

SPEAKER

Chief Innovation Officer, ICAN

JEREMY D. BUTLER



WHEN CONCERN BECOMES ACTION

**Helping Parents Recognize Early Warning
Signs in Youth Mental Health and Behavior**

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**Non-Profit Leader
Executive Coach
Leadership Consultant
Experiential Learning Expert
Crisis Intervention Specialist
National Speaker**

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Father/Husband/Papa

Dromomania Survivor

Cycle Breaker

Builder:

(Things, People, Teams, Culture, Core Memories)

Goal:

Awareness - Not Alarm

KEY REMINDERS

- **Most young people who struggle never become violent.**
- **Most parents miss signs not because they don't care but because signs are often subtle.**
- **The goal today is connection and early support, not fear or profiling.**

*“What makes **parenting**
more **challenging** today vs
20-years ago?”*

REPORT:
KIDS STRUGGLING
WITH MENTAL
HEALTH ISSUES



Daily Time with Friends, by Age Group

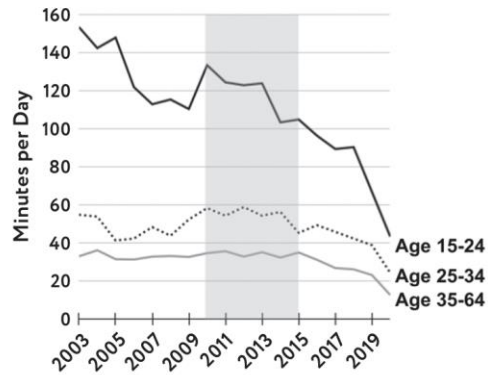


Figure 5.1. Daily average time spent with friends in minutes. Only the youngest age group shows a sharp drop before the 2020 data collection, which was performed after COVID restrictions had begun. (Source: American Time Use Study.)¹⁹

Life Often Feels Meaningless

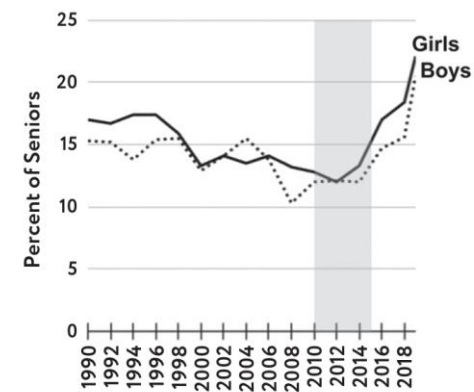


Figure 7.6. Percent of U.S. high school seniors who agreed or mostly agreed with the statement “Life often feels meaningless.” (Source: Monitoring the Future.)

Major Depression Among Teens

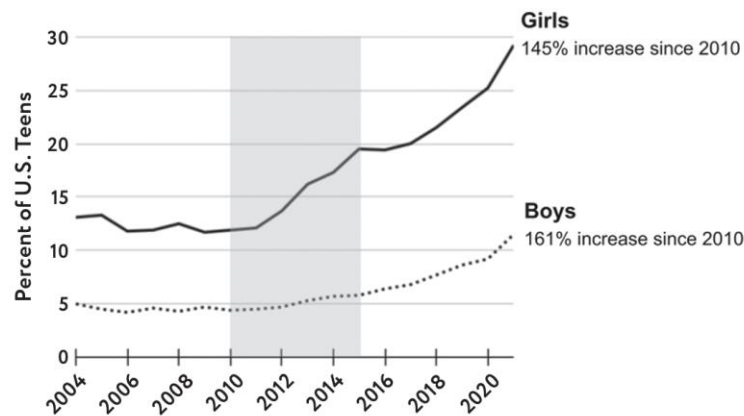


Figure 1.1. Percent of U.S. teens (ages 12–17) who had at least one major depressive episode in the past year, by self-report based on a symptom checklist. This was figure 7.1 in *The Coddling of the American Mind*, now updated with data beyond 2016. (Source: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health.)³

Anxiety Prevalence by Age

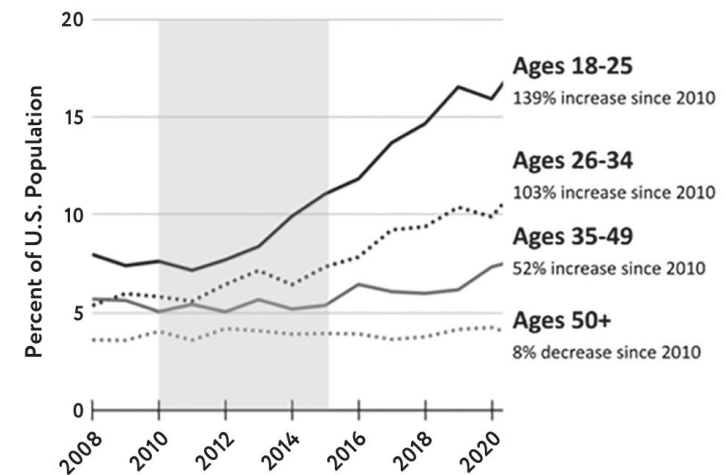


Figure 1.3. Percent of U.S. adults reporting high levels of anxiety by age group. (Source: U.S. National Survey on Drug Use and Health.)¹¹

Emergency Room Visits for Self-Harm

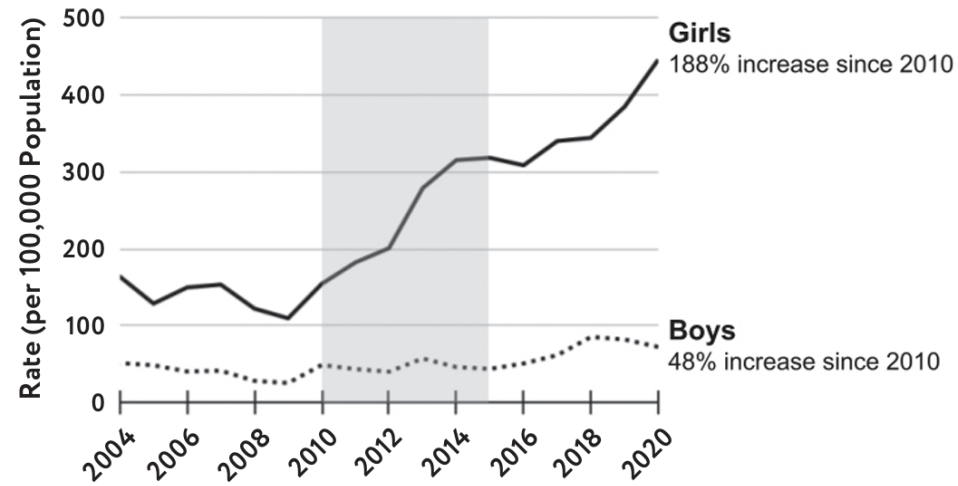


Figure 1.4. The rate per 100,000 in the U.S. population at which adolescents (ages 10–14) are treated in hospital emergency rooms for nonfatal self-injury. (Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.)²⁰

Suicide Rates for Younger Adolescents

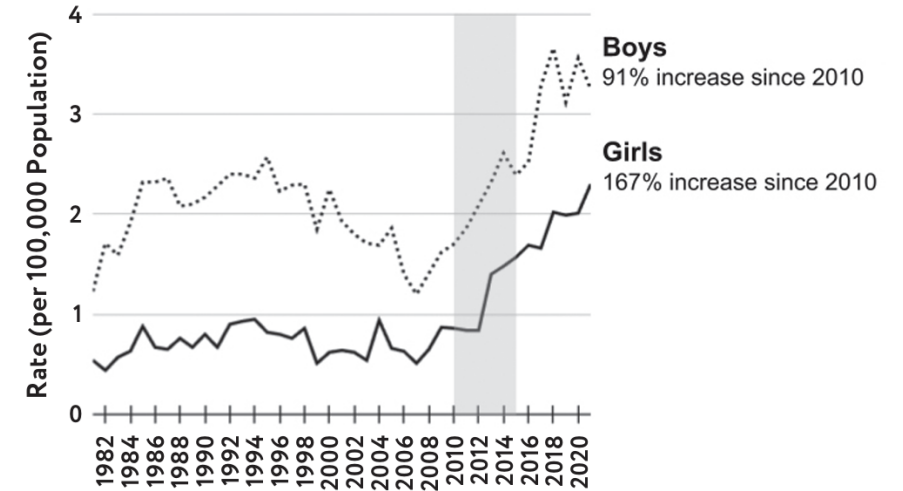


Figure 1.5. Suicide rates for U.S. adolescents, ages 10–14. (Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.)²²

Typical

VS.

Potential Concern

Typical

Moodiness

Wanting privacy

Occasional anger

Changes in interests

Stress about school

Increased screen time

Friend conflict

Potential Concern

Persistent hopelessness

Extreme isolation

Obsession with revenge/violence

Sudden withdrawal from everything

Talking like life has no future

Immersion in violent/extremist content

Loss of all meaningful connections

A graphic with a black background. At the top is a yellow banner with a black border containing the word "WARNING" in bold black capital letters. Below the banner, the word "SIGNS" is written in large, bold black capital letters.

WARNING

SIGNS

Common Warning Signs

Emotional

- Hopelessness
- Persistent sadness
- Emotional numbness
- Intense anger or rage
- Feeling trapped
- Extreme shame

Behavioral

- Withdrawal from family/friends
- Sudden personality changes
- Giving away possessions
- Increased aggression
- Self-harm behaviors
- Declining hygiene
- Fixation on death or violence
- Risk-taking behaviors
- Sudden calmness after severe depression

Social/Digital

- Online isolation
- Violent or concerning searches/posts
- Obsession with grievance-based communities
- Cyberbullying involvement
- Secretive online behavior
- Sudden drastic identity/personality shifts

Statements That Matter

- “Nobody would care if I disappeared.”
- “I’m done.”
- “People will regret how they treated me.”
- “I can’t do this anymore.”
- “At least then people would notice me.”

Key Protective Factors

- **One trusted adult relationship**

- Family connection

- Feeling emotionally safe

- Sense of belonging

- **Sleep**

- Predictable routines

- Positive peer connections

- Access to mental health support

- Involvement in activities/community

Connection
before
Correction

A woman with glasses and a white cardigan sits on the left, looking towards a young girl on the right. The girl has long, curly brown hair and is wearing a green long-sleeved shirt and blue jeans. They are sitting on a light-colored couch in a room with a window and a bulletin board in the background. The text is centered in a black-bordered box.

**How To Have a
Difficult
Conversation With
Your Child**

What To Do

- Stay calm
- Get curious before reacting
- Listen longer than you speak
- Validate emotions without validating harmful behavior

The image features a dark silhouette of a person's head and shoulders in profile, with their hand pressed against their forehead, suggesting distress or pain. The background is a gradient of light blue and white, overlaid with a large, dark blue, textured shape that resembles a brain. The text is centered over this brain-like shape.

How to Know When to

ASK FOR HELP

with

Mental Health

When to Seek Immediate Help

- Talks about suicide or harming others
- Has a plan or access to weapons
- Expresses hopelessness + withdrawal
- Displays escalating aggression
- Threatens violence
- Engages in severe self-harm
- Appears detached from reality



Keeping Families Together™

988



Mental Health
& Substance Use
Support



Suicide Prevention
& Crisis
De-escalation



Connection
to Local Care
& Treatment
Resources

WHOLE- PERSON CARE

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

911



Medical
Emergency



Fire



Crime in Progress



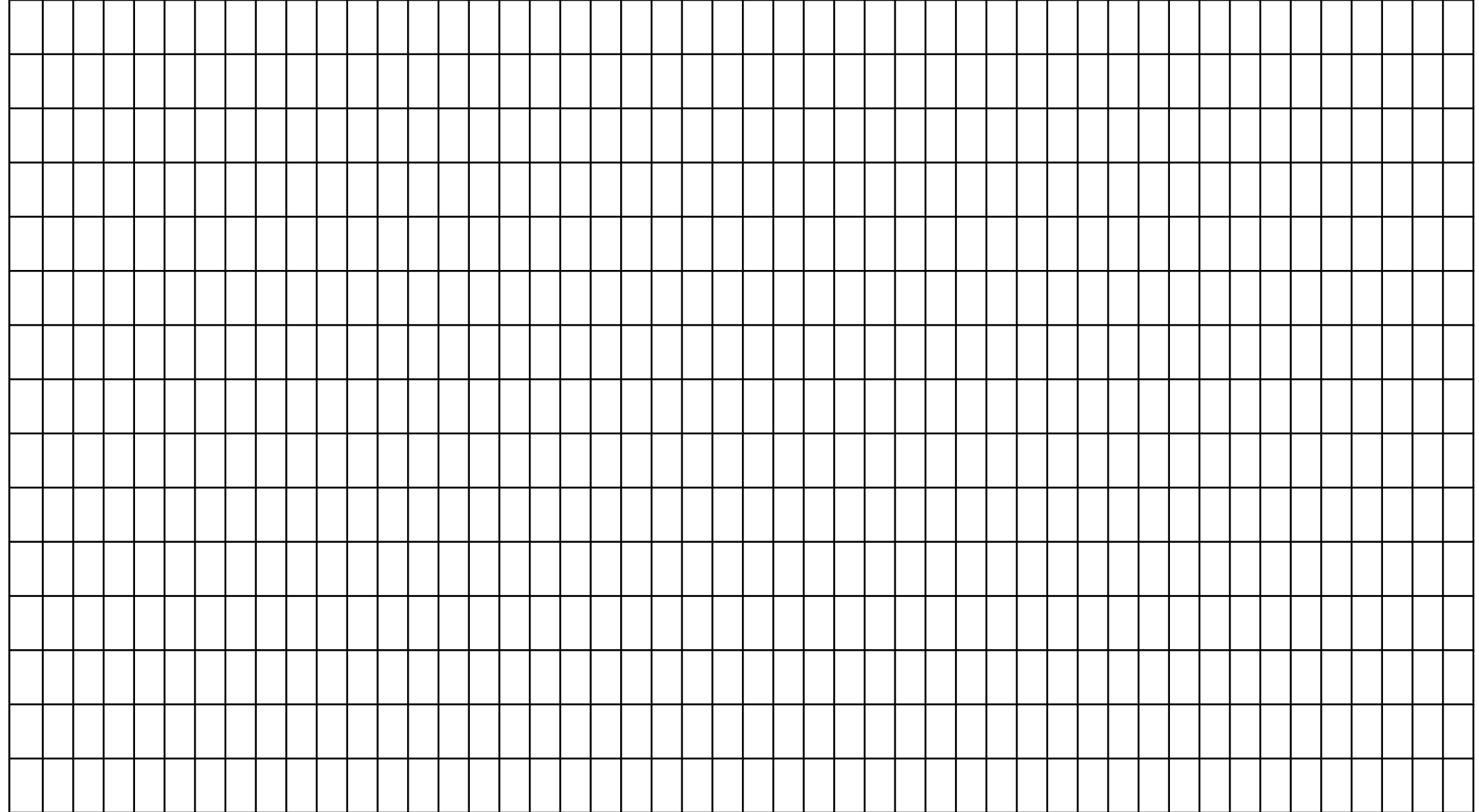
Life-Threatening
Situations

“Young people do not need perfect parents. They need emotionally available adults who notice, stay connected, and are willing to lean into hard conversations.””

48 mos = 4 years



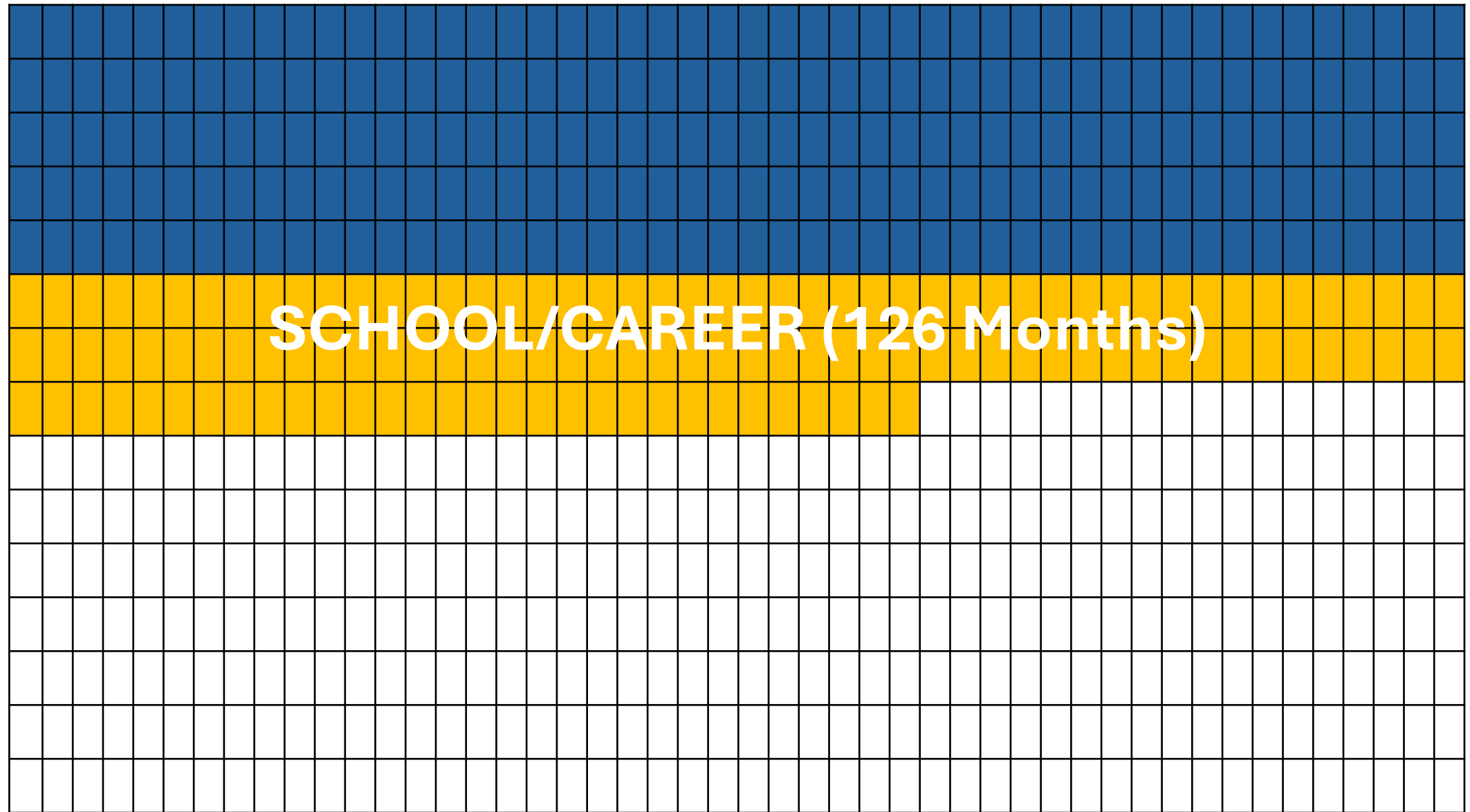
60 years - age 18-78



48 mos = 4 years



60 years - age 18-78

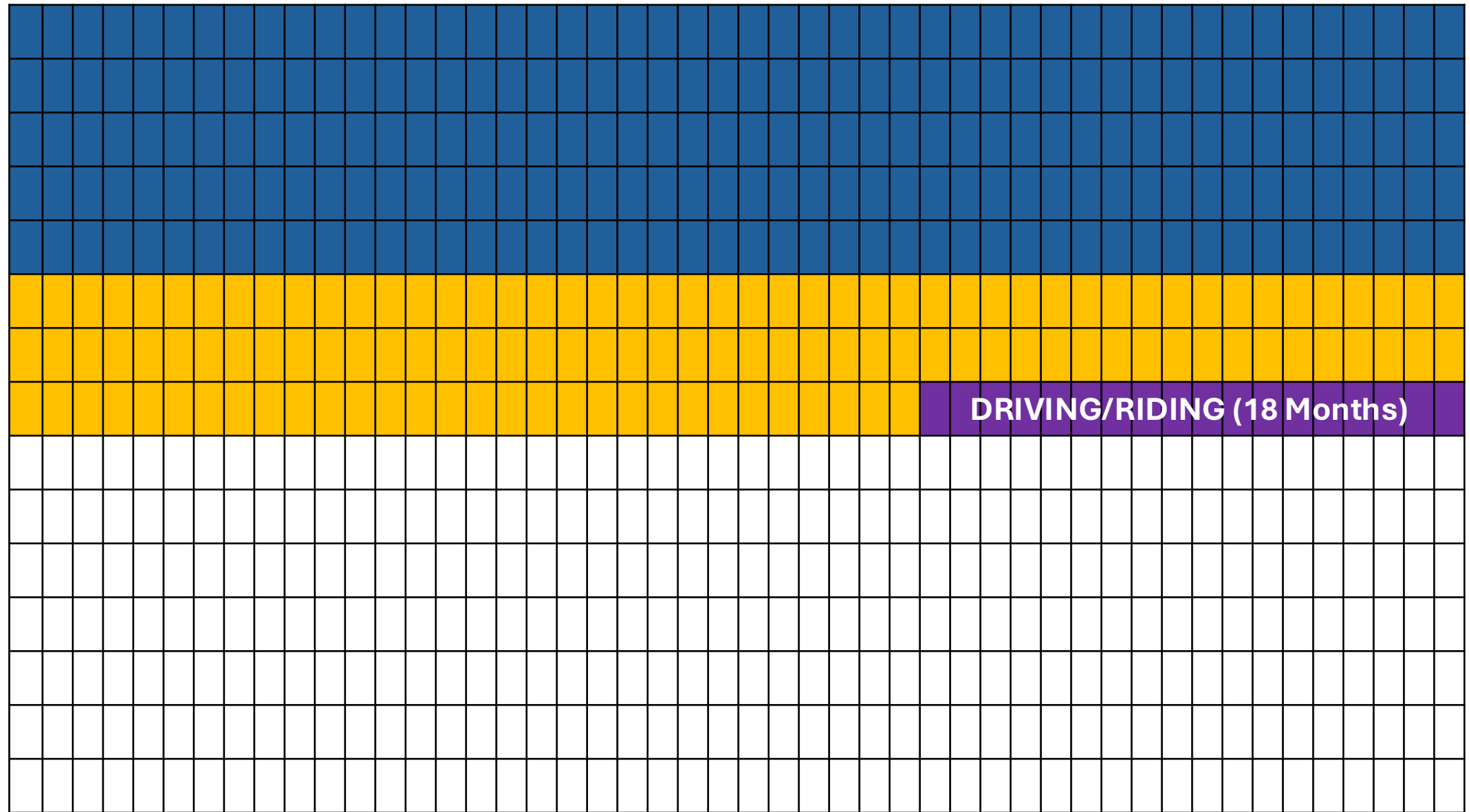


SCHOOL/CAREER (126 Months)

48 mos = 4 years



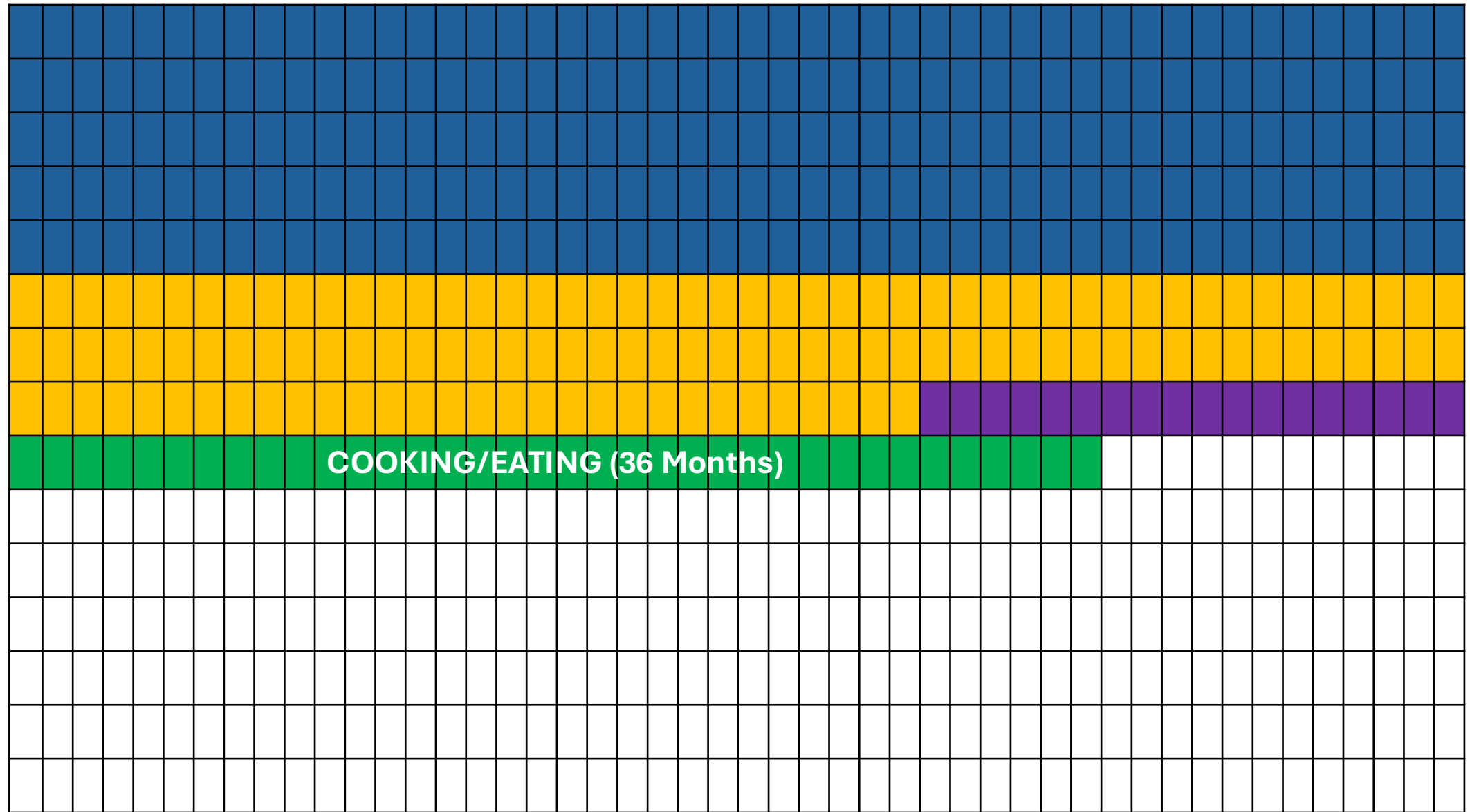
60 years - age 18-78



48 mos = 4 years



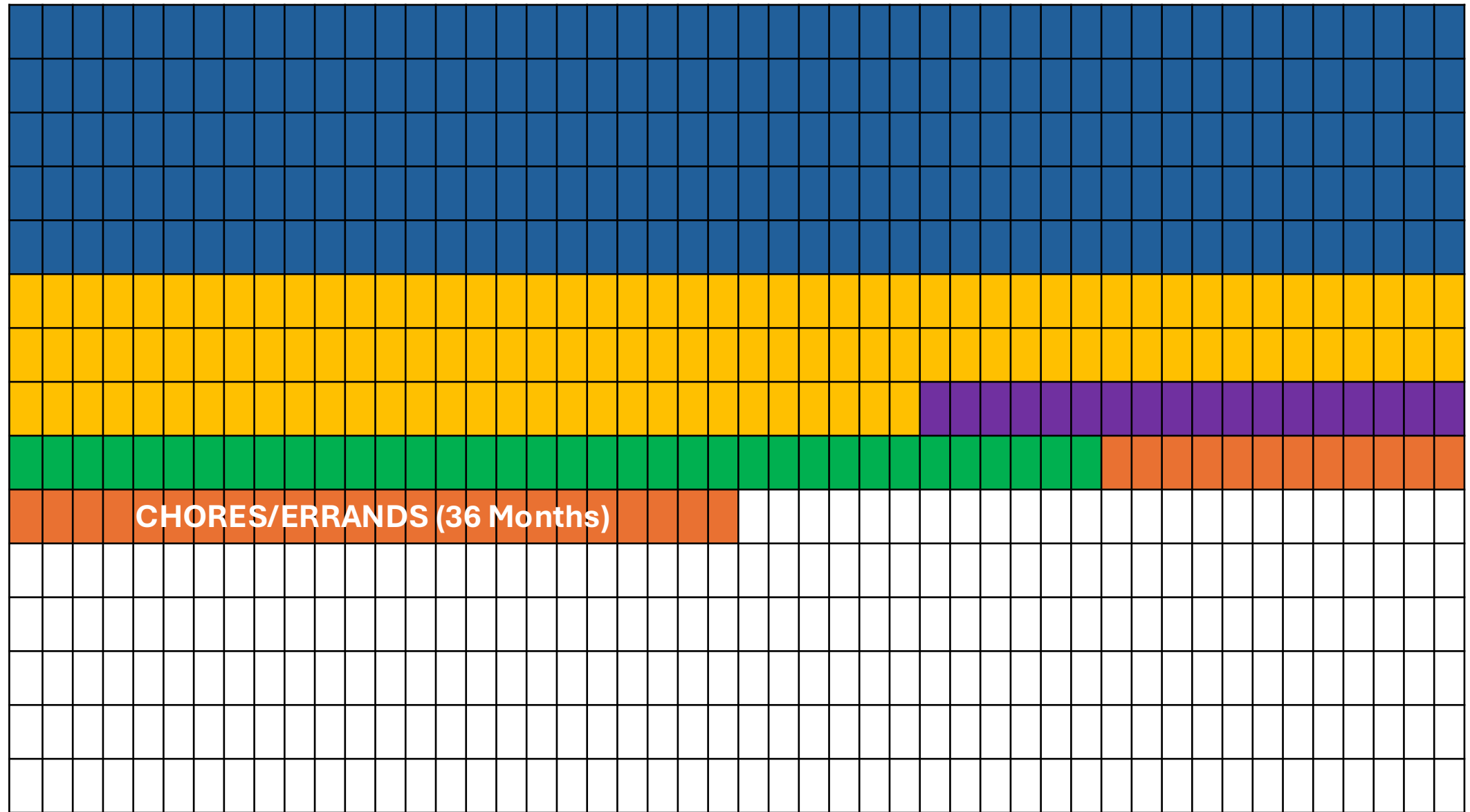
60 years - age 18-78



48 mos = 4 years



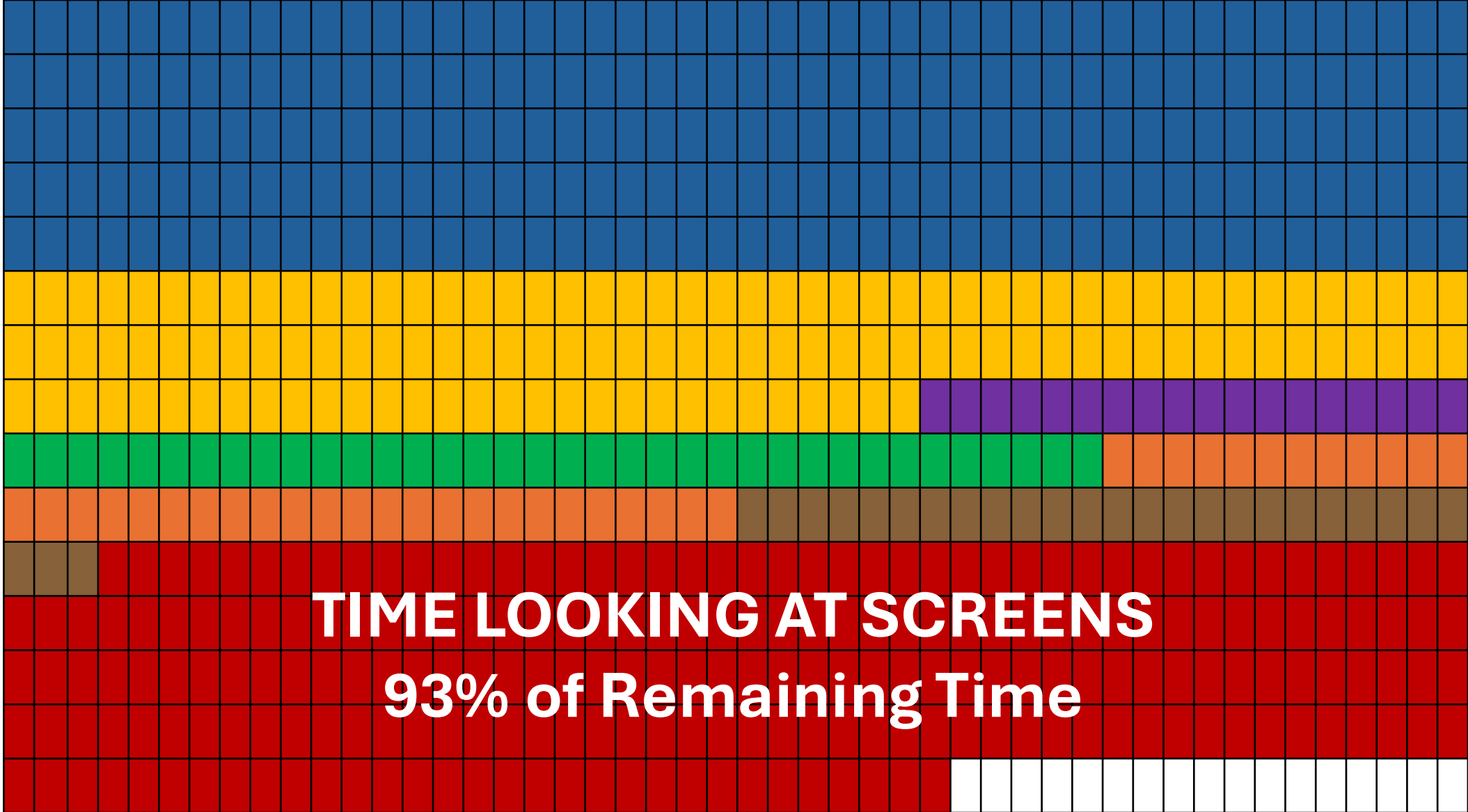
60 years - age 18-78



CHORES/ERRANDS (36 Months)

48 mos = 4 years

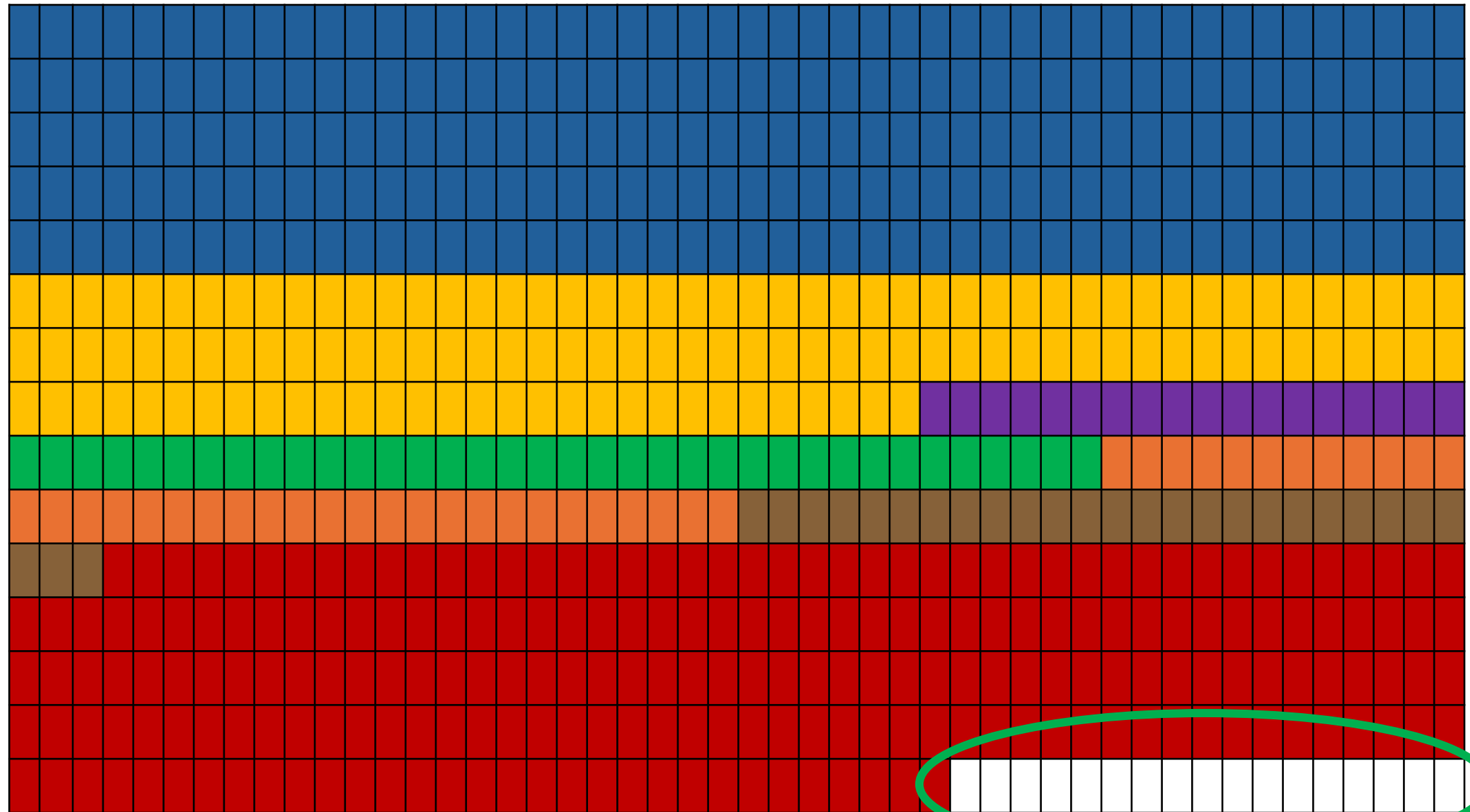
60 years - age 18-78



48 mos = 4 years



60 years - age 18-78



WHAT IS LEFT FOR YOU

*Young people's brains do not
need more cheap dopamine.
They need *social connection,*
sunshine, nature, rest, and
*exercise.**

*What's **one thing** you want **your**
child to **feel more consistently**
from you after tonight?*

QUESTIONS?



Let's Connect!

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