

Who are the adolescents that being at risk do not use drugs?

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Introduction

Much of the current knowledge about addictive substances allows us to know related factors that facilitate drug use, however, the fact that even in the presence of these factors, some adolescents do not use drugs, has been less studied. Interaction between risk and protective factors is not a simple process (Rutter, 2006.¹), its study has been constantly changing as the scenarios and contextual variables change. There are several factors related to drug use such as drug availability in the environment, substance use by friends and family, the presence of friends with antisocial behavior, the prior use of legal substances (alcohol and tobacco), impulsivity, self-esteem, personal satisfaction level and parenting styles among others. However, the trajectories of mental health are varied, so it is important to know the specificity of factors in their relationship with either drug use or other mental health problems. Also, knowing which factors protect the adolescents are elements that help us understand how to design healthier environments for them. Therefore, this study is aimed to identify the characteristics of adolescents that even in risk situations do not use drugs.

Method

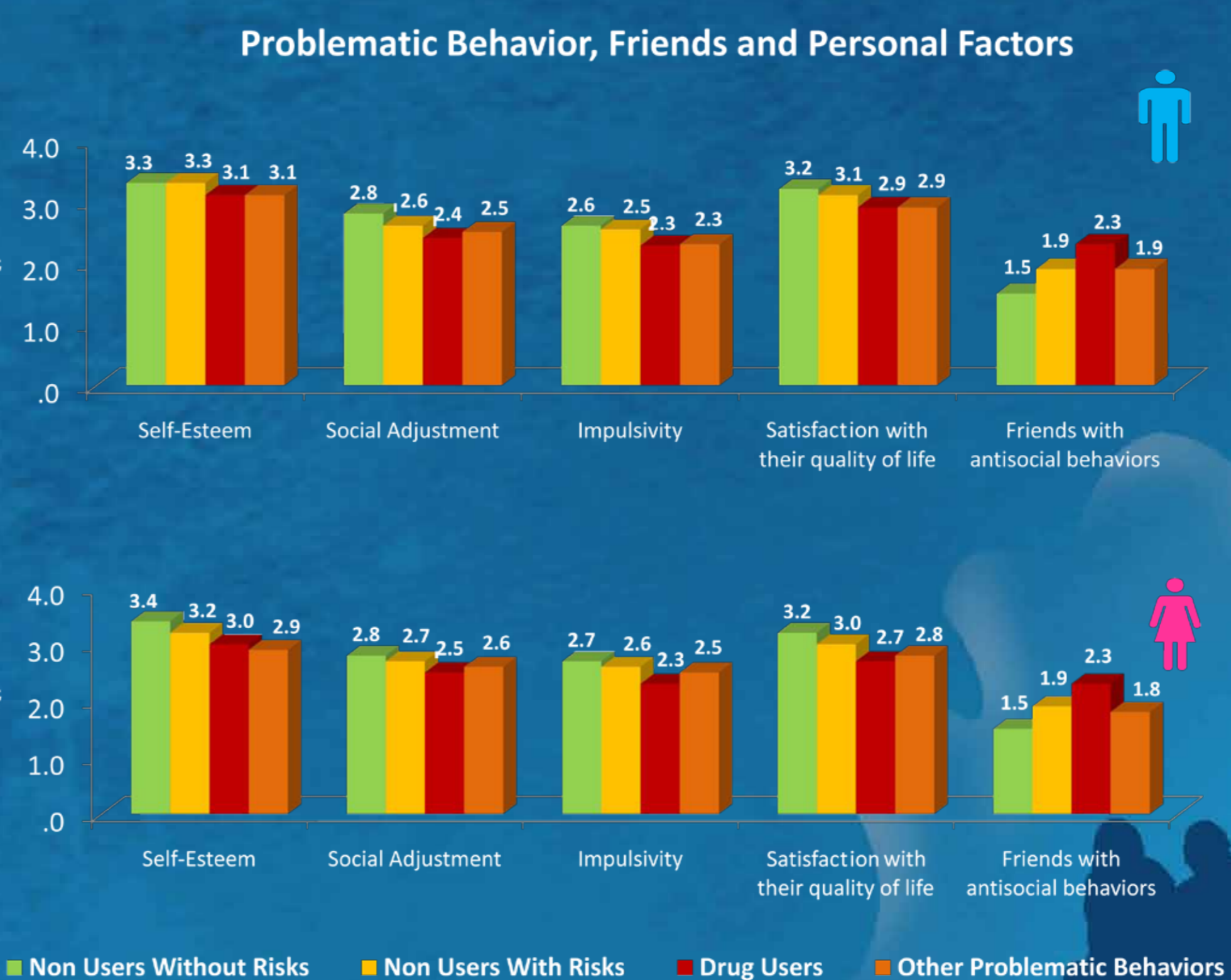
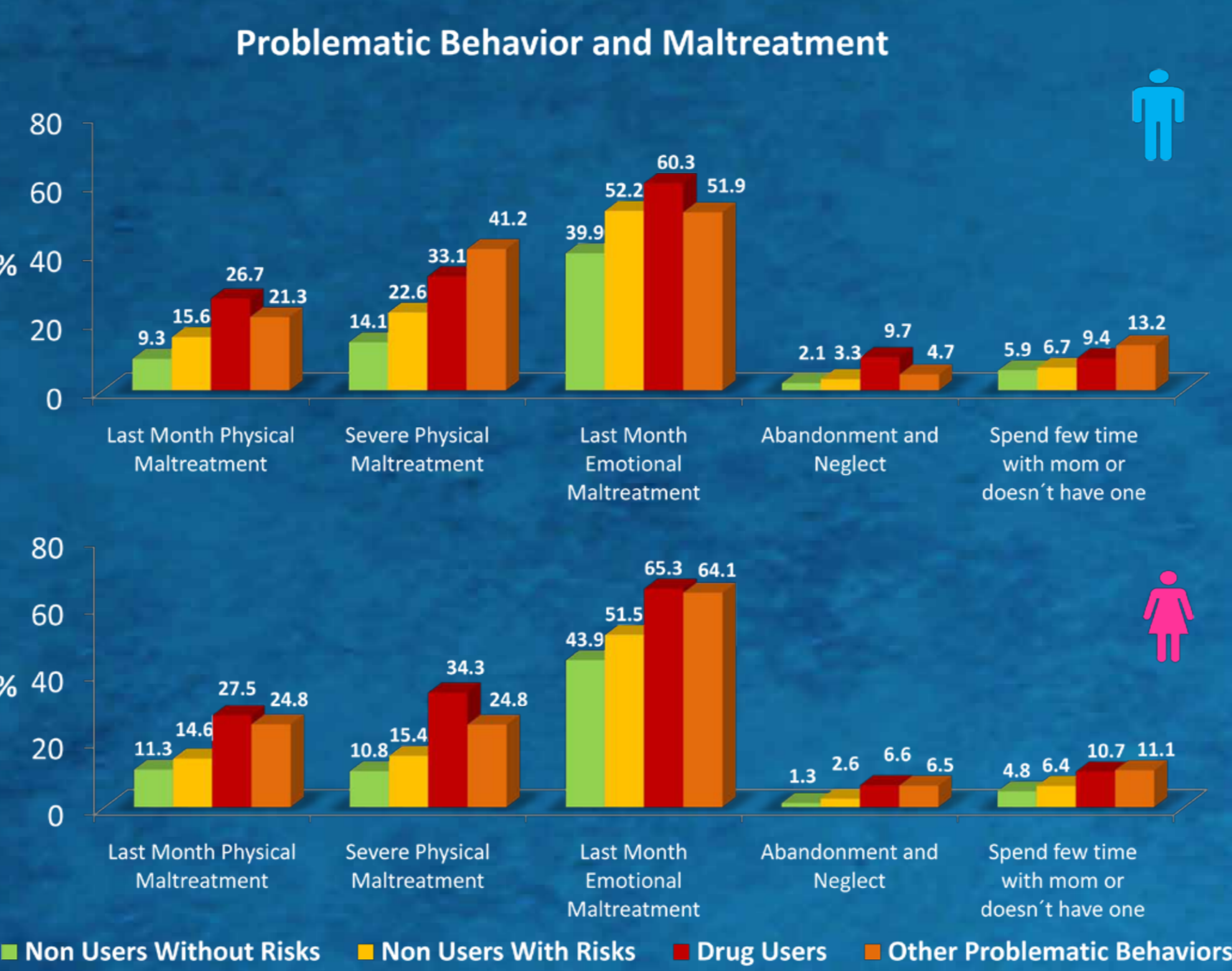
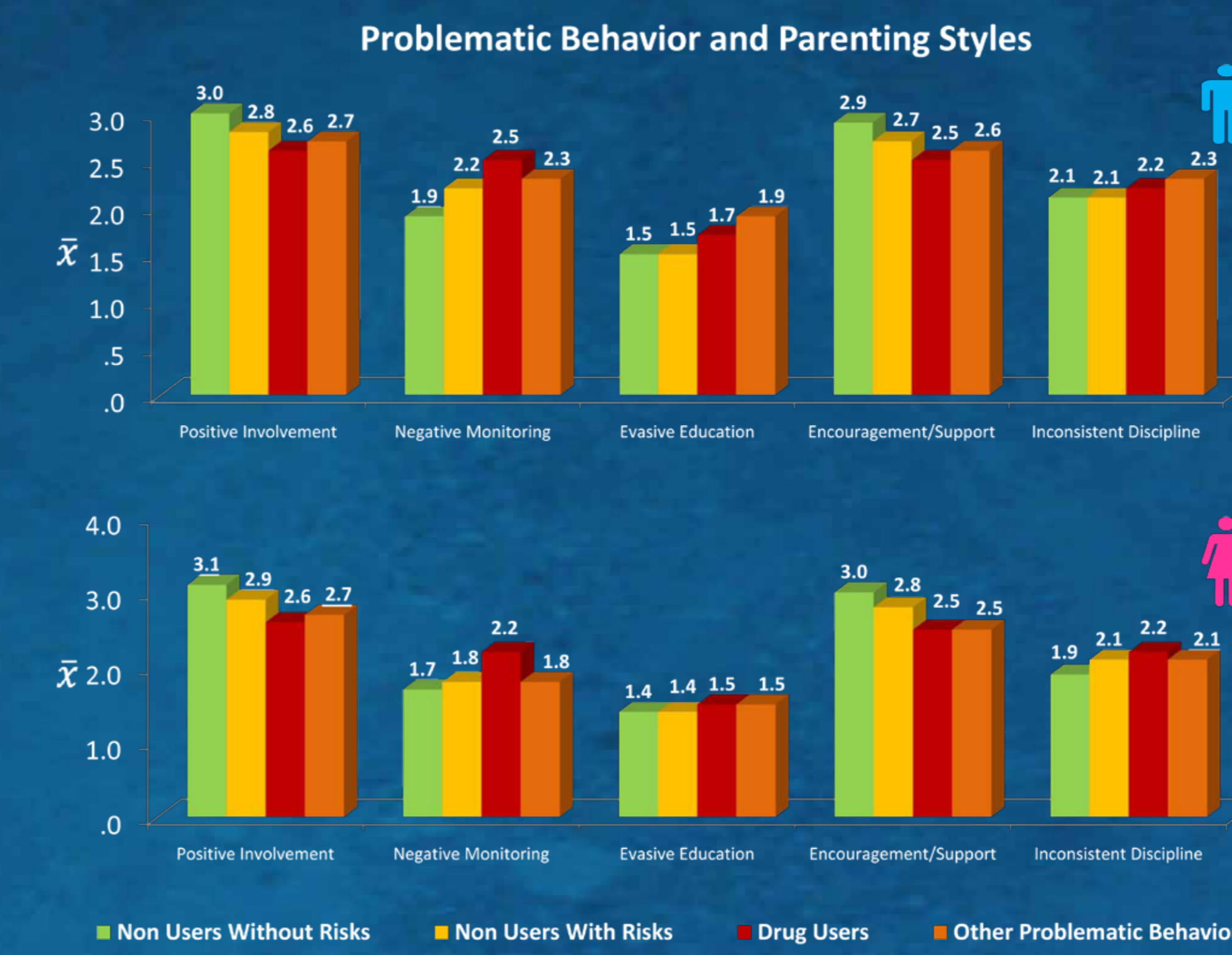
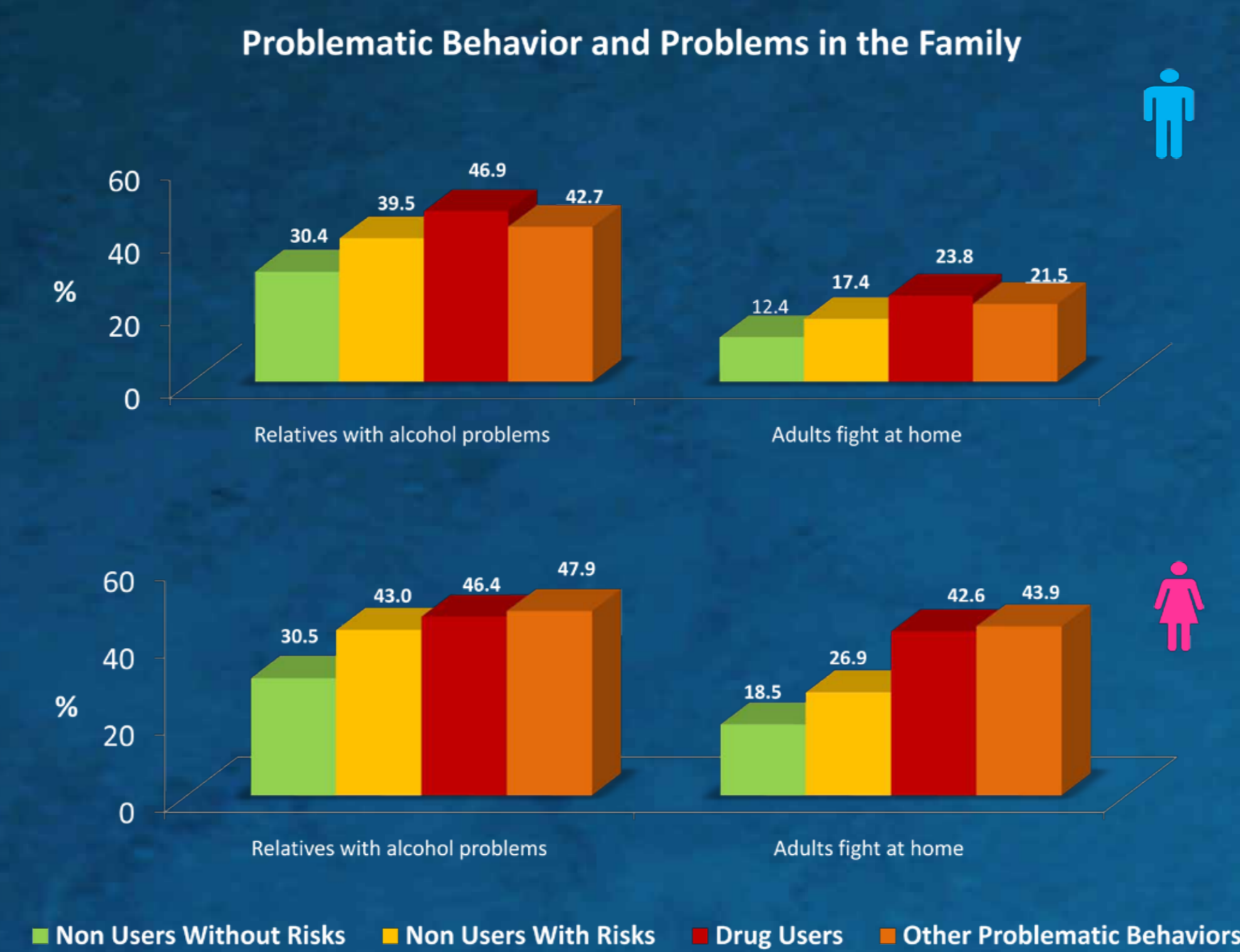
The study is a probabilistic survey in school population which was representative of Mexico City. The final sample was 22,980 students, and it was conducted in late 2009. The information was obtained through standardized questionnaire previously validated containing indicators that explore different aspects of drug use and related factors. (Villatoro, et. al., 2009.). For data analysis manova and x2 were used to compare 4 groups: non users without risk factors, non users with risk factors (drug availability, low risk perception, high social tolerance and opportunity to use drugs), drug users, and non users with other problematic behavior (suicide attempt, sexual abuse, maltreatment, etc.)

Results

The population subgroup analysis showed that in men, 32.8% were non users with risks, 31.4% were non users without risks, 25.9% were drug users and 9.8% were non users with other problematic behaviors. In women, 38.7% were non users without risks, 25.7% were non users with risks, 23.9% were drug users and 11.9% were non users with other problematic behaviors. Data showed that non-consumption group at risk, compared with drug user group, showed better parenting styles, more communication with mom and dad, a lower percentage of relatives with drinking problems and parents fighting at home, better self-esteem, social adjustment as well as lower rates of physical abuse, severe physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. They also showed higher satisfaction with their quality of life, less impulsivity and they have more pro-social friends. While the non user group without risk provided better rates in the indicators, it is important to point out, that parenting and neglect indicators are almost the same.

References

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Conclusions

Data shows how a positive parental relationship and the presence of parents or any adult who provides constant supervision and support are relevant factors in preventing drug use. To have the support from public and social policies that facilitate such support and supervision and provide education to parents and parents to be, in how to raise and provide their children with effective support are elements that will contribute to reduce drug addiction and associated problems (Simons, 2007²).