



# VIDEOGAME TO ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH AND PREVENT THE INITIATION OF OPIOID MISUSE IN ADOLESCENTS

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# ABOUT PLAY2PREVENT

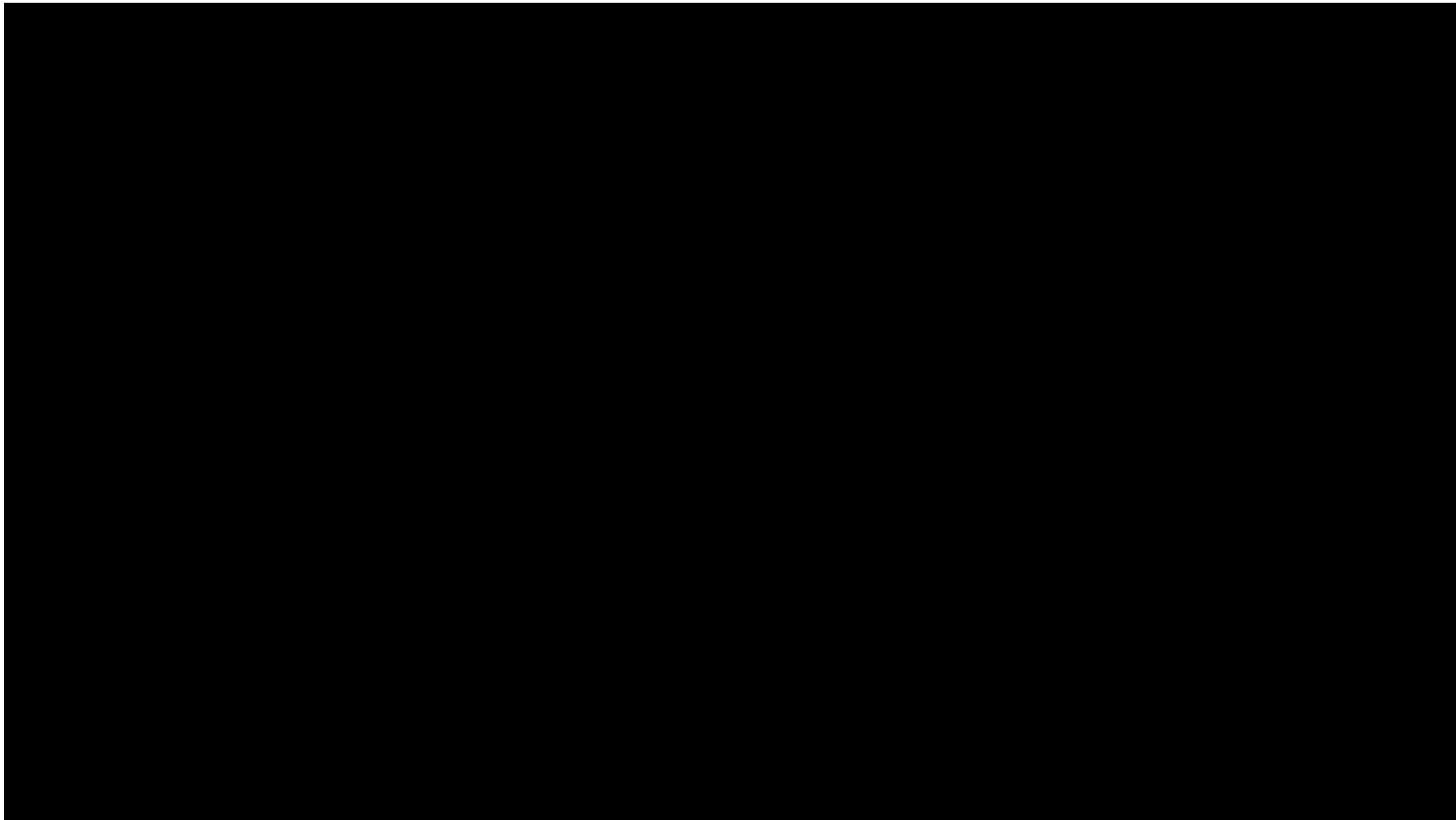
- We develop and evaluate serious videogames to promote health behaviors.
- Our lab was created **over 10 years ago** with funding from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).
- We are a “**collective brain**” of scientists, youth, educators, community-based organizations, and game designers.



# PLAYSMART

- *PlaySmart* is our newest game created with funding from the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Helping to End Addiction Long-Term (HEAL) initiative.
- The game targets **mental health promotion and opioid misuse prevention** in adolescents aged 16-19.
- Features 6 storylines and 7 minigames for 6-8 hours of gameplay.





# DEVELOPMENT

- 2020-2021
- We conducted focus groups with youth, treatment providers, and individuals current in treatment for opioid use disorder (OUD) to create the content of the game.
  - 91 total
  - 52 youth
  - 32 providers
  - 1 individual in treatment
- **Example themes:** confusion with opioid identification, perceived risk of harm, consequences and addiction, mental health



# QUOTES

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*“I think they do drugs and they try different drugs as a coping mechanism, because if somebody goes through a traumatic stage in their life or something...and they don't got nobody to talk to...they substitute that person with the drug...”*

*“I feel like therapists will make you feel worse than you actually do, especially if you're like an addict.”*

*“...We want the counselor and the patient basically to understand...have an understanding of each other, instead of you just meeting the person and then getting right into it.”*

# MENTAL HEALTH

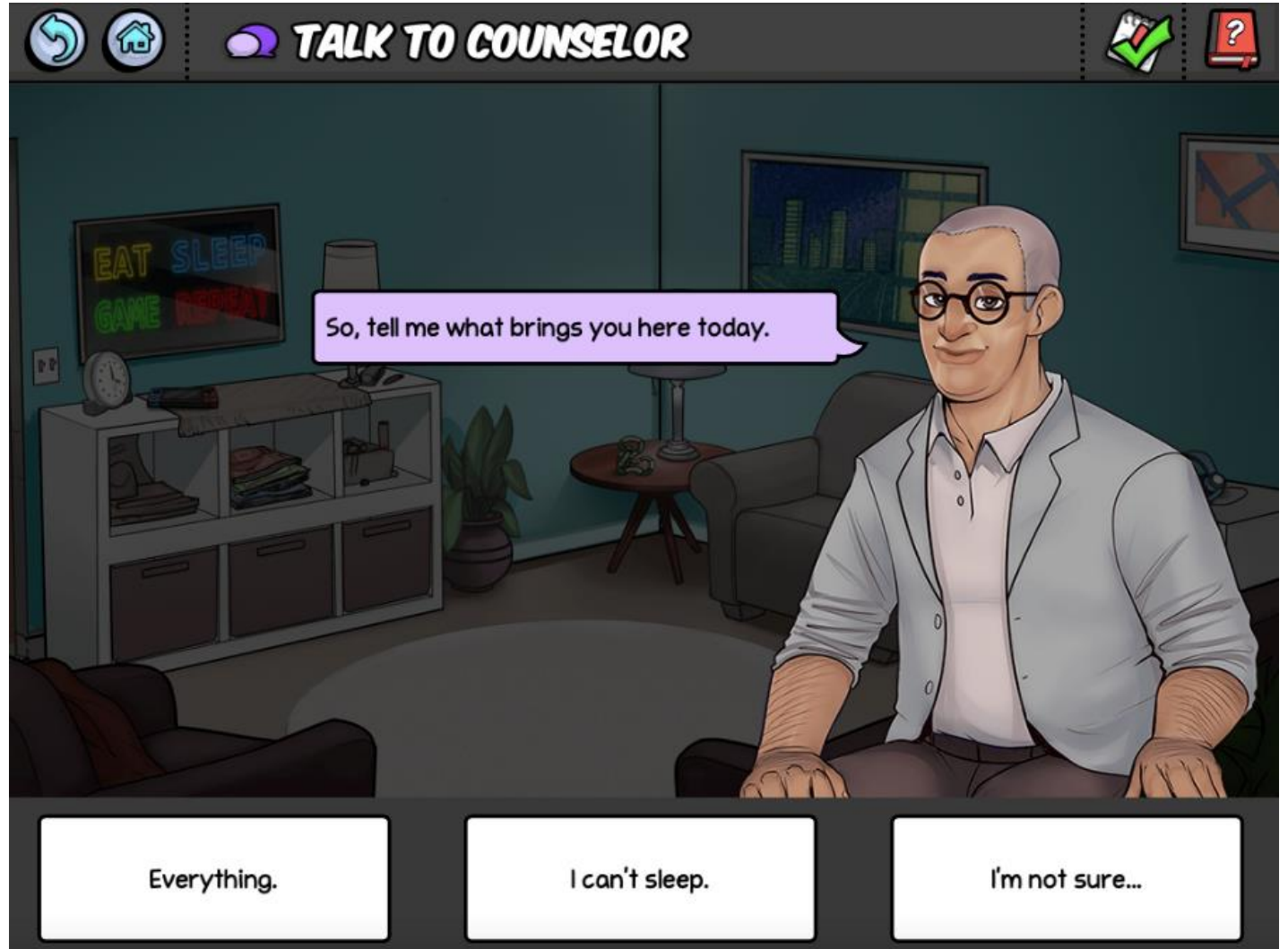
- A large component of *PlaySmart* encourages students to seek help and de-stigmatizes mental health.
- The game teaches students skills such as motivational interviewing, how to find a good counselor, and how to identify cognitive distortions.





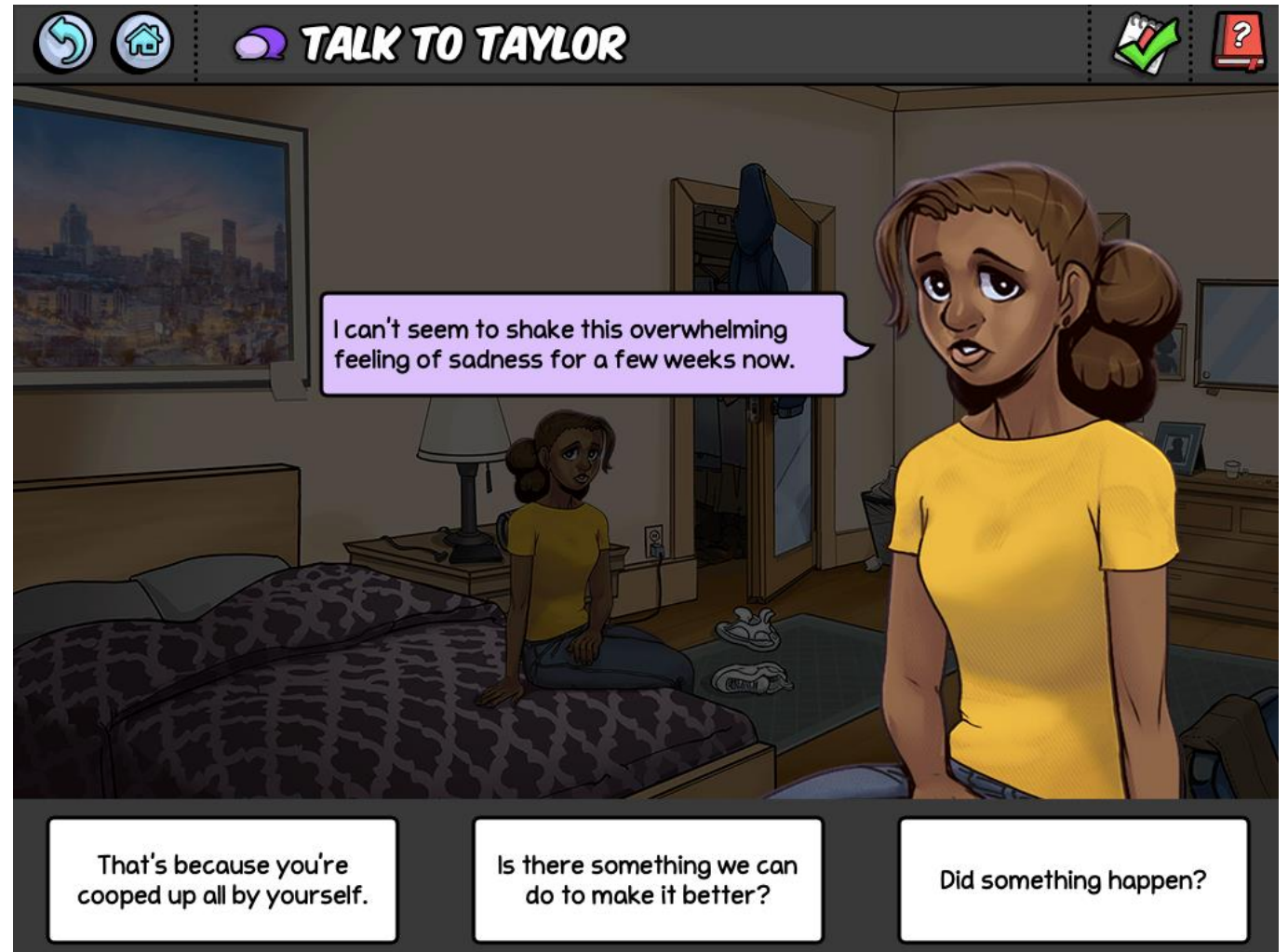
# A NEW DIRECTION

- Encourages help-seeking and teaches how to navigate different counseling styles.



# A FRIEND IN NEED

- Teaches motivational interviewing and how to recognize signs that additional help may be needed.



# STRESS SENSE

- Teaches how to identify cognitive distortions and how to re-frame negative thoughts.

The screenshot shows a digital interface for a lesson titled "#3: STRUGGLE IS REAL". At the top, there are navigation icons (a circular arrow, a house, and a question mark) and a yellow star with the number 8. On the left, there is a character's profile picture and a green button labeled "BIO >". The main content area features a speech bubble from the character: "I'm not having the best day. I found out I didn't get that job I applied for and really wanted. I'm such a loser." Below this, there are two blue text boxes: "I'm sorry you didn't get that job. The part about being a loser could use some reframing though." and "When you say 'I'm such a loser' ...". A blue box prompts the user to "Choose the reason the statement could be reframed" with three options: "Emotional Reasoning", "Overgeneralization", and "Blaming". The "Overgeneralization" option is highlighted in yellow. Below the options, a white box with a blue border provides a definition: "Overgeneralization: Making a general conclusion based on a single piece of evidence or experience." A green "Select Reason" button is located to the right of this definition.

# EVALUATION

- Large-scale RCT to evaluate the effectiveness of *PlaySmart*.
- Assess participant knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors for up to 12 months.
- **Goal:** 532 participants across 10 schools.
- **Current:** 75 students, 5 schools



- EARN \$225 IN VISA GIFT CARDS
- MUST BE 16-19 YEARS OLD

**PARTICIPATE IN OUR  
VIDEOGAME RESEARCH  
PROJECT AND LEARN HOW A  
VIDEOGAME CAN HELP TEENS  
MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES!**



**TO JOIN:**

SCAN THE QR CODE OR TEXT  
US AT:

(203)-464-6183

OR ASK YOUR SCHOOL-BASED  
HEALTH CENTER STAFF!



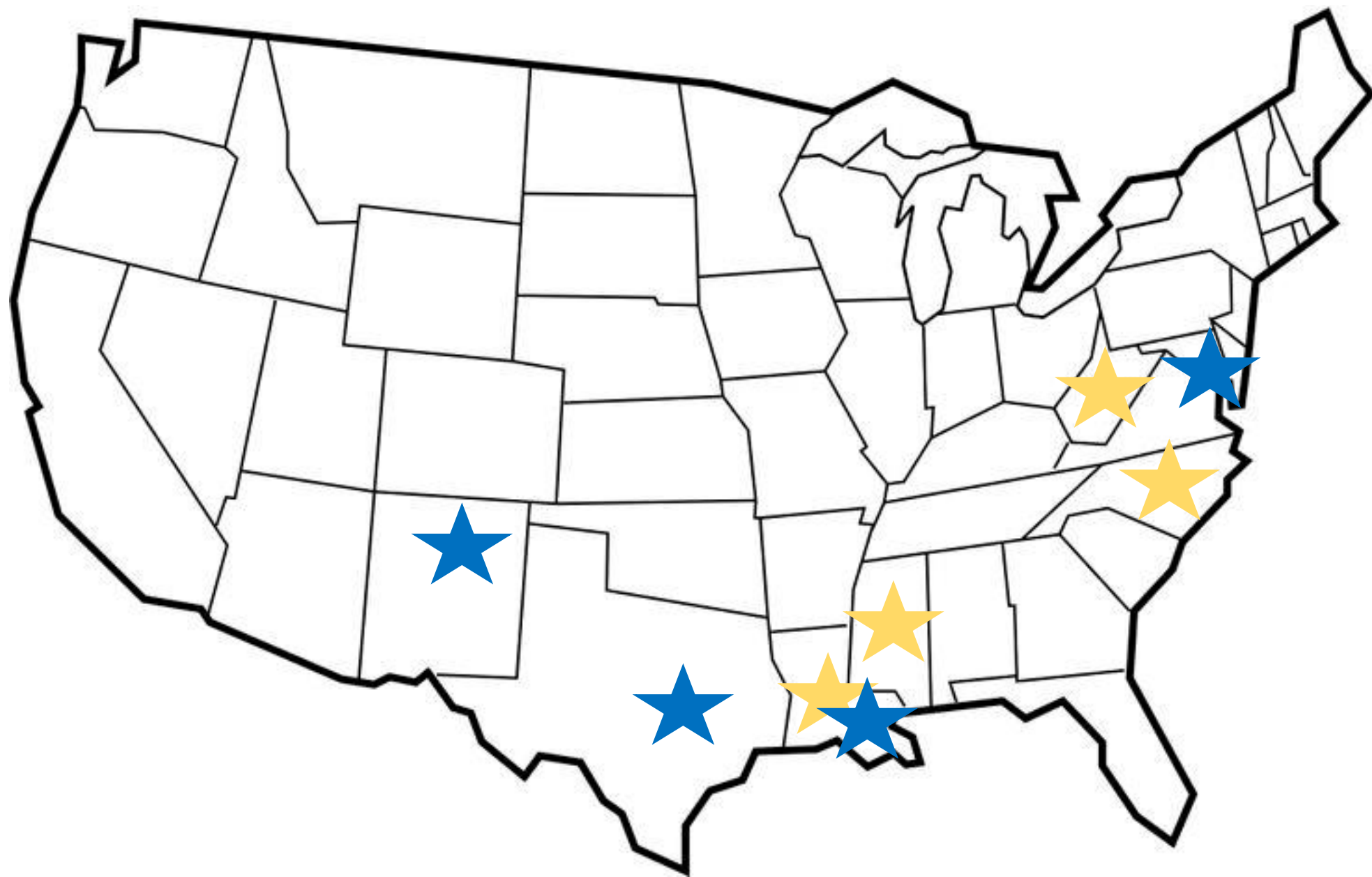
# IMPLEMENTATION

- **Goal:** Partner with up to 15 SBHCs across the United States to evaluate the real-life costs, barriers, and best-practices to implementing *PlaySmart* in an SBHC/ school setting.



<https://www.sbh4all.org/>





# IMPLEMENTATION



***INTERESTED?***

Email Katy Stinchfield at  
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— LET'S PLAY! —





# THANK YOU

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## Questions?



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- <https://www.play2prevent.org>



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