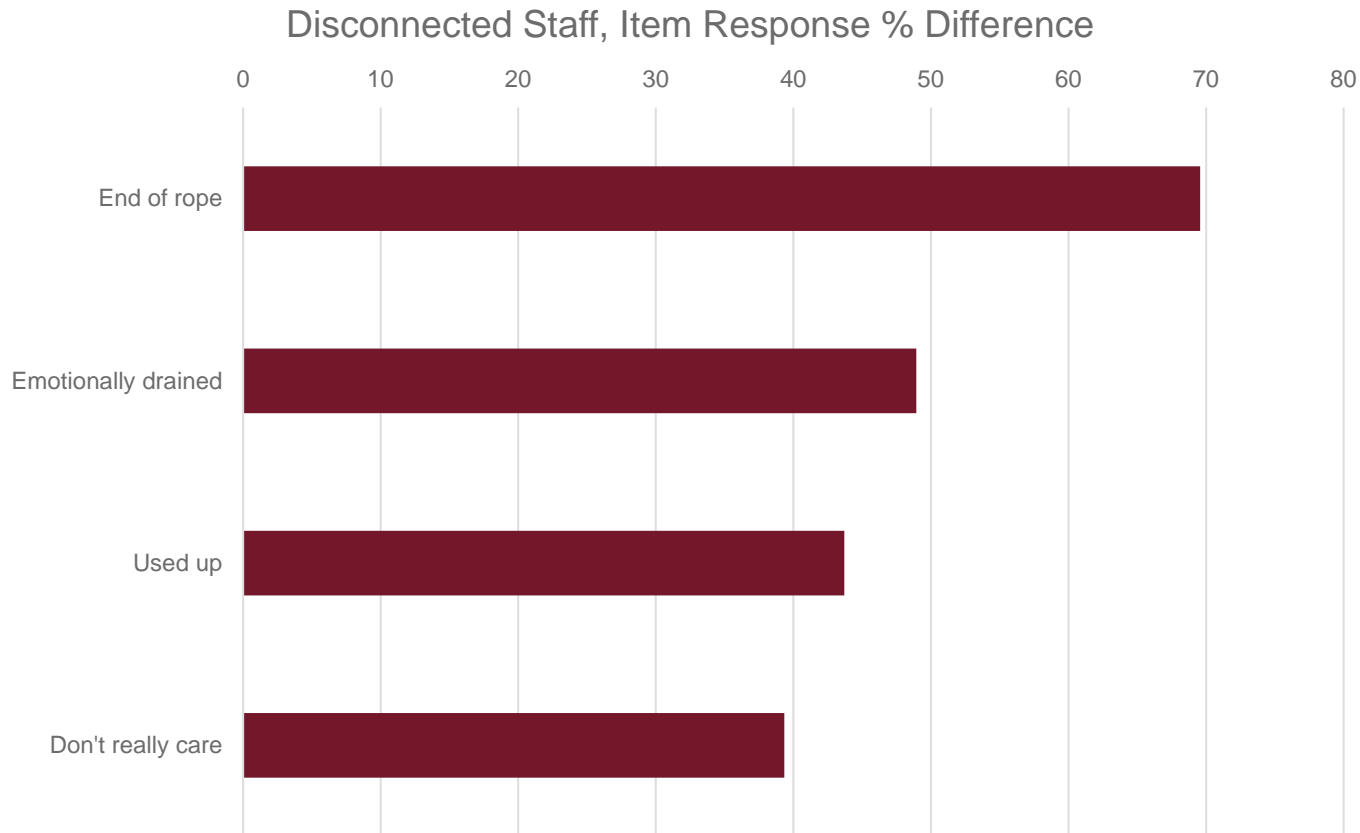
# Staff: Connected vs. Disconnected

How do high connection staff compare to those who are disengaged?

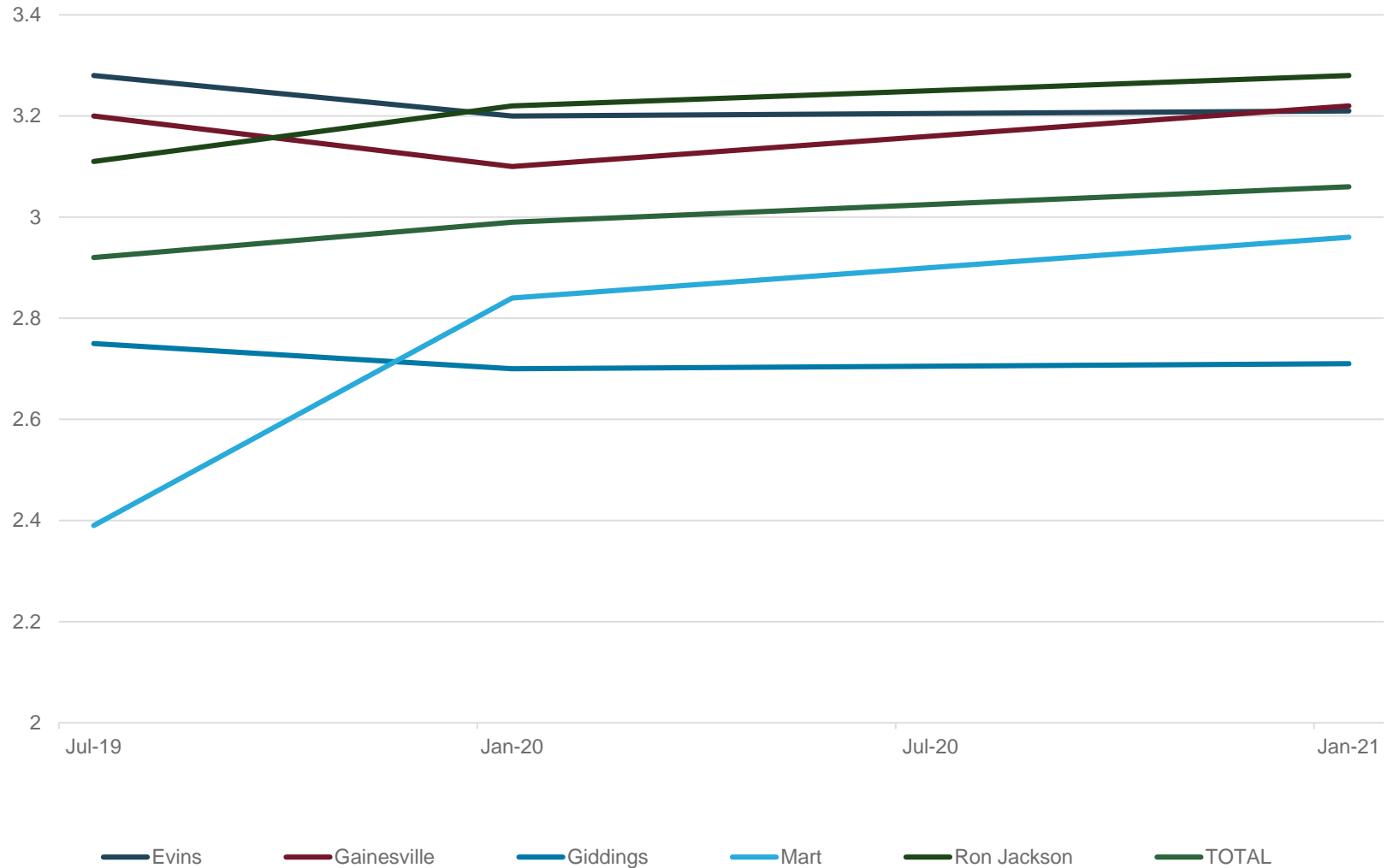


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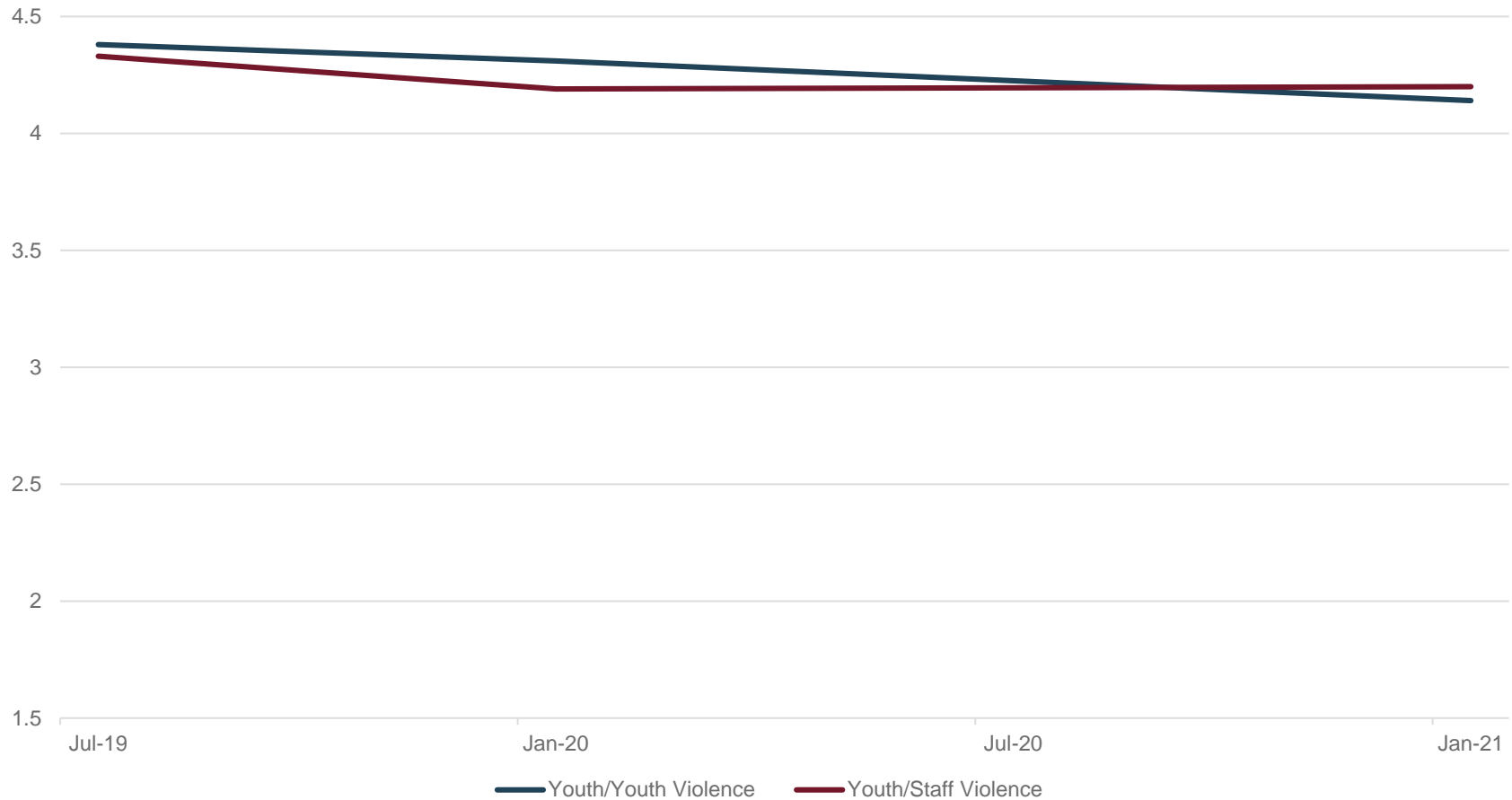


# Collective Efficacy (Staff Connection), by Facility





# Staff Perceived Dangerousness, 2019-2021



# Youth: Findings

What does the youth data tell us about connection?

**HIGH SOCIAL CONNECTION**



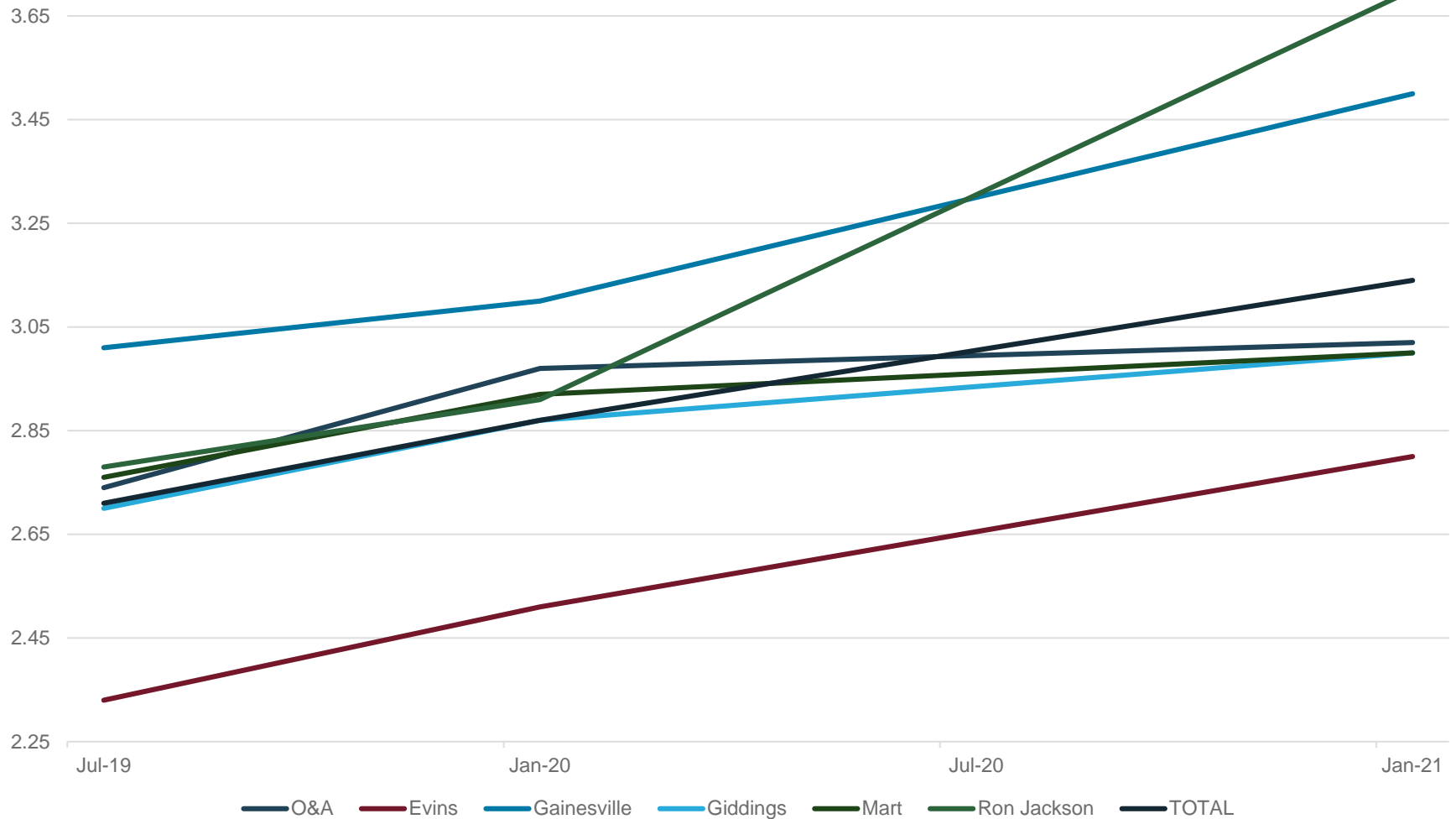
- Greater satisfaction with physical health
- Higher felt safety
- More perceived fairness
- Fewer major rule violations (MRVs)
- Higher positive affect (happy feelings) and higher negative affect (bad feelings)

# Youth: Control Variables

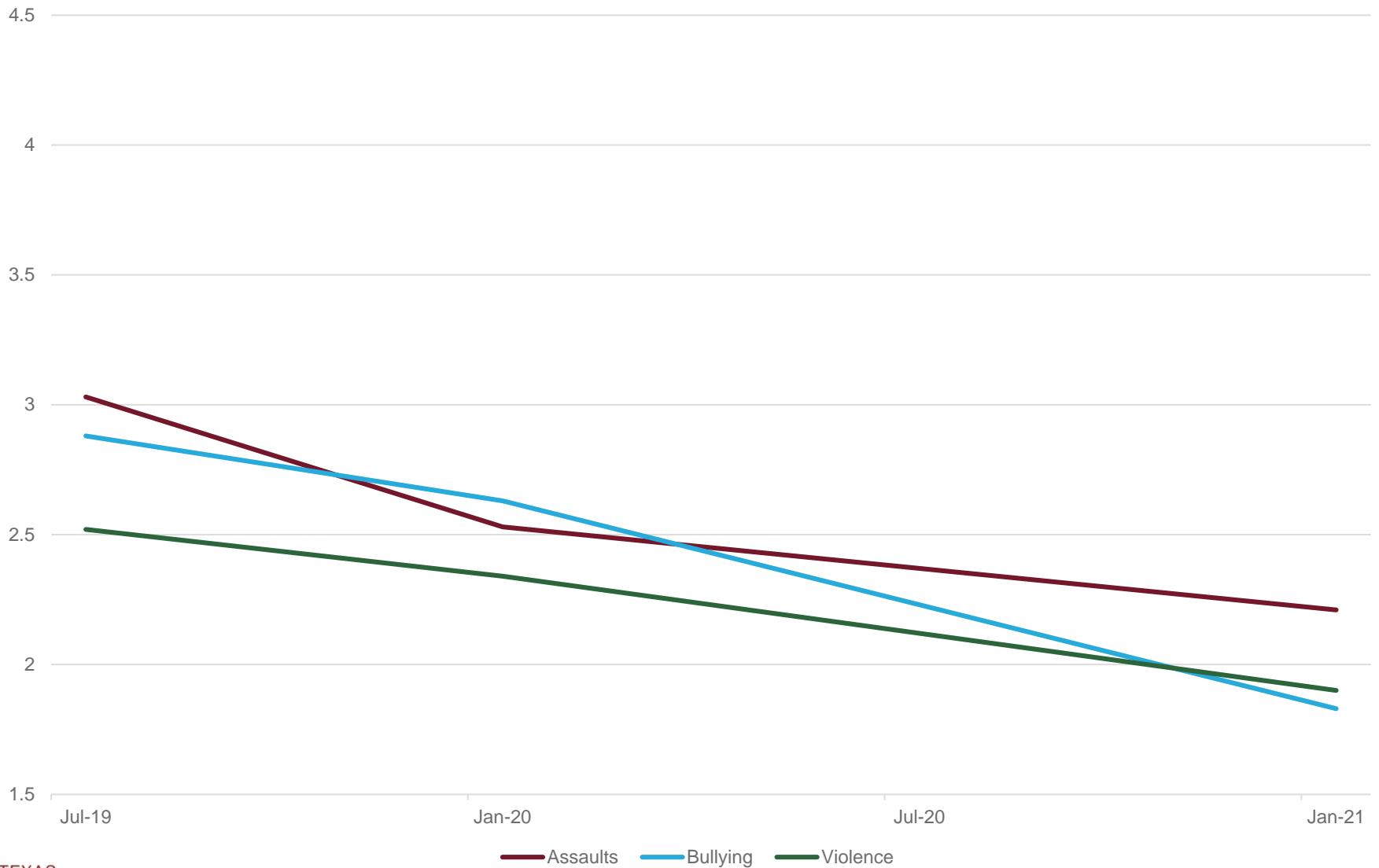
What things *don't* impact the power of connection for our kids?

- Race
- Gender
- Age
- Age at Admission
- Facility
- ACE Score
- Total MRVs (last 6 mos.)
- Offense Category
  - Felony Level, Capitol Offense
- DSO or Indeterminate
  - DSO current or initial
- Home County: Urban vs. Rural
- Risk Level

# Youth Connection, by Facility



# Youth Perceived Dangerousness, 2019-2021



# What do you do to calm down?

Disconnected Youth:

Hit the wall

Buck the dorm out

Beat a youth up

Go in my room

Nothing

N/A

Tbh idk  
(To be honest, I don't know)



\*actual response

# What do you do to calm down?

Connected Youth:

Work out

Talk with someone I trust

Call my mom

Talk to someone or draw

Breathe and just think before I do anything stupid

Count to ten

games, tv, music, exercise, go and sing or rap something to feel the melody to calm down

Listen to music, Lay with weighted stuff animal, talk to someone (Coach, Case Manager)

I go to the calming room and sit to myself, If I cant go to the calming room I sit in the corner stay to my self. I will draw, color, and if that doesn't work I will play cards with two specific peers.

Talk to staff, read, and play with Rubix cube

# Conclusions

## Where do we go from here?

- Round 4 of Youth Data Collection—July 2021
  - Explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on TJJD
- Increase accountability through establishing Texas Model Mentors at each facility, and forming larger TBRI mentorship groups for facility leadership
- Incorporate social support behaviors into training materials
- Focus on *controllable* factors
- New research focusing on how to help youth build and maintain healthy social support networks upon release, and external factors that best position our youth and staff for success.



# Questions?

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