




MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

Integrating Resiliency Into Everyday Practice





**Why do some people grow
and thrive despite
adversity whereas others
experience debilitating
distress and impairment?**



The Interaction of Nature and Nurture

Nature

- Personality factors
- Predispositions/family history

Nurture

- Loving, responsive, consistent,
- predictable conditions during childhood
- Reasonable opportunities to master challenges and stressors
- Supportive cultural, political, economic systems





MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY



Strategies to Foster Resilience

At the Community Level...



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

- Develop policies and practices to ensure that basic needs are met and address health disparities
- Target resources towards most vulnerable youth
- Increase access to supportive and preventative interventions
 - Telehealth
 - School- and community-based options



Parental Support and Information



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY



- Provide support for parents experiencing stress
- Enhance parental self-efficacy
- Increase social and community supports
- Enhance engagement with teachers and community leaders
- Model healthy coping by parents and other adults
- Limiting pandemic-related news/processing this actively

Wang et al. *Lancet*. 2020.



Increase Individual Skills

- Psychoeducation to help recognize emotions and stress-related symptoms
- Teach resiliency skills
 - Relaxation/mindfulness
 - Cognitive restructuring
 - Problem-solving
- Practice helpful behaviors
- Enhance social and community connections
- Enhance natural, innate sources of resiliency





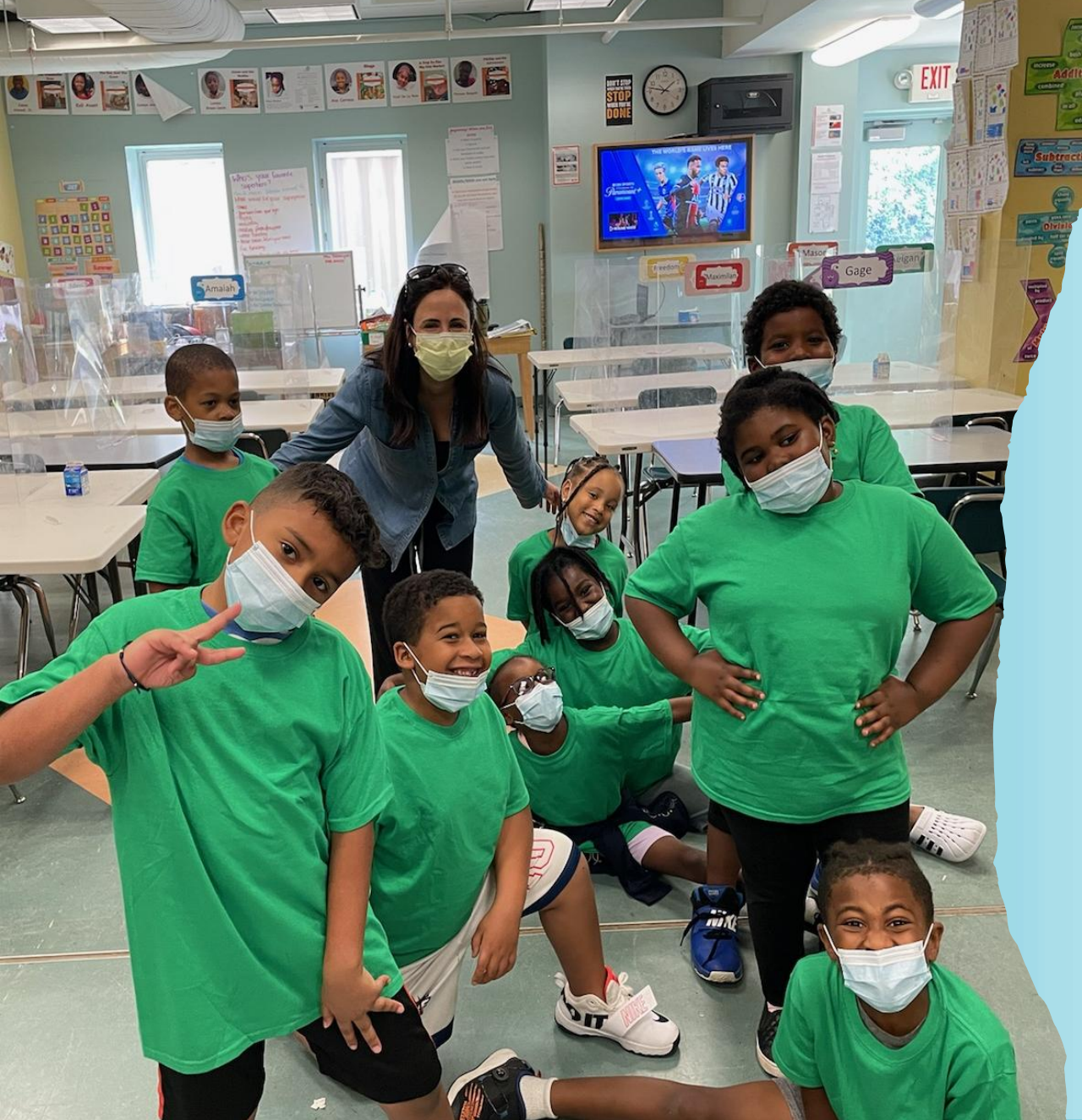
Resilient Youth Curriculum

- Modular 12-Session Intervention
 - Module 1 (sessions 1-6): Core Relaxation and Cognitive Skills
 - Module 2 (sessions 7-12): Enhancing Well-Being and Positive Coping
- Can be administered in a group or individually (online or in person)
- For youth from first grade through high school



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY



C.A.L.M.S. Practice

- C:** Coping Skills to Help my Body Relax
- A:** Actions I can Take
- L:** Looking at my Thoughts
- M:** Mindfulness
- S:** Social Support and Connection

Key Question: Is There Something I Can do About the Stressor?

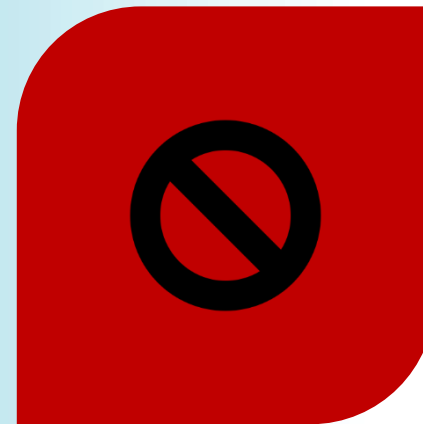


MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

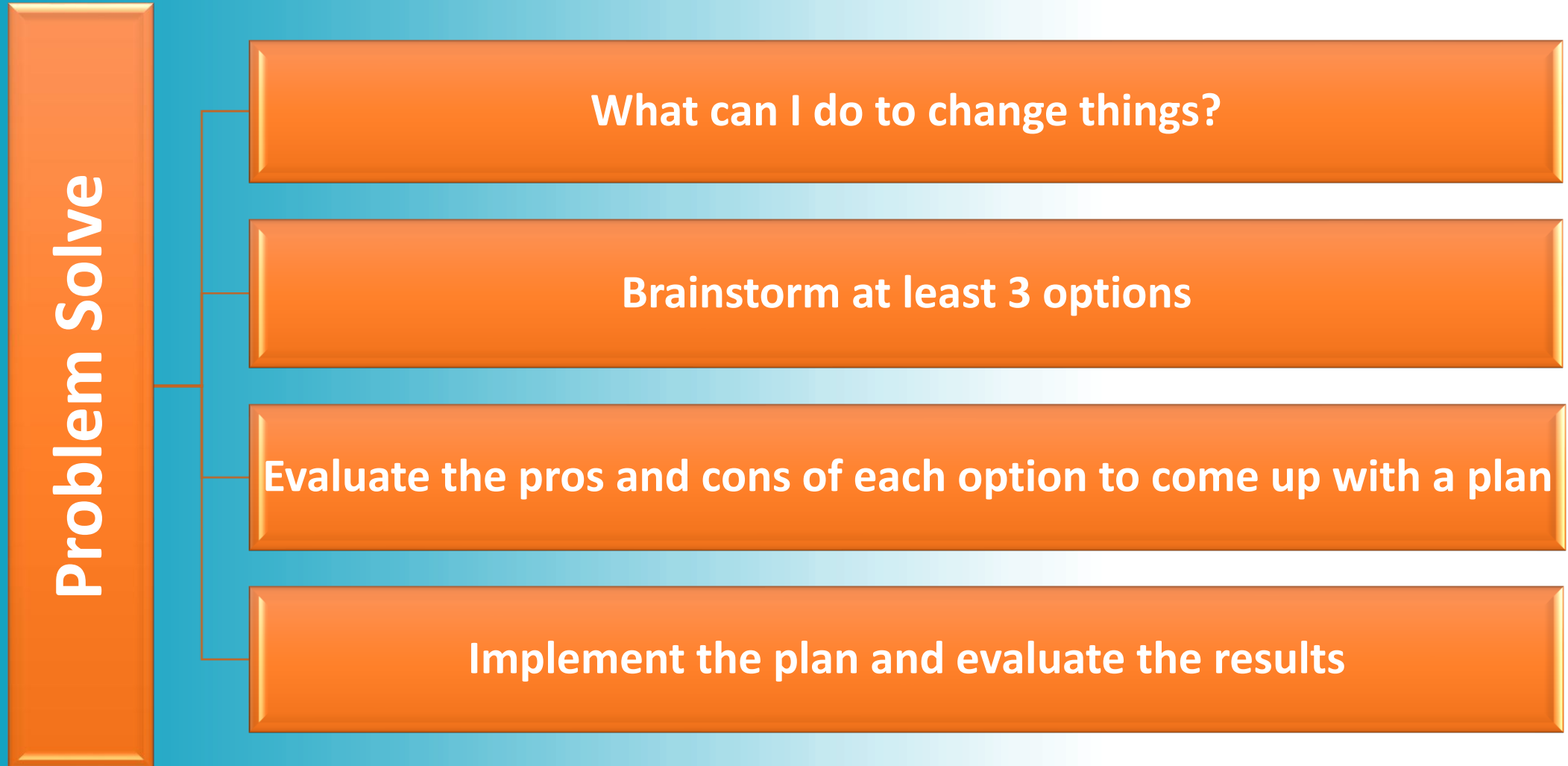


YES



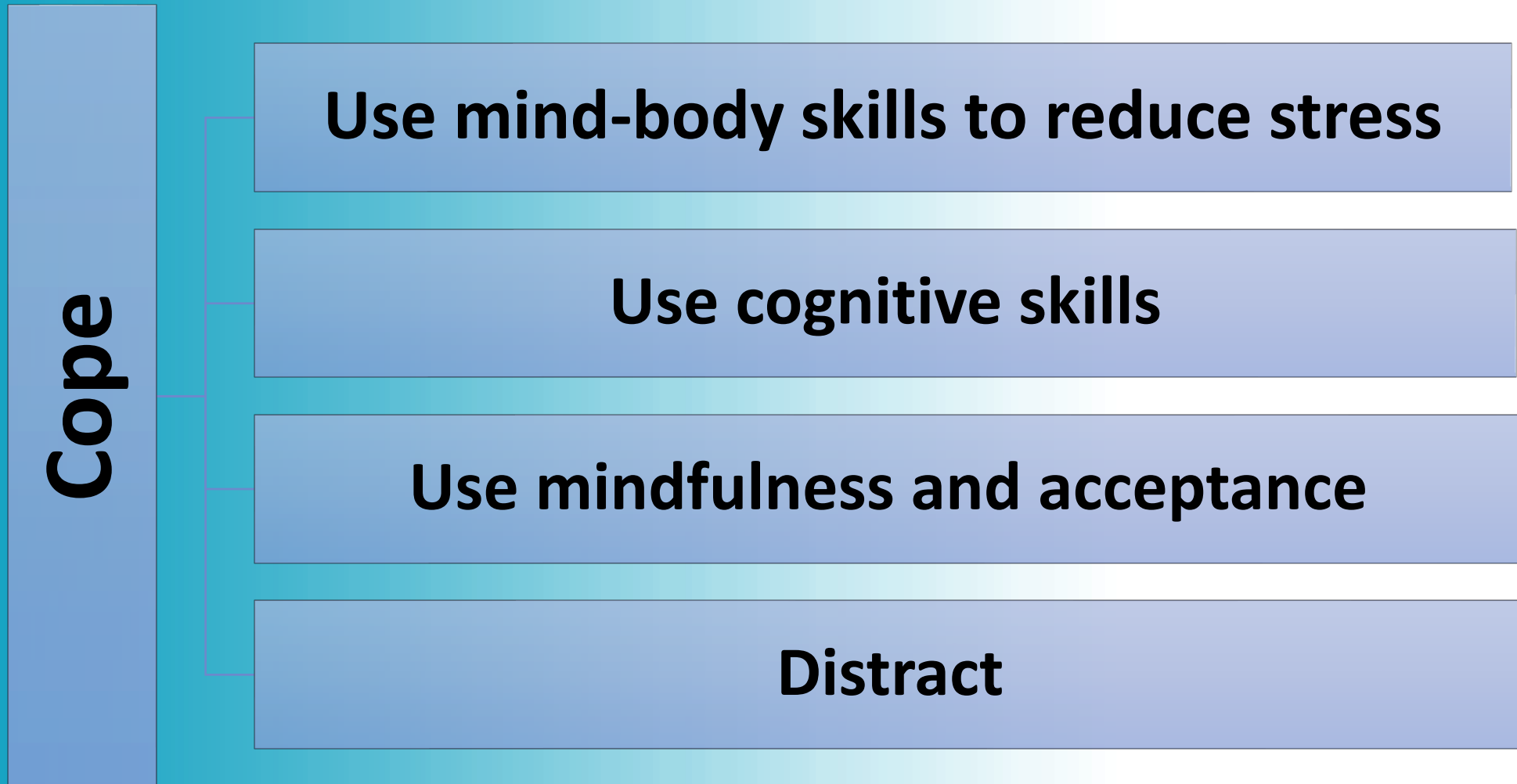
NO

If YES...





If NO...





MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

Core Relaxation and Mindfulness Skills

WWW.MGHCMC.ORG

The Relaxation Response (RR): The Opposite of “Fight or Flight”





Two Steps

1. The repetition of a word, a sound, a prayer, a thought, a phrase or a muscular activity
2. The passive return to the repetition when other thoughts intrude

What Type of Repetition Is Calming?



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL





Remember

The stress response is usually
automatic

BUT

the relaxation response is voluntary
and requires practice



Evoking the Relaxation Response

- Diaphragmatic Breathing (Belly Breaths)
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation (imaginative exercises)
- Imagery (“special place”)
- Mindfulness (focusing in the here-and-now)
- “Mini”-relaxation strategies to use in the moment





MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

Diaphragmatic Breathing



Just This



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY



Sensory Awareness



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY



- Focusing on the here and now
- Using your senses to focus your attention
- Everyone is different in which sense(s) are most powerful

Using Imagery to Elicit the RR



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY





Progressive Muscle Relaxation



- Tense and relax various large muscle groups
 - Hands and arms
 - Shoulders and back
 - Face and jaw
 - Chest and stomach
 - Legs and feet



Increasing Social Support and Connection

WWW.MGHCME.ORG

How can you be in
service to others
(greater good)?

Increasing Social Support and Connection



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY



Which forms of support are important?

- Emotional?
- Informational?
- Tangible?
- Self-esteem/affirmational?
- Belonging?

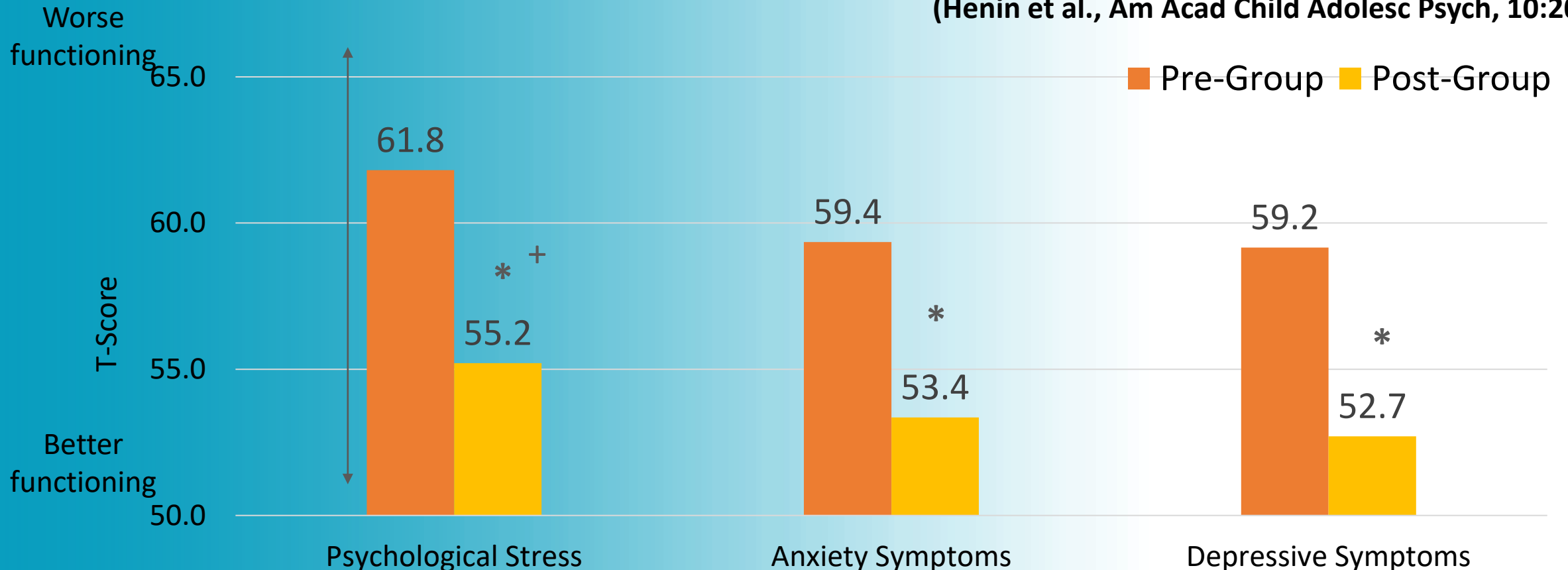
Parent-Reported Improvement Across Multiple Domains (N_≤170)



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

(Henin et al., Am Acad Child Adolesc Psych, 10:2021)



*Denotes statistically significant change from pre- to post-group, $p < 0.05$

+Cohen's d was 0.53, indicating a medium effect size for reducing psychological stress.

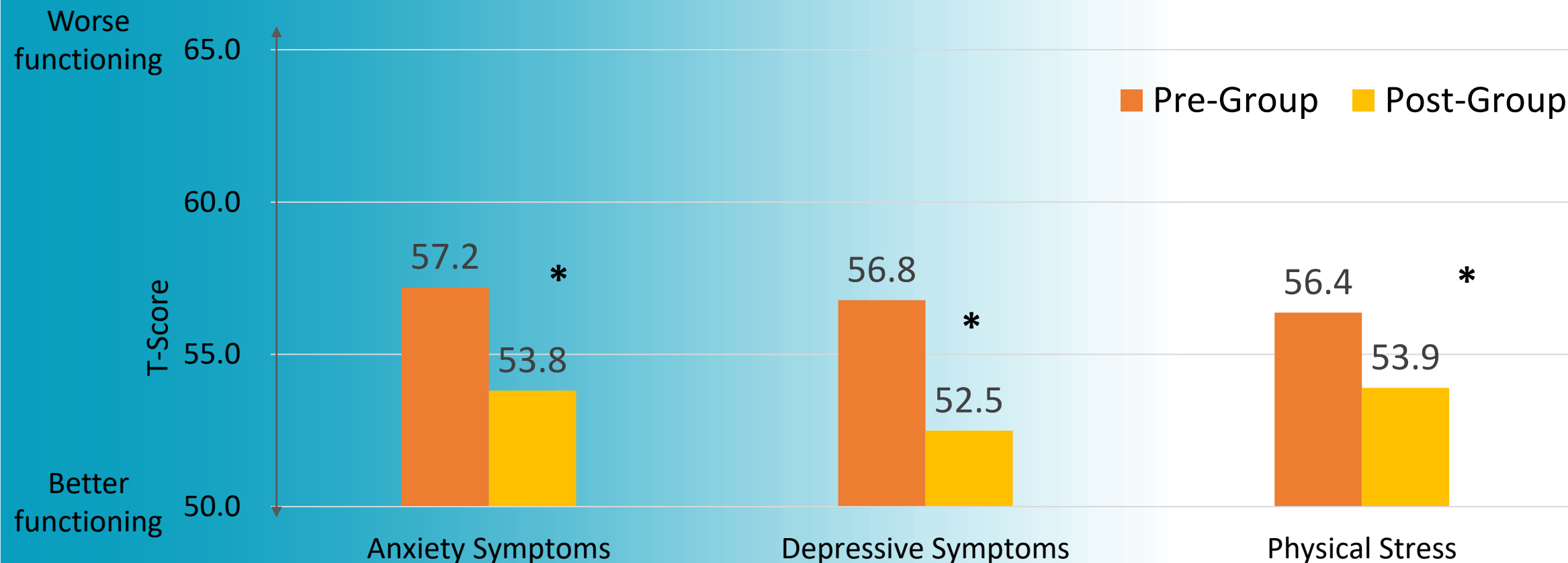
Youth Self-Reported Improvement Across Multiple Domains (N < 170)



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

(Henin et al., Am Acad Child Adolesc Psych, 10:2021)



*Denotes statistically significant change from pre- to post-group, $p < 0.05$

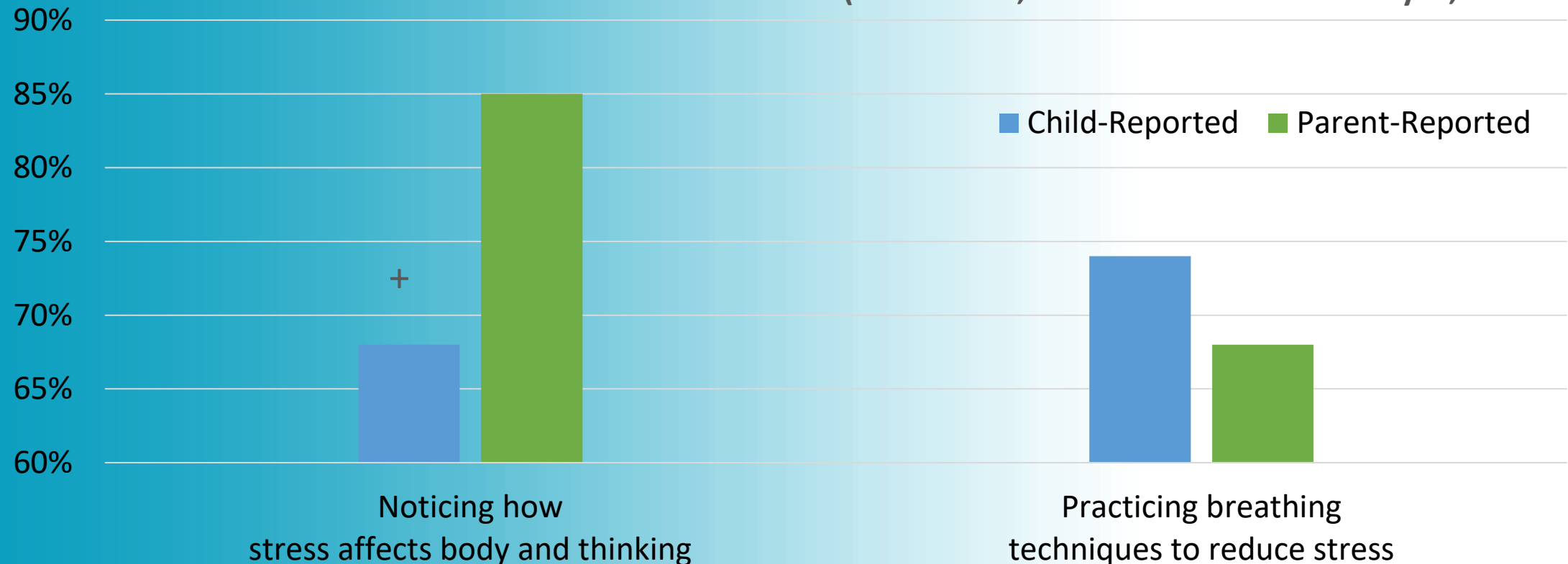
Percentage of Youth Employing New Strategies to Manage Stress (N≤170)



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

(Henin et al., Am Acad Child Adolesc Psych, 10:2021)



+Reported as sometimes or often using these strategies.

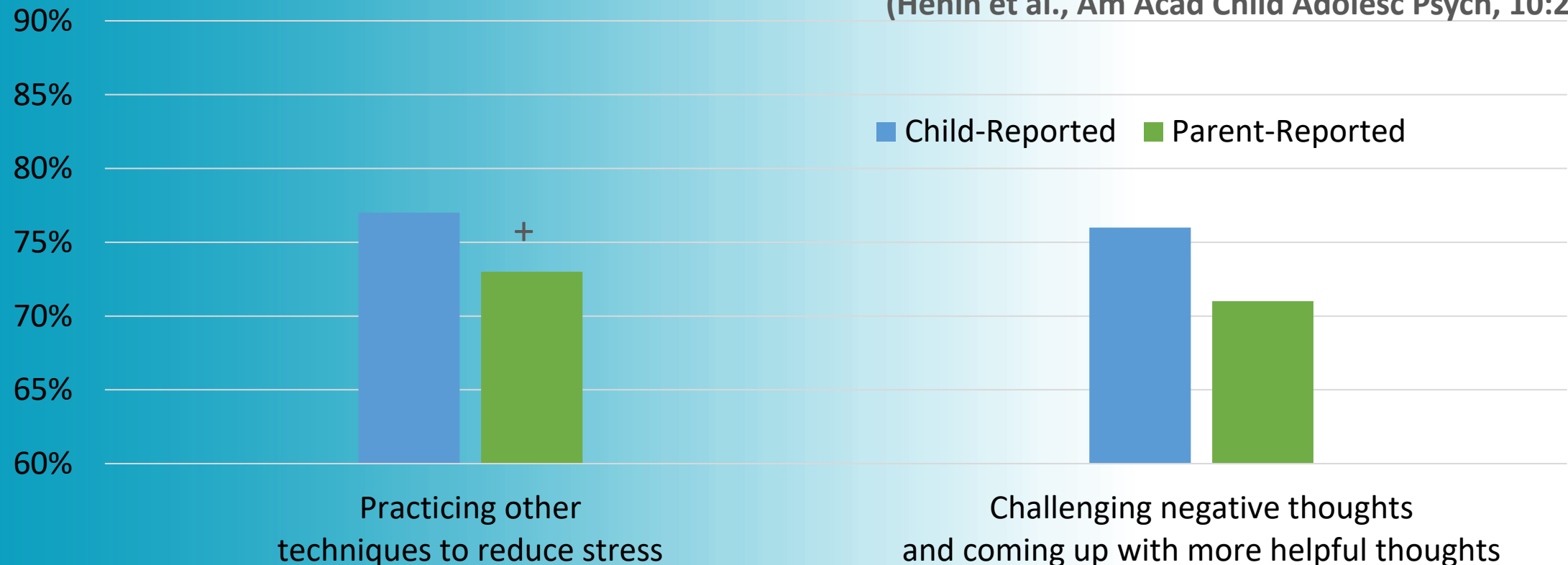
Percentage of Youth Employing New Strategies to Manage Stress (N_≤170)



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

(Henin et al., Am Acad Child Adolesc Psych, 10:2021)



*Reported as sometimes or often using these strategies.



Limitations

- Open pilot design
- Post-treatment assessment attrition
- Lack of longer-term follow-up



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

PSYCHIATRY ACADEMY

THANK YOU!