

Children's and Adolescents' Attitudes Toward Peers with Mental Health Difficulties:

Findings from a Nationally Representative Survey on Stigmatization and Treatment Options.

Presented at:

Building on Family Strengths in 2007 Conference

June 1, 2007

Portland, Oregon

Presented by:



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Under-explored topics...

Young people's knowledge and attitudes about emotional and behavioral disorders and treatment

- How do knowledge and attitudes change as children move from elementary to middle school to high school years?
- Do knowledge and attitudes vary depending on the type of disorder?
- Do boys and girls, or children from different backgrounds, have different attitudes or different levels of knowledge?



Under-explored topics...

What factors might impact young people's attitudes about help-seeking

- Type of disorder
 - Perceptions of treatability
 - Perceptions about causation
 - Familiarity with disorder
- What factors might impact young people's stigmatization of peers with disorders?

The "story" of the survey...



- RTC approached by Harris to develop a survey for monthly online youth poll
- RTC staff chose stigmatization as a good topic for a general survey of youth
- Six-week timeline (!)
- Team of researchers and young adults, together with Harris staff, working by conference call and email
- Pilot testing with children and adolescents in our communities



A Collaboration with Harris Interactive

Nationally representative sample of 1,318 children and adolescents aged 8-18 conducted in the summer of 2006.



Survey administered online by the polling firm Harris Interactive

- “opt in” panel
- Panel members provide demographic info on entry into panel. Using this information, a stratified random sample drawn based on youth age, gender, race, and ethnicity.
- Invited by email
- Respondents determined eligible continued



A Collaboration with Harris Interactive

Data gathered in this manner is consistently comparable to data that has been obtained from random telephone samples when sampling is applied as described.

- Barrens, Bohara, et al., 2003
- Bremer, Overmeyer, et al., 2000
- Berrens, Bohara, Jenkins-Smith et al., 2004
- Schonau, Sapert, et al., 2004

- Research focuses on adults...



Respondents by Age and Sex



	Frequency	Percent
Male 8 - 12	274	20.8
Male 13 - 17	343	26.0
Male 18 - 19	57	4.3
Female 8 - 12	309	23.4
Female 13 - 17	277	21.0
Female 18 - 19	58	4.4
	1318	100.0

Respondents' Racial Background

	Frequency	Percent
White	779	59.1
African American	199	15.1
Hispanic	234	17.8
Asian or Pacific Islander	49	3.7
Native American or Alaskan Native	5	0.4
Mixed	32	2.4
Other	20	1.5
Total	1318	100.0

Survey versions



- Three versions, focusing respectively on
 - Depression (433 respondents)
 - ADHD (449 respondents)
 - Asthma (control, 436 respondents)

About Michael...



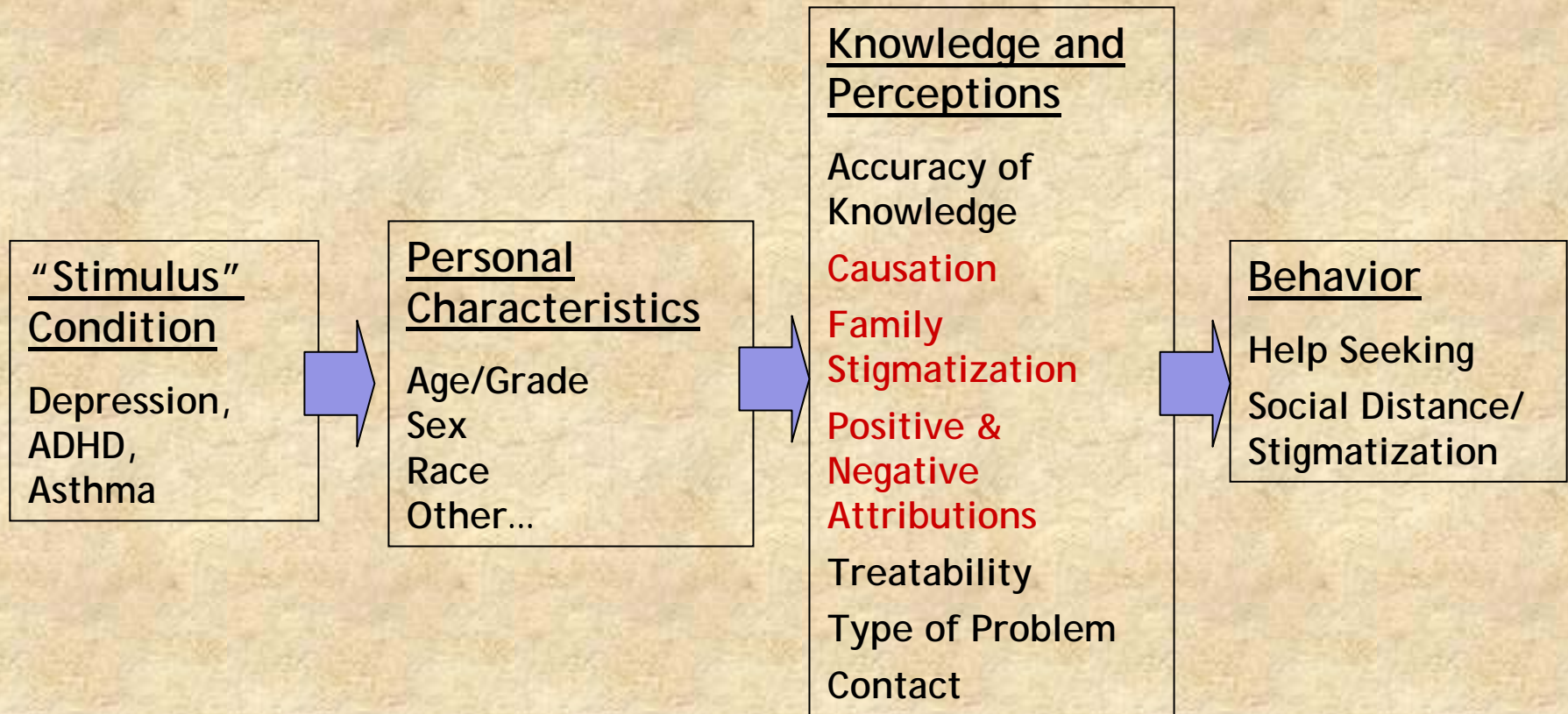
- ❖ First part of the survey asked about a fictional “Michael,” a school peer and has the condition and
 - Sees a doctor for the condition
 - Has been hospitalized several times because of the condition
 - Spends part of the school day in special classes
- ❖ Peers’ willingness to interact with Michael (social distance)
- ❖ Possible causes of Michael’s condition
- ❖ Likelihood Michael has certain attributes (more creative, gets into trouble more)
- ❖ Treatability of Michael’s condition

Other questions



- ❖ Knowledge about condition (checklist of possible symptoms)
- ❖ Familiarity with condition (had they themselves- or family or friends- been diagnosed with condition)
- ❖ Family stigmatization of condition
- ❖ Possible coping/help-seeking measures
 - Talk to parents, friends
 - See a doctor, psychologist, take medication
 - Look for information, change habits, pray, do nothing

Big picture...



Presentation will be focused on **Causation, Family stigmatization, Attributes**

The Cause of Michael's Condition...

Blaming parents



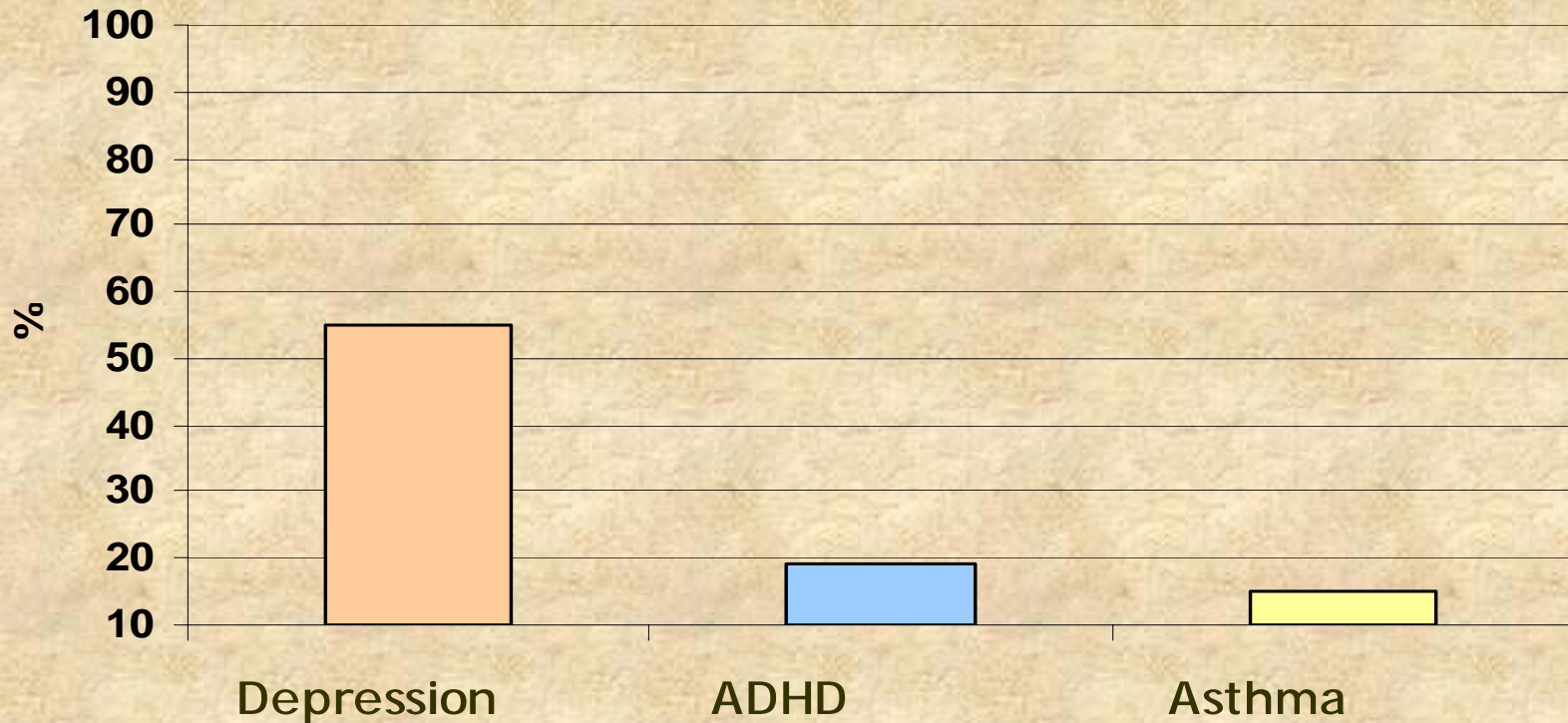
4.5 times more likely in Depression than Asthma, $X^2 = 195.2^{***}$

2.07 times more likely in Depression than ADHD, $X^2 = 67.4^{***}$

2.2 times more likely in ADHD than Asthma, $X^2 = 41.2^{***}$

The Cause of Michael's Condition...

Michael abuses drugs or drinks alcohol



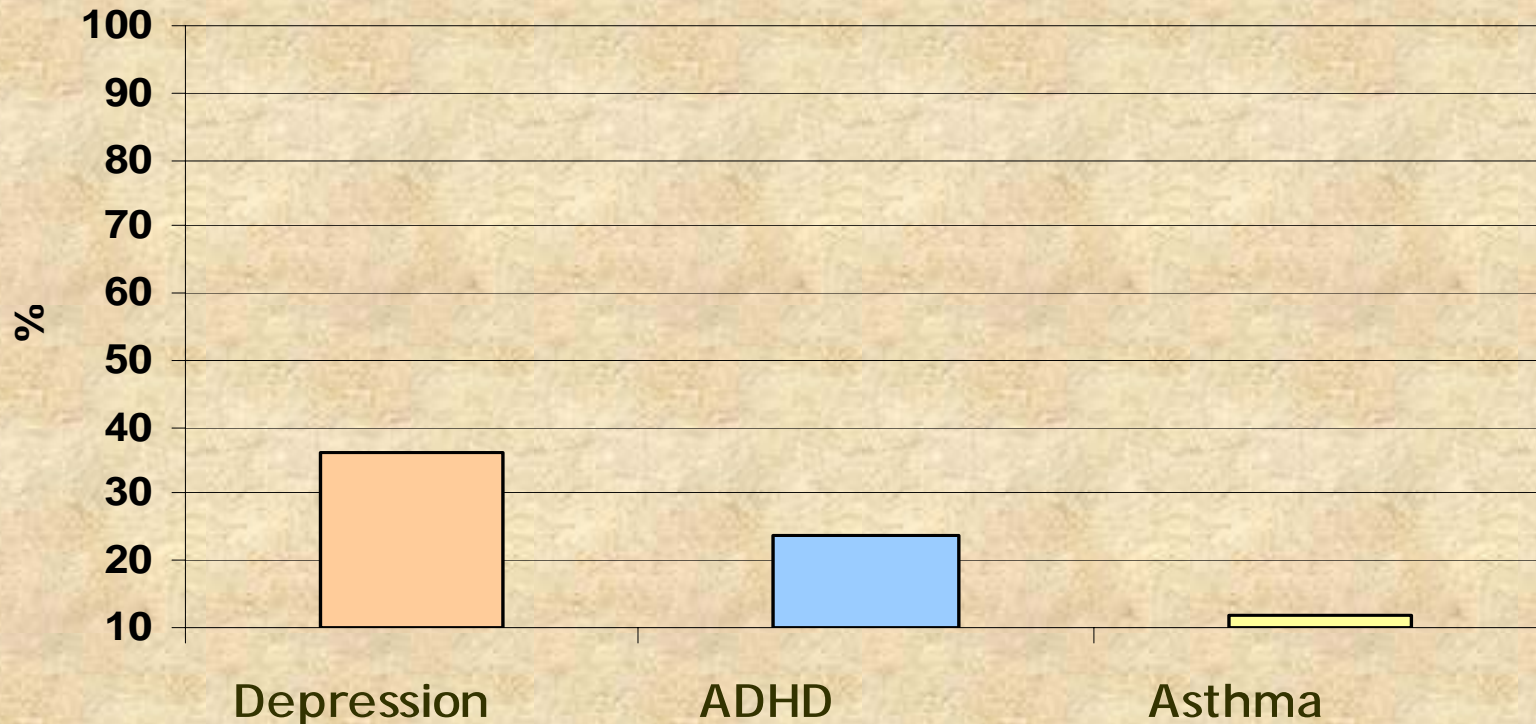
2.9 times more likely in Depression than Asthma, $\chi^2=123.4^{***}$

1.7 times more likely in Depression > ADHD, $\chi^2 = 152.8^{***}$

ADHD > Asthma, *NS*

The Cause of Michael's Condition...

Not try hard enough to get better



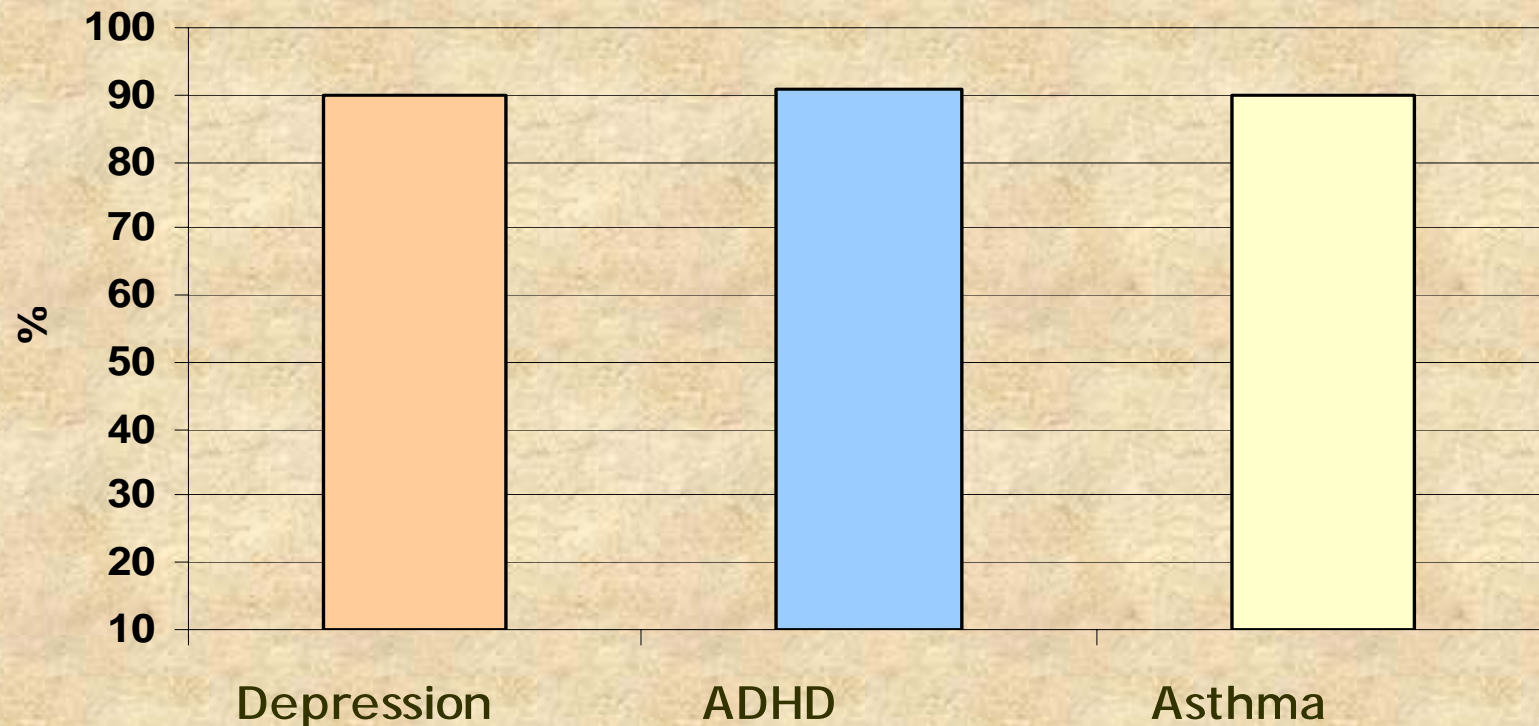
3 times more likely in Depression than Asthma, $\chi^2 = 66.0^{***}$

1.5 times more likely in Depression than ADHD, $\chi^2 = 13.6^{***}$

2 times more likely in ADHD than Asthma, $\chi^2 = 21.9^{***}$

The Cause of Michael's Condition...

Michael's brain works differently



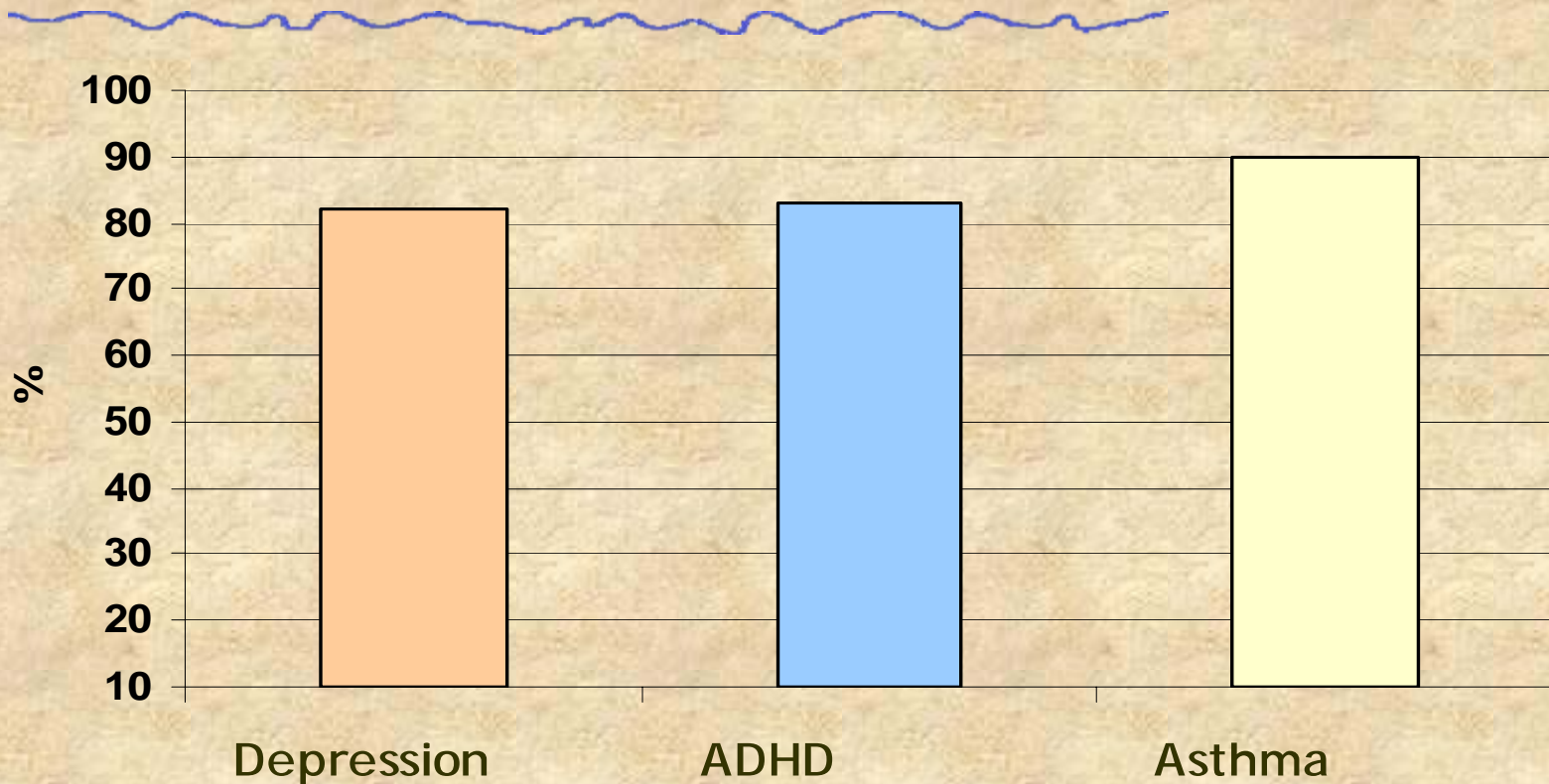
Depression > ADHD, *NS*

Depression > Asthma, *NS*

ADHD > Asthma, *NS*

The Cause of Michael's Condition...

Genetic



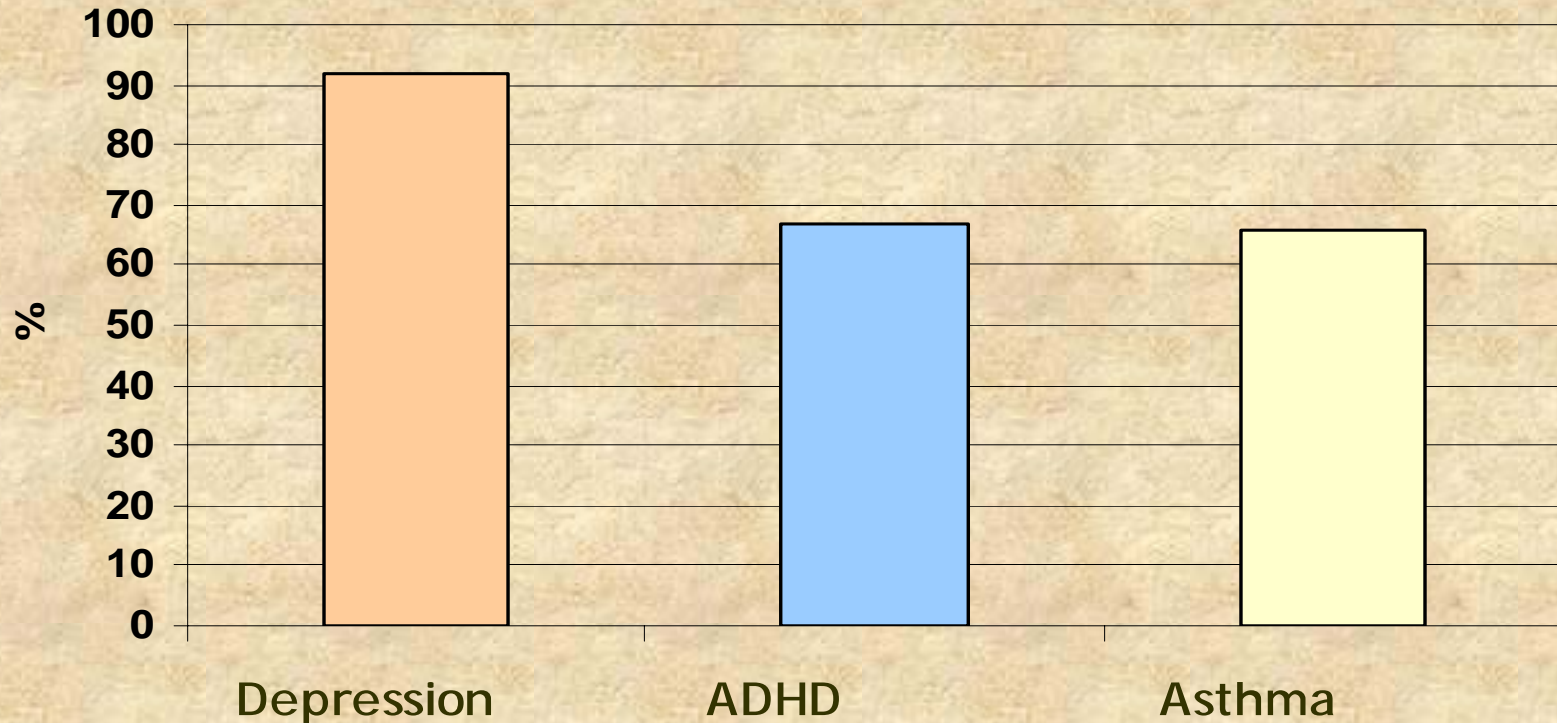
1.1 times less likely in Depression than Asthma, $\chi^2 = 11.8^{**}$

Equally likely in Depression and ADHD, *NS*

1.1 times less likely in ADHD than Asthma, $\chi^2 = 10.3^{**}$

The Cause of Michael's Condition...

Has experienced more stressful events in his life



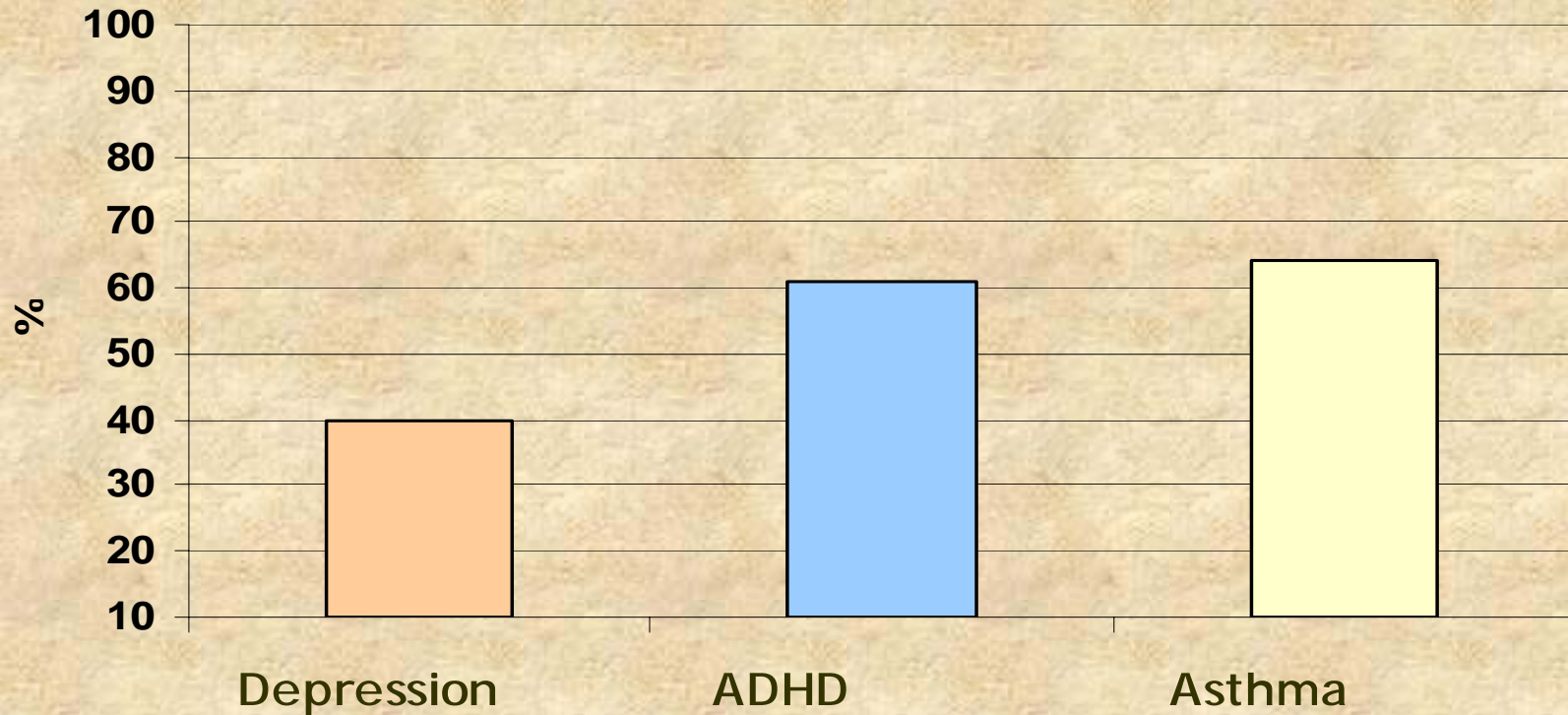
Depression > ADHD, $X^2 = 81.8^{***}$, PR = .1.37

Depression > Asthma, $X^2 = 86.0^{***}$, PR = .02

ADHD > Asthma, NS

The Cause of Michael's Condition...

It's God's will

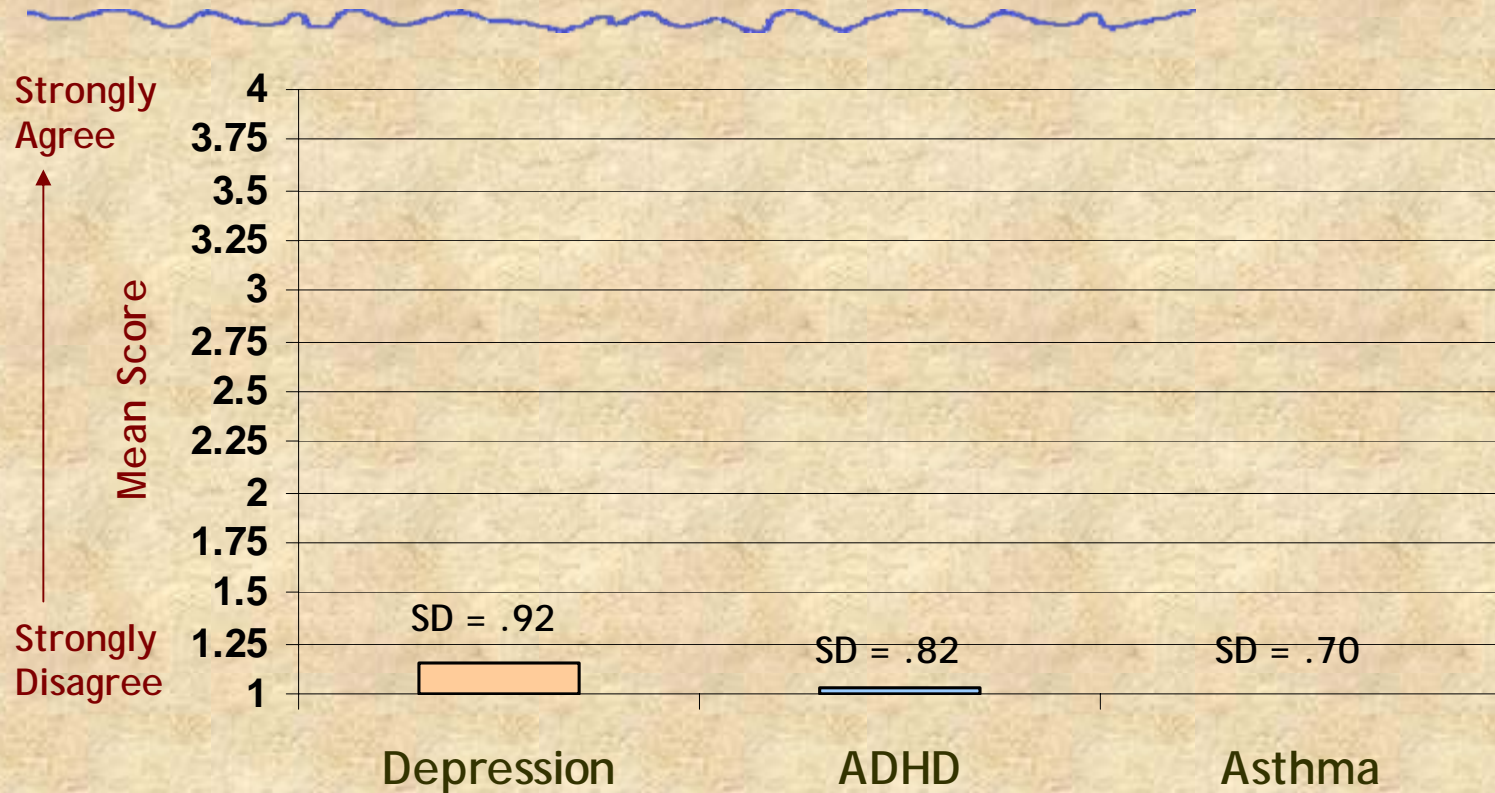


1.6 times less likely in Depression than Asthma, $X^2 = 50.0^{***}$

1.5 times less likely in Depression than ADHD, $X^2 = 37.9^{***}$

Equally likely in ADHD and Asthma, $X^2 = 10.3, NS$

People in your family think that having depression/ADHD/Asthma is something to be ashamed of.

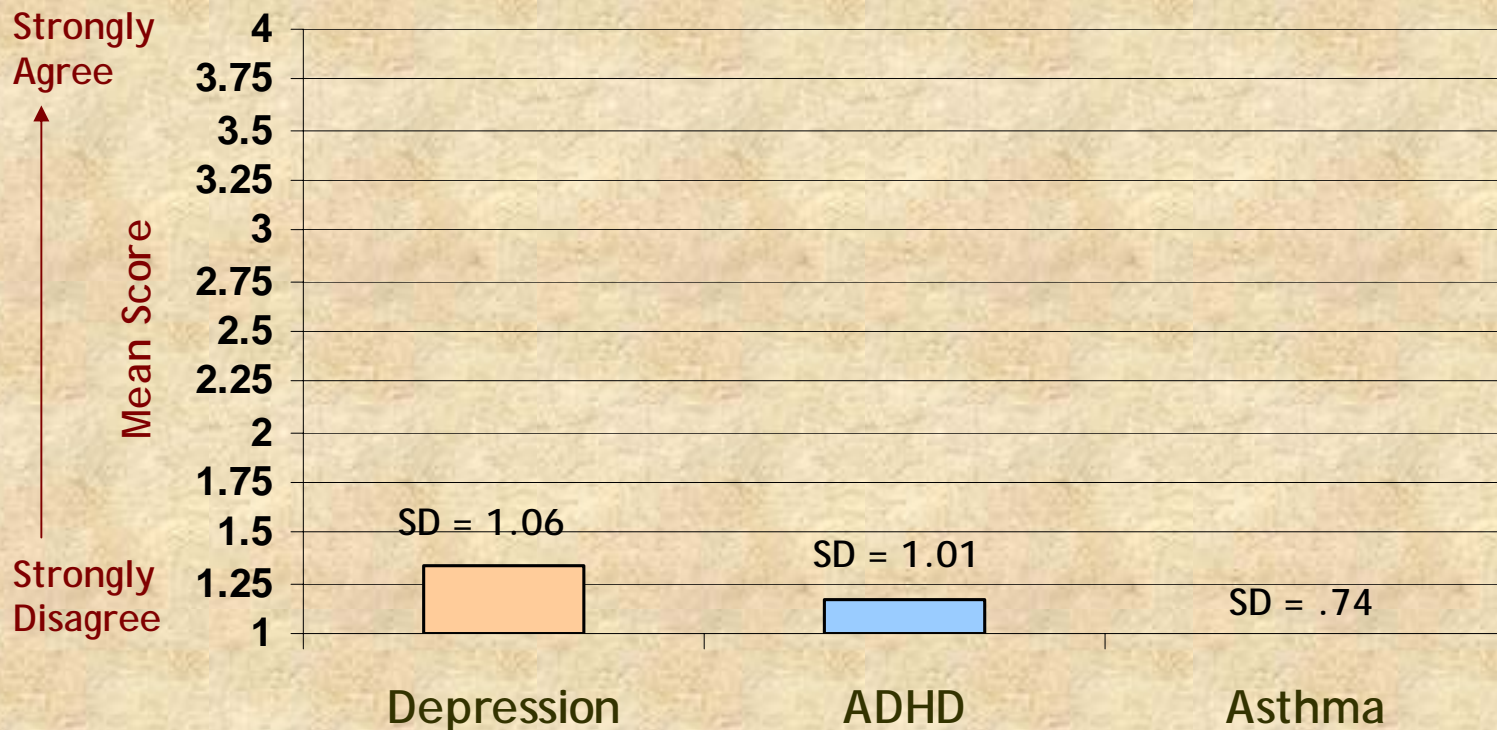


Depression - ADHD = .13, *NS*

Depression - Asthma = .19*, effect size = .27 (small)

ADHD - Asthma = .06, *NS*

People in your family think that if you have depression/ADHD/Asthma, you should not tell anyone outside the family.



Depression - ADHD = .16, *NS*

Depression - Asthma = .32*, effect size = .44 (medium)

ADHD - Asthma = .17*, effect size = .23 (small)

People in your family think that if a child has depression/ADHD/Asthma, it means the parents are not good parents.

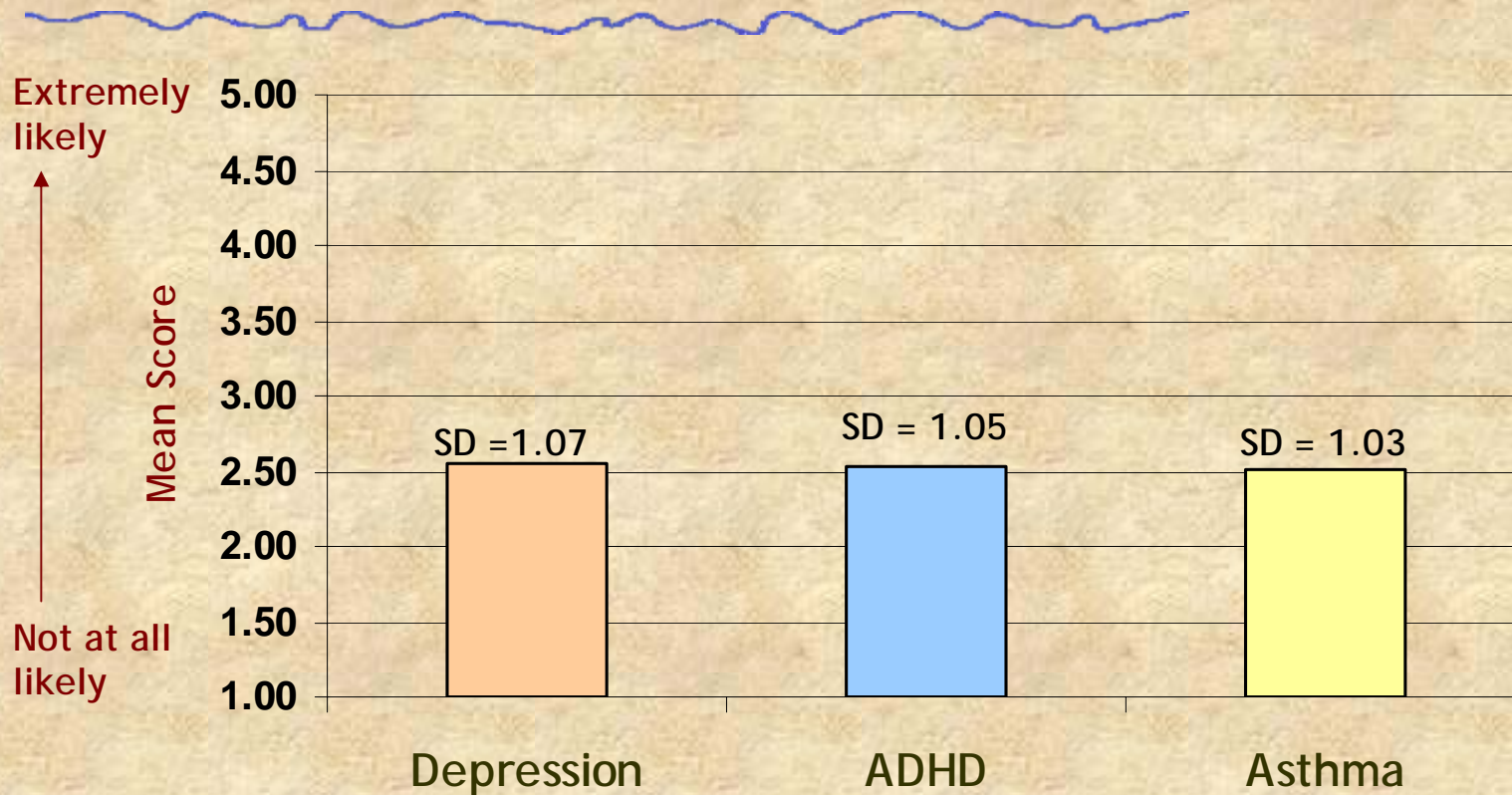


Depression - ADHD = .12, *NS*

Depression - Asthma = .26*, effect size = .41 (medium)

ADHD - Asthma = .14*, effect size = .22 (small)

Compared to most students in your class: Michael is more creative ...

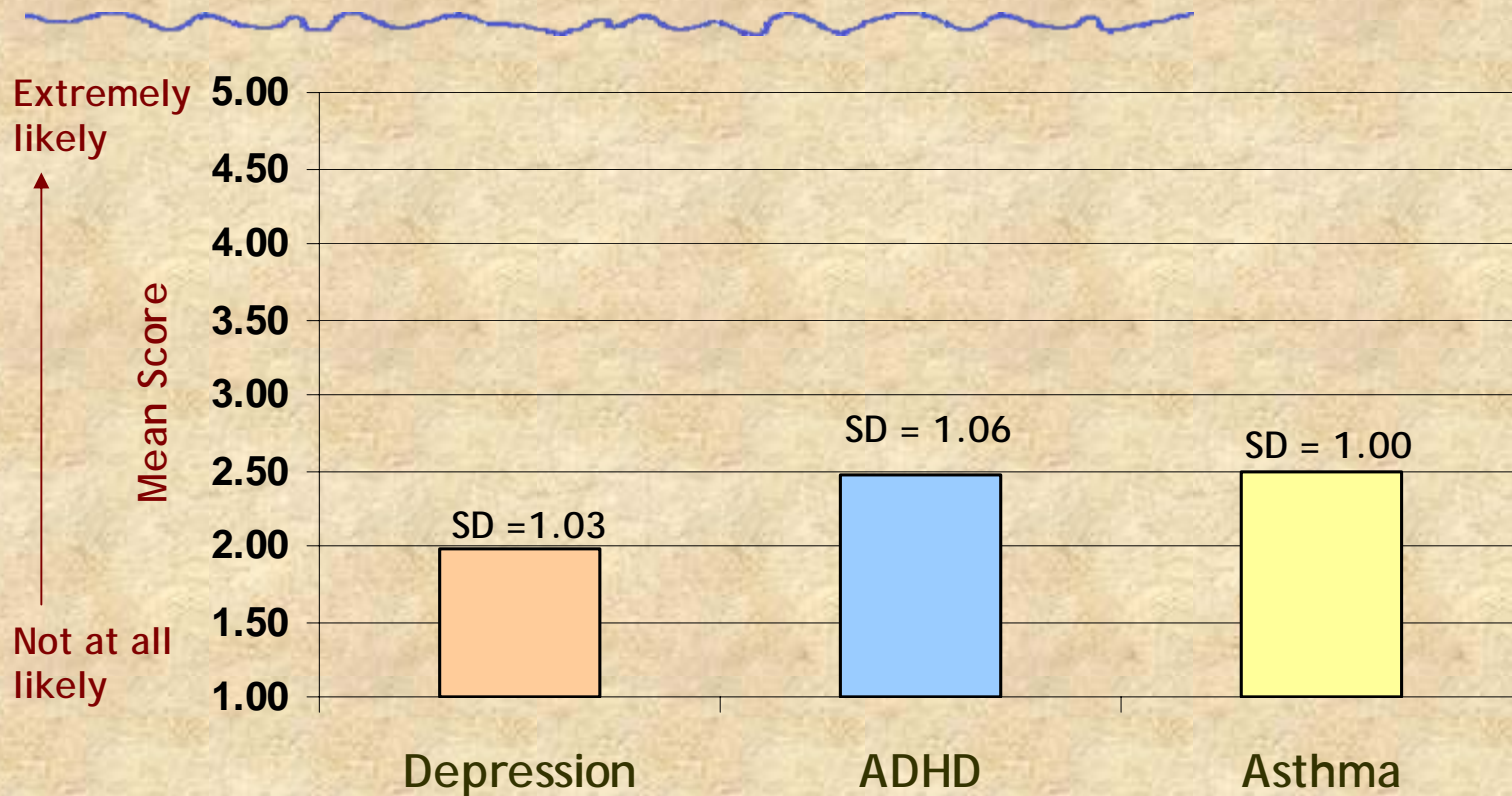


Depression - ADHD = .02, *NS*

Depression - Asthma = .03, *NS*

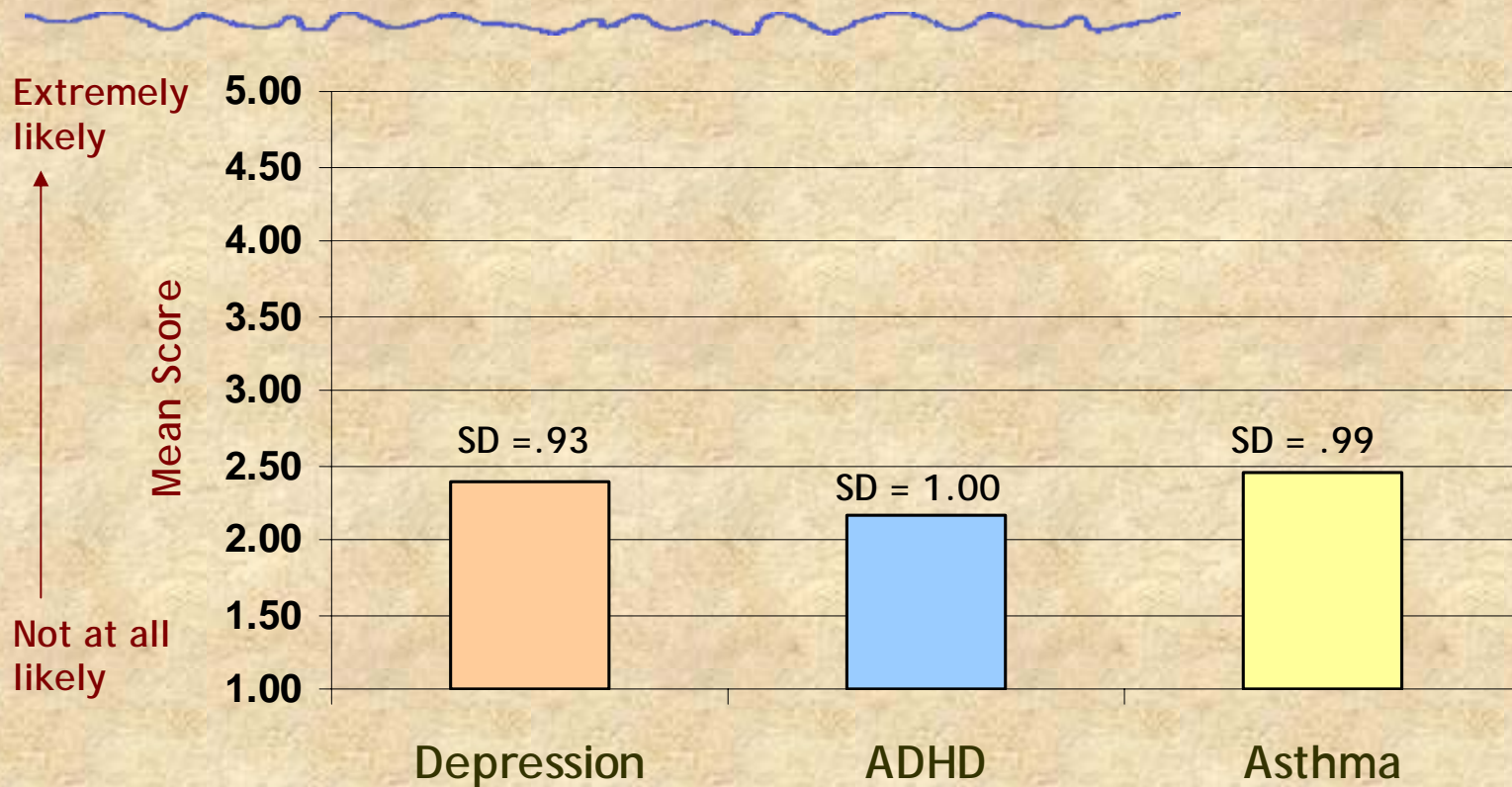
ADHD - Asthma = .01, *NS*

Compared to most students in your class: Michael has a better sense of humor ...



Depression - ADHD = $-.47^*$, effect size = .44 (medium)
Depression - Asthma = $-.49^*$, effect size = .49 (medium)
ADHD - Asthma = $-.02$, *NS*

Compared to most students in your class: Michael is smarter ...

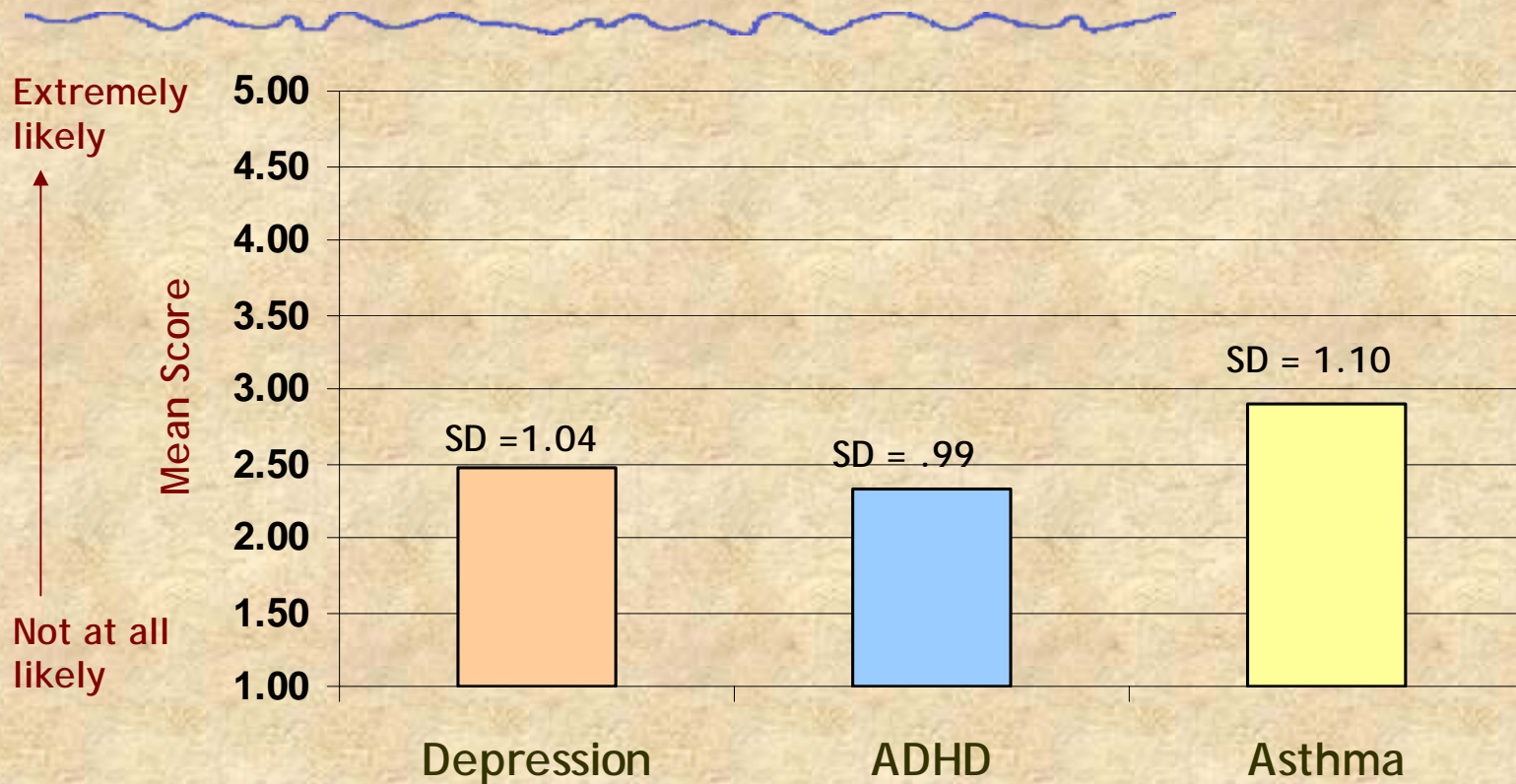


Depression - ADHD = .24**, effect size = .24 (small)

Depression - Asthma = -.06, *NS*

ADHD - Asthma = -.28***, effect size = .28 (small)

Compared to most students in your class: Michael is more caring ...

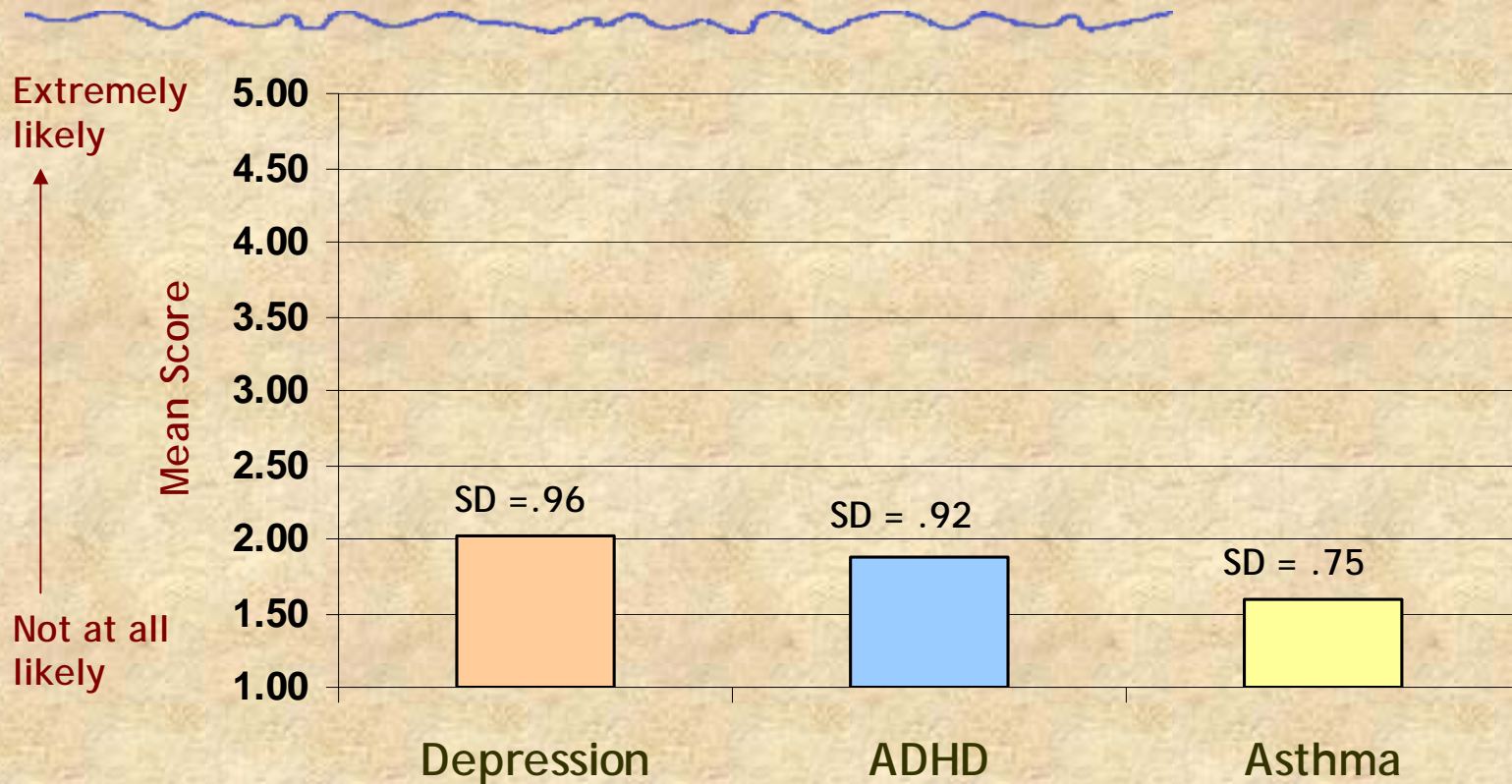


Depression - ADHD = .15, *NS*

Depression - Asthma = -.43^{***}, effect size = .39 (small-medium)

ADHD - Asthma = -.58^{***}, effect size = .53 (medium)

Compared to most students in your class: Michael is lazier ...

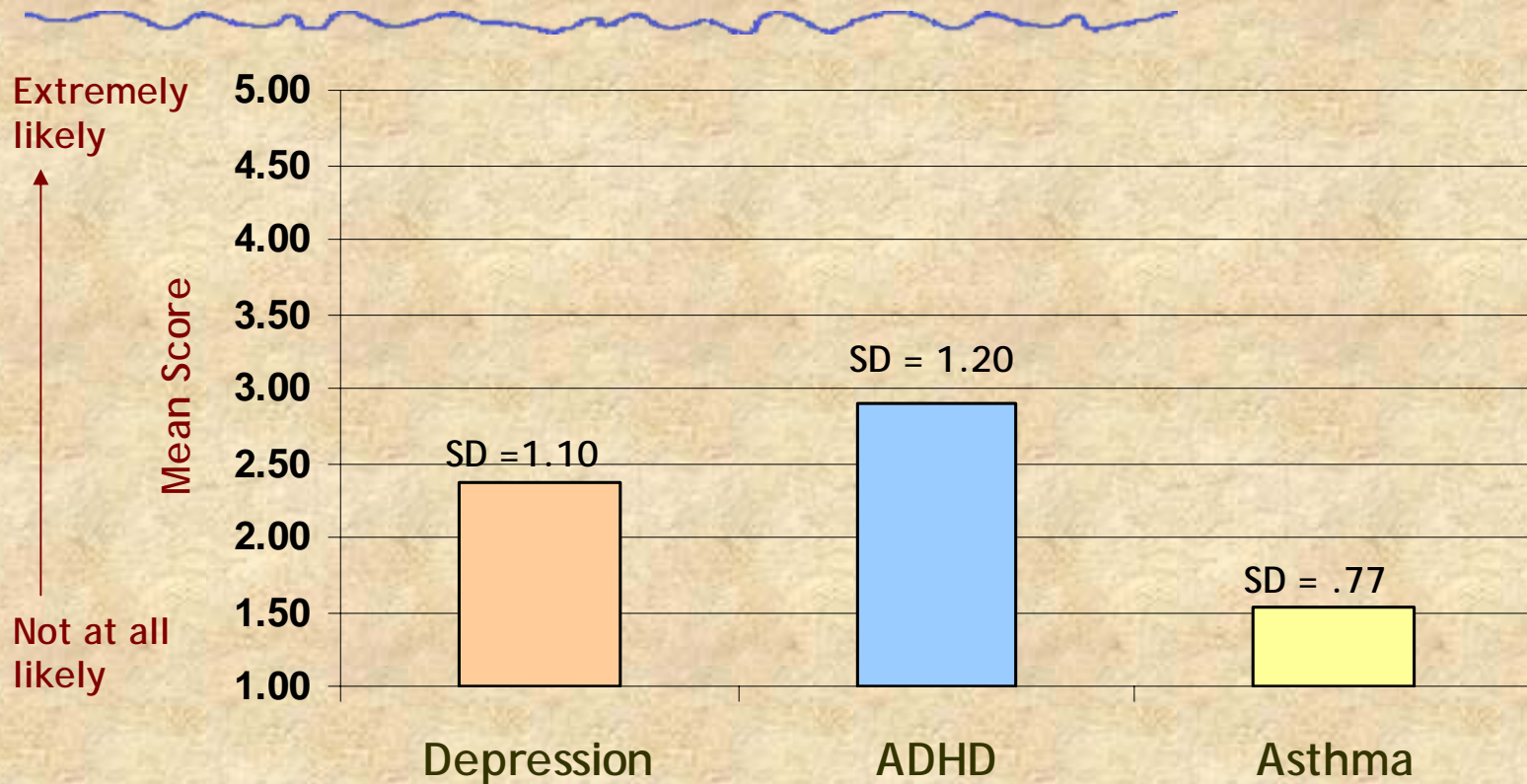


Depression - ADHD = .15*, effect size = .16 (small)

Depression - Asthma = .44*, effect size = .59 (medium)

ADHD - Asthma = .28*, effect size = .37 (small-medium)

Compared to most students in your class: Michael gets into trouble more often ...

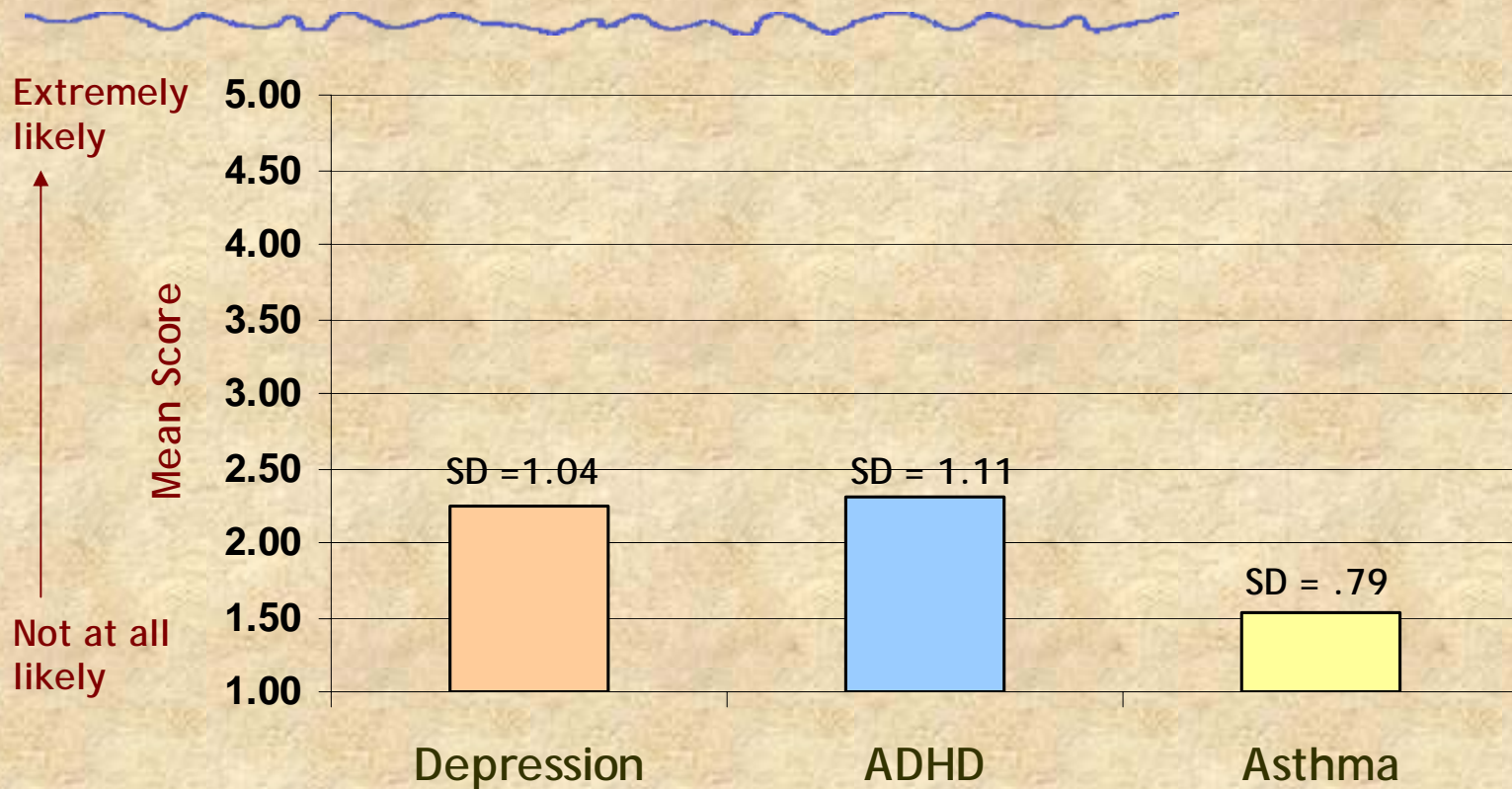


Depression - ADHD = $-.52^*$, effect size = .43 (medium)

Depression - Asthma = $.84^*$, effect size = 1.09 (large)

ADHD - Asthma = 1.36^* , effect size = 1.77 (very large)

Compared to most students in your class: Michael is more violent...



Depression - ADHD = $-.06$, *NS*

Depression - Asthma = $.72^*$, effect size = $.91$ (large)

ADHD - Asthma = $.78^*$, effect size = $.99$ (large)

Discussion

- Stigmatization a problem: High proportion of kids endorse stigmatizing causal attributions, especially depression.
- Depression clearly more stigmatized condition.
- At same time, high proportions of kids endorse non-stigmatizing causal attributions: genetic, brain works differently, due to stress.
- Non-stigmatizing causes evenly distributed across depression, ADHD, Asthma

Discussion cont'd...

- Low mean scores on stigmatizing family attitudes, but moderately higher in depression.
- Large effects for depression and ADHD kids to be viewed as violent and behavioral problems.

Discussion cont'd...

- Anti-stigma efforts that don't deny realities of MH problem, but reduce fear and distancing.
- Reduced stigma of ADHD due to it viewed as a biologically based, treatable disorder.
- Need to show public that this is true of depression as well.
- Contact reduces stigma- contact based program for kids?

Next steps...

- ???





Portland, Oregon

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