

# COVID-19 and IDD: Mental Health Research and Practice

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# Conflicts of Interest

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- I receive funding for research from Autism Speaks and the National Institute of Health for projects unrelated to the topic of this talk.
- I have no conflicts of interest to declare.

# Today's Plan

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Mental Health and Challenging Behavior in IDD

2

Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health and Challenging Behavior

3

Treatment of Mental Health and Challenging Behavior

4

Impact of COVID-19 on treatment

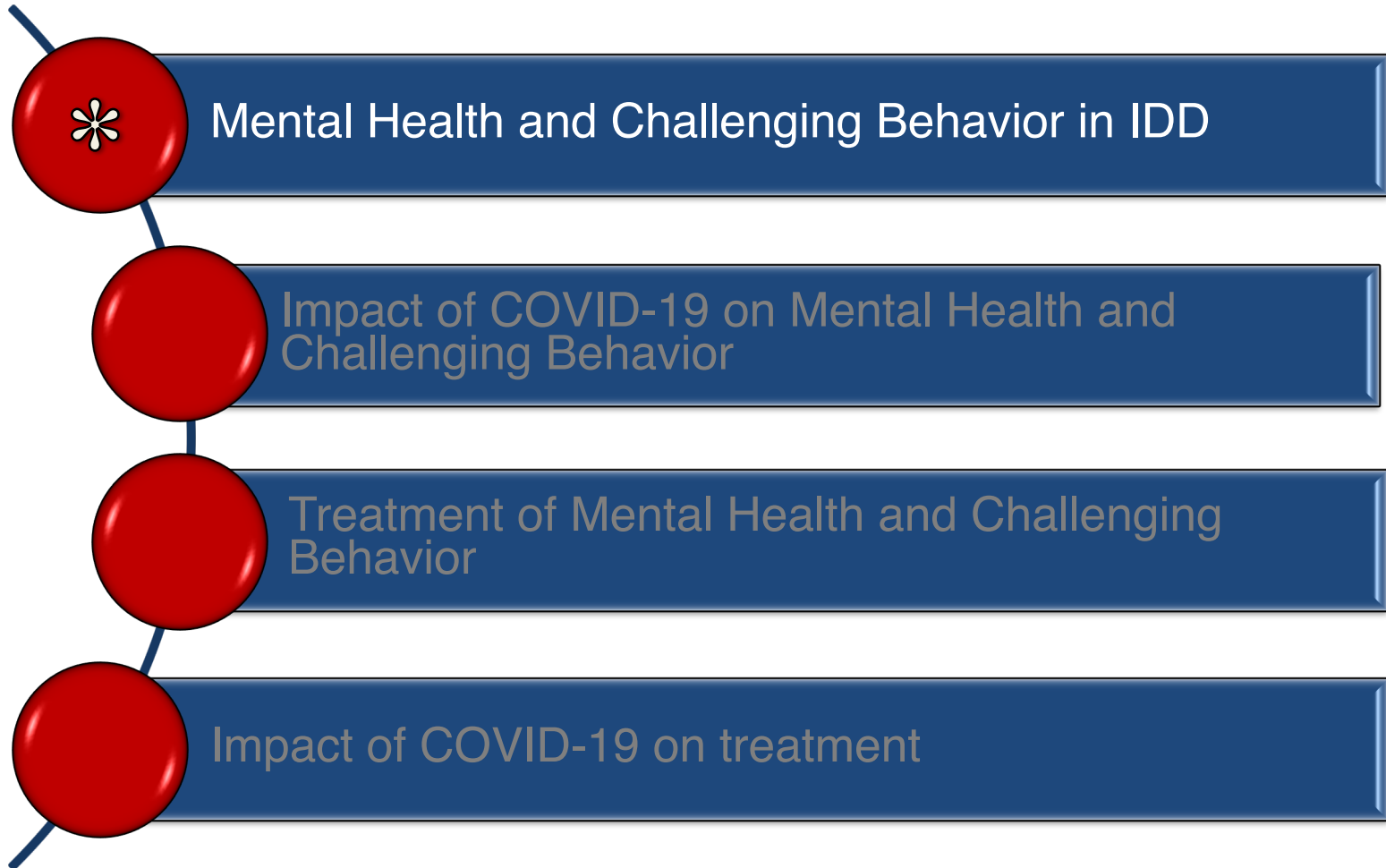
# Survey

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Who is in the audience?

# Today's Plan

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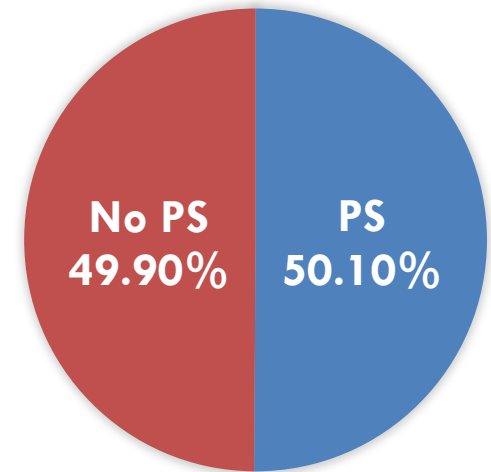


# Prevalence

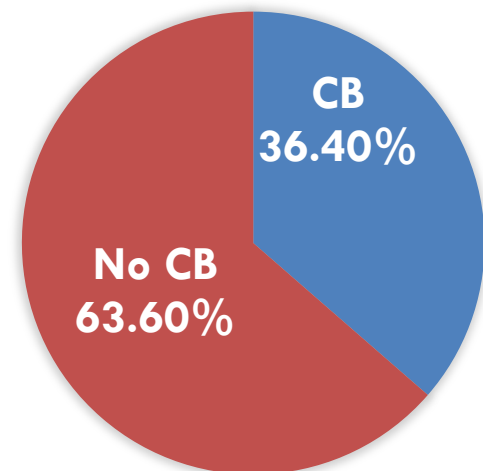
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- Mental health concerns and challenging behavior are prevalent among individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.
- Gormez et al., 2020

## PSYCHIATRIC SYMPTOMS (PS)



## CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR (CB)



# Risk Factors for Mental Health Concerns

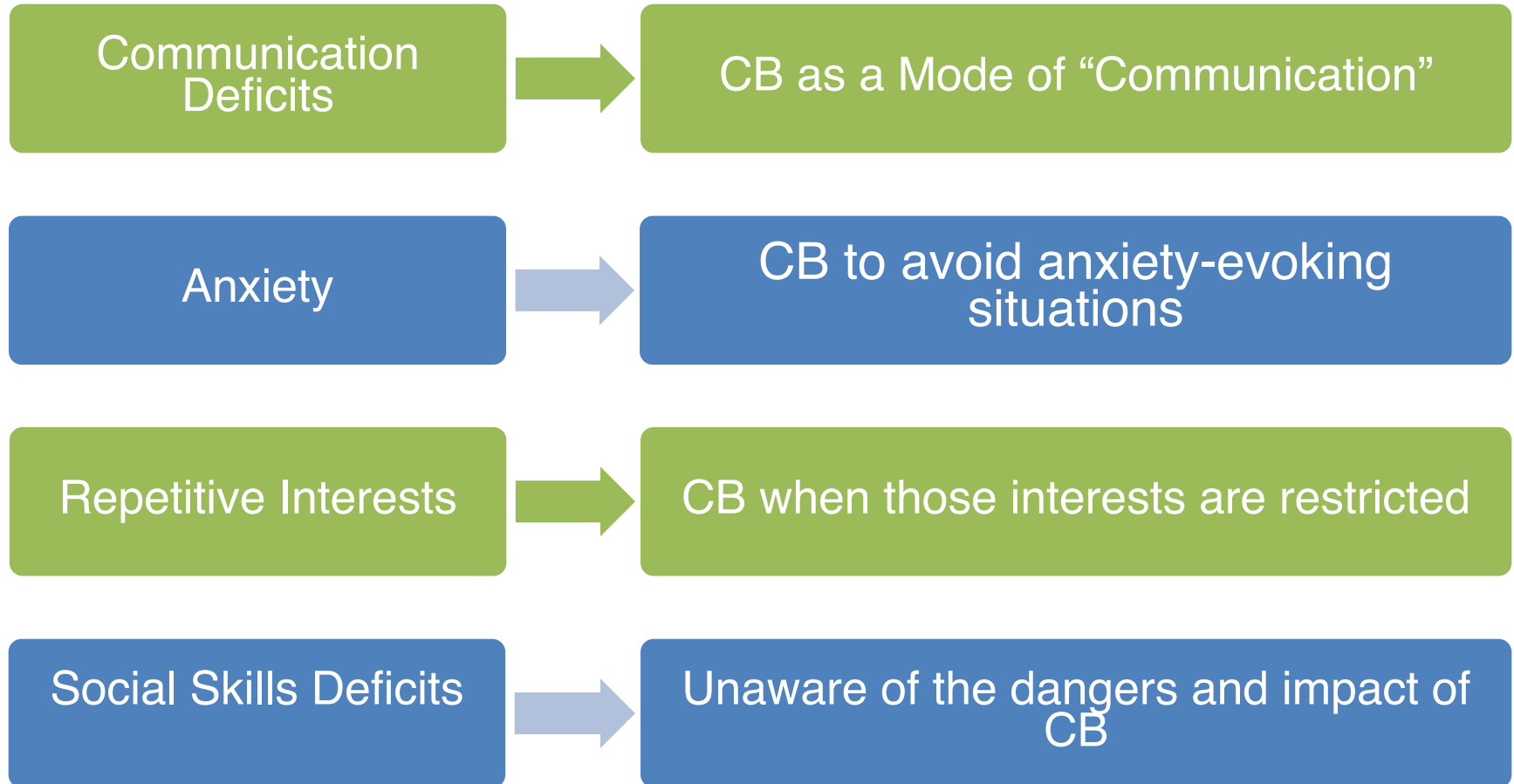
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- More severe intellectual disabilities
- Parental divorce
- Previous mental health issues
- Lack of mobility impairment
- Urinary accidents
- Higher verbal ability (might be better detection)

(Gormez, 2020; Smiley, 2007)

# Why does CB occur?

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# Detrimental Effects

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(Buescher, Cidav, Knapp, & Mandell, 2014; Horner, Diemer, & Brazeau, 1992; Lauer et al., 2019; Lecavalier, Leon, & Wiltz, 2006)

## **The impact of caring for an adult with intellectual disability and psychiatric comorbidity on carer stress and psychological distress**

**F. Dawson,<sup>1</sup> S. Shanahan,<sup>2</sup> E. Fitzsimons,<sup>3</sup> G. O'Malley,<sup>1</sup> N. Mac Giollabhui<sup>1</sup> & J. Bramham<sup>1</sup>**

Parent and family problems

Pessimism

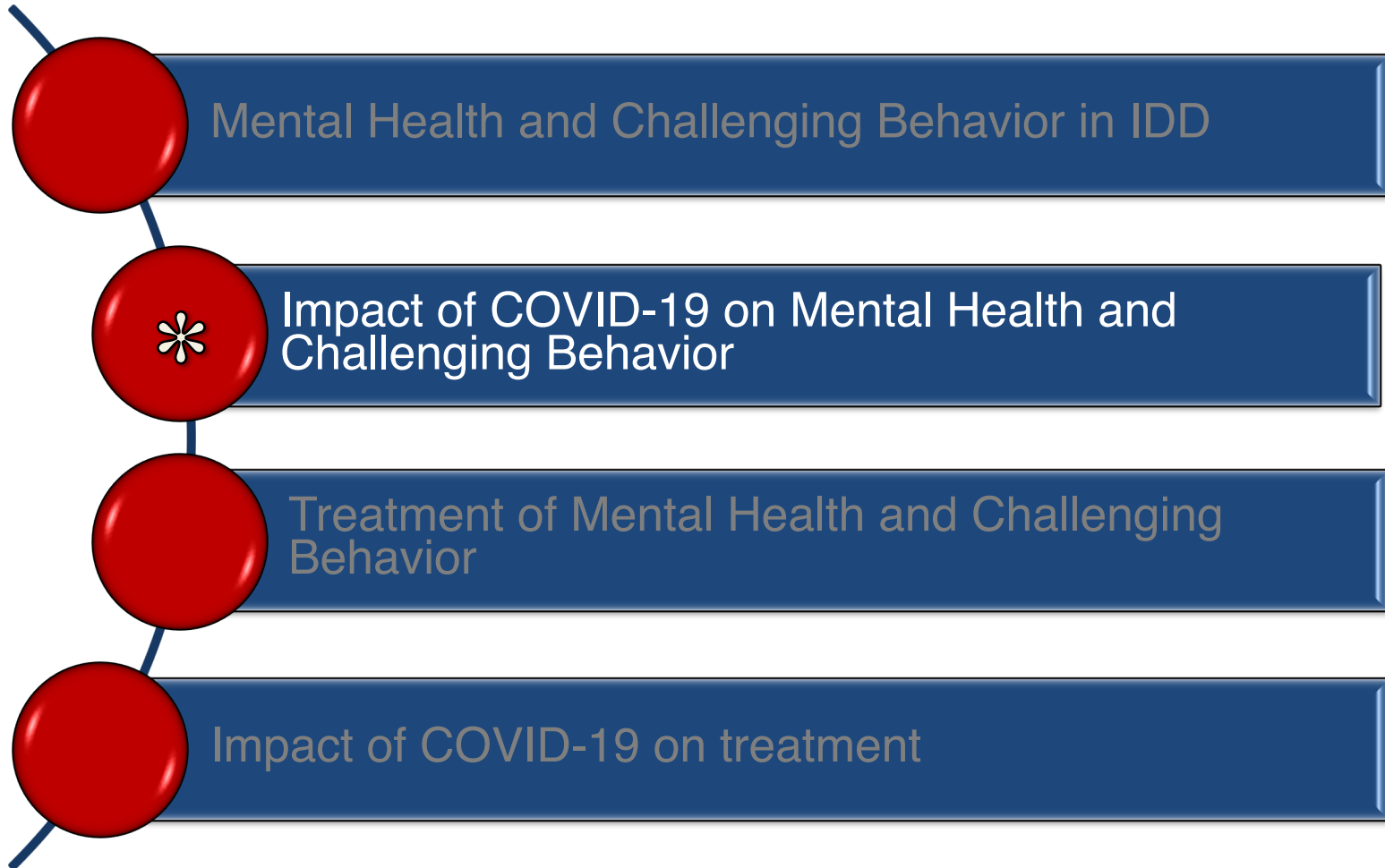
Anxiety or insomnia

Depression

Overall stress

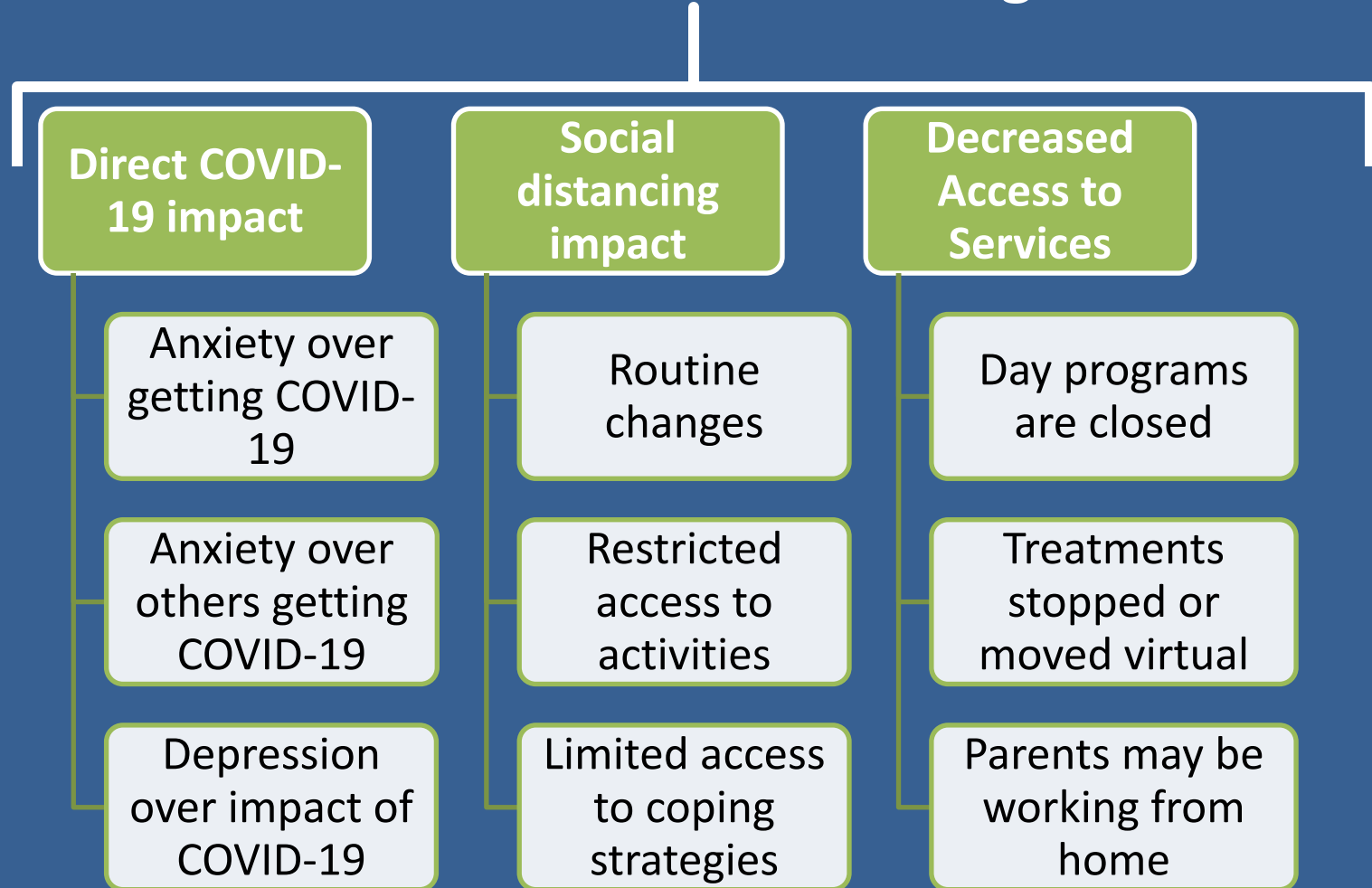
# Today's Plan

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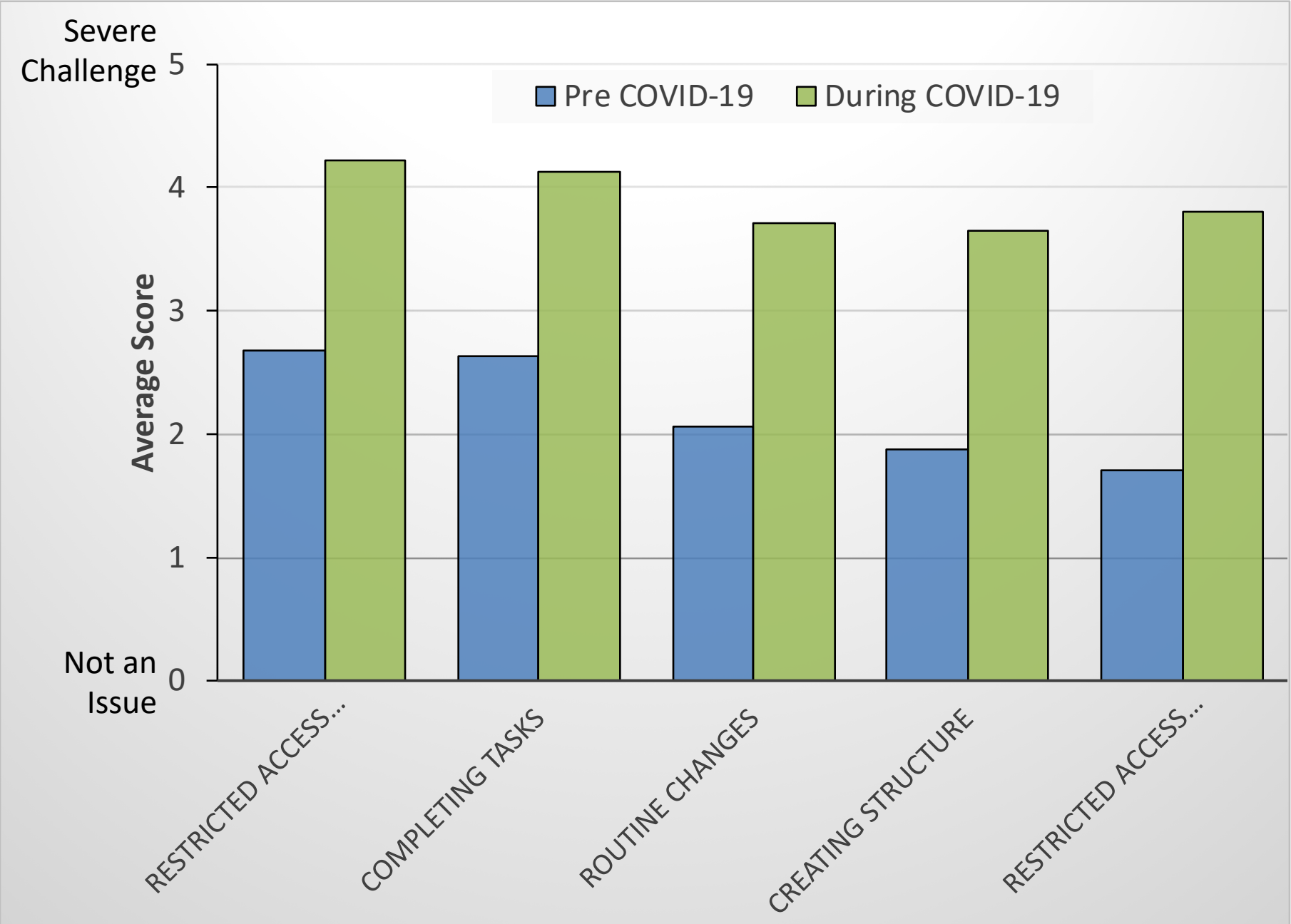


# Impact of COVID-19

## Difficulties Understanding

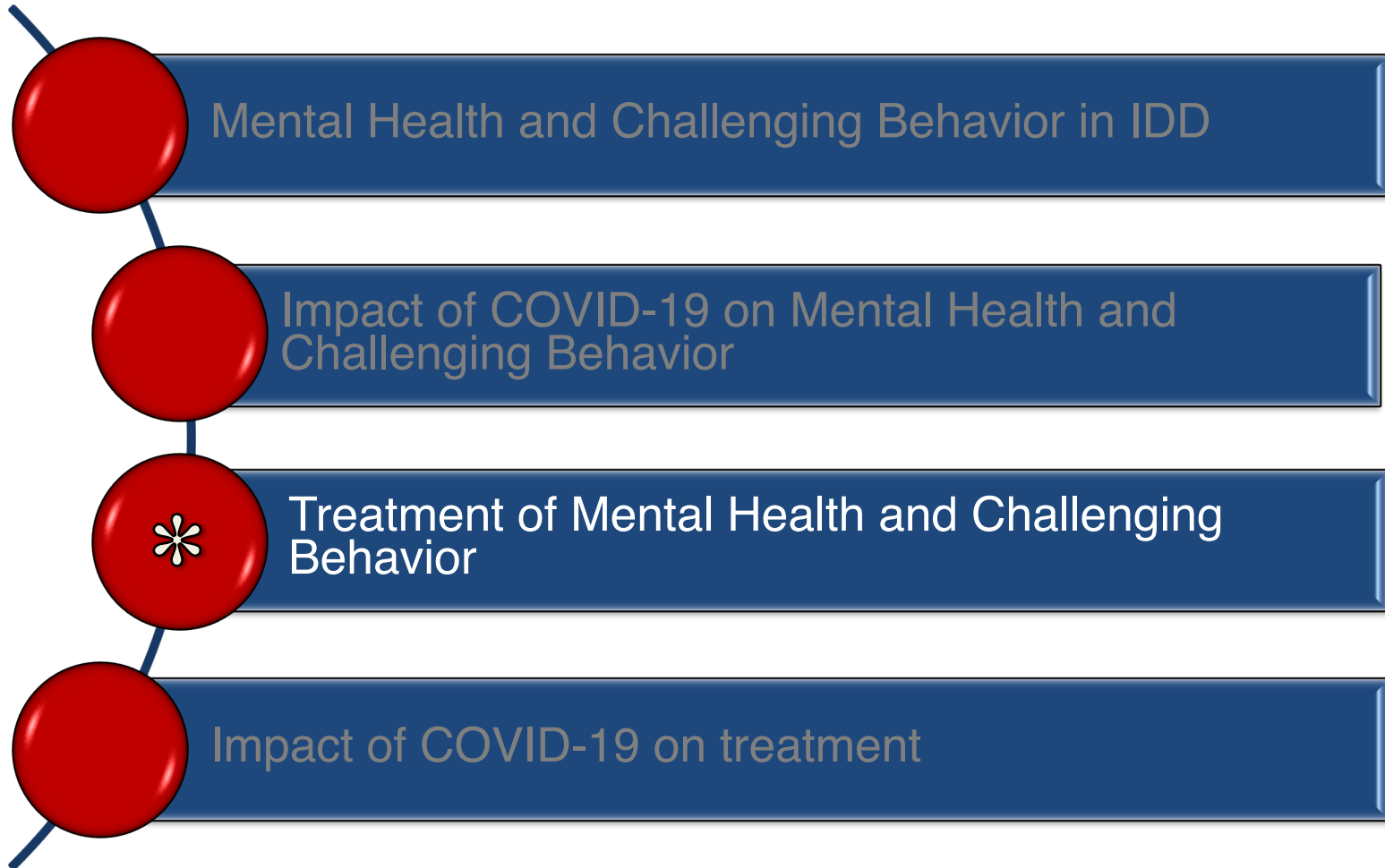


# Report from caregivers of 30 children and young adults with IDD in treatment for CB



# Today's Plan

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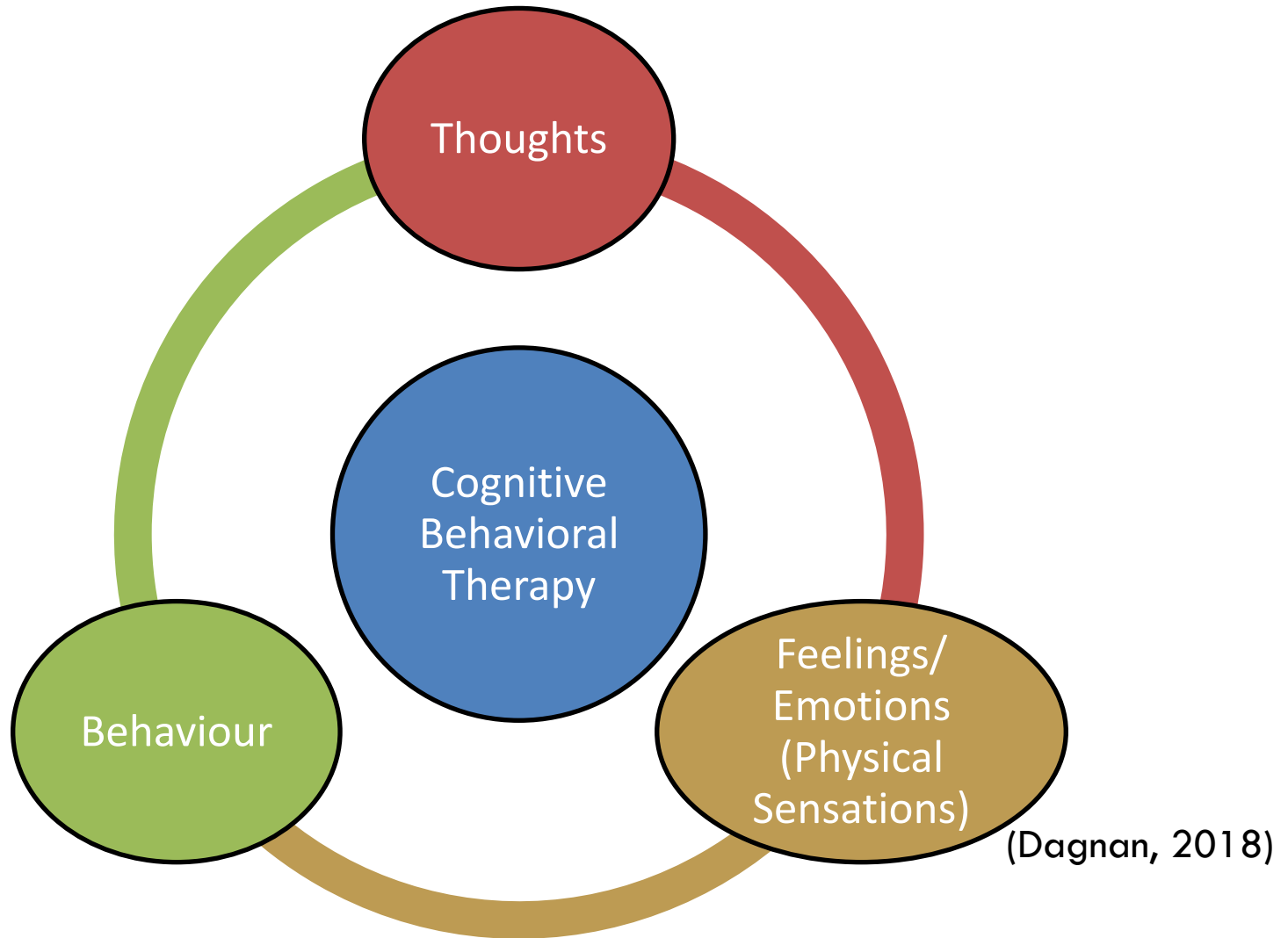
# Treatment of CBMH Concerns

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- Psychotropic medications
- Psychotherapy
- Applied behavior analysis
- Social skills groups and other structured activities

# Mental Health Treatment Option

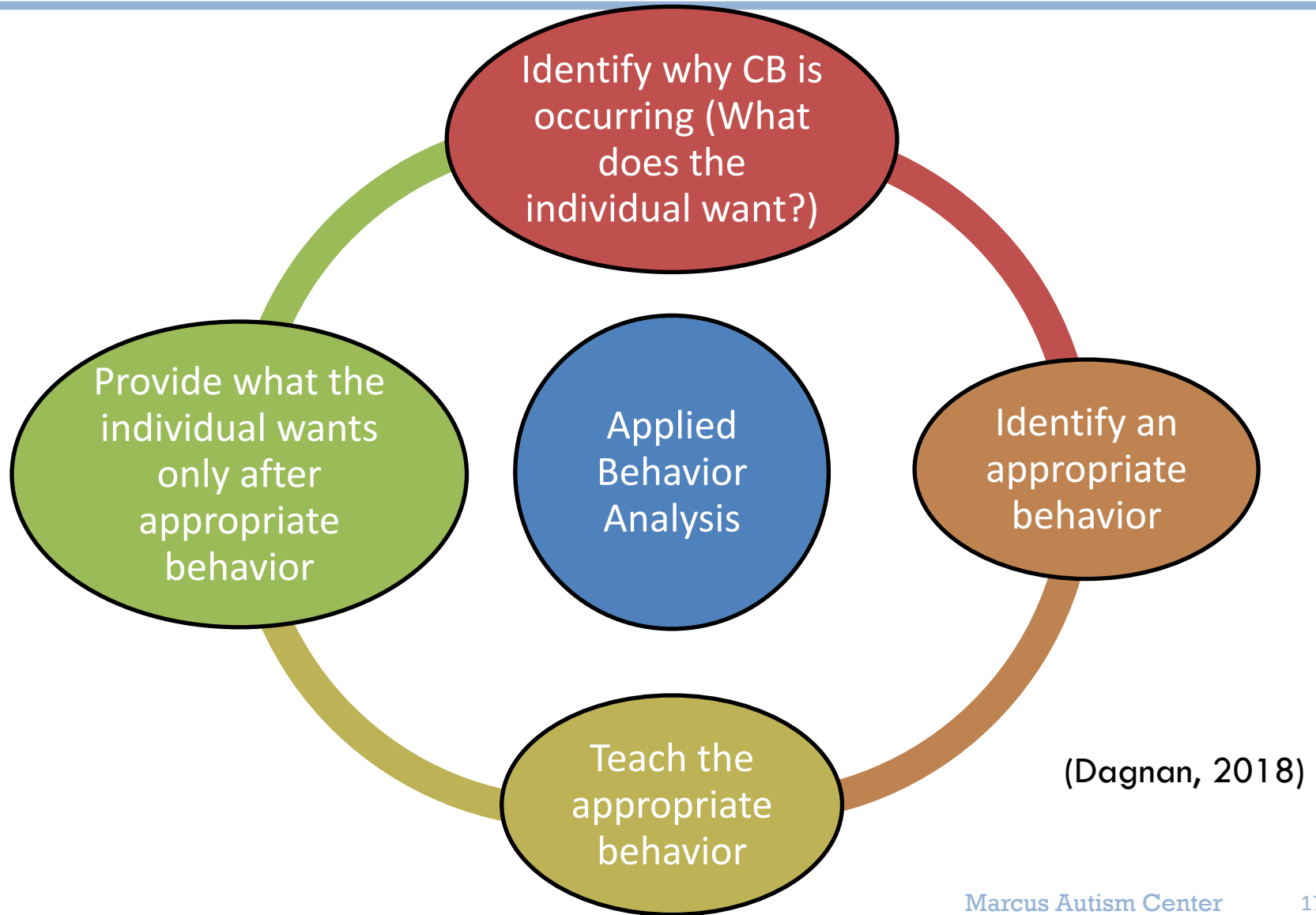
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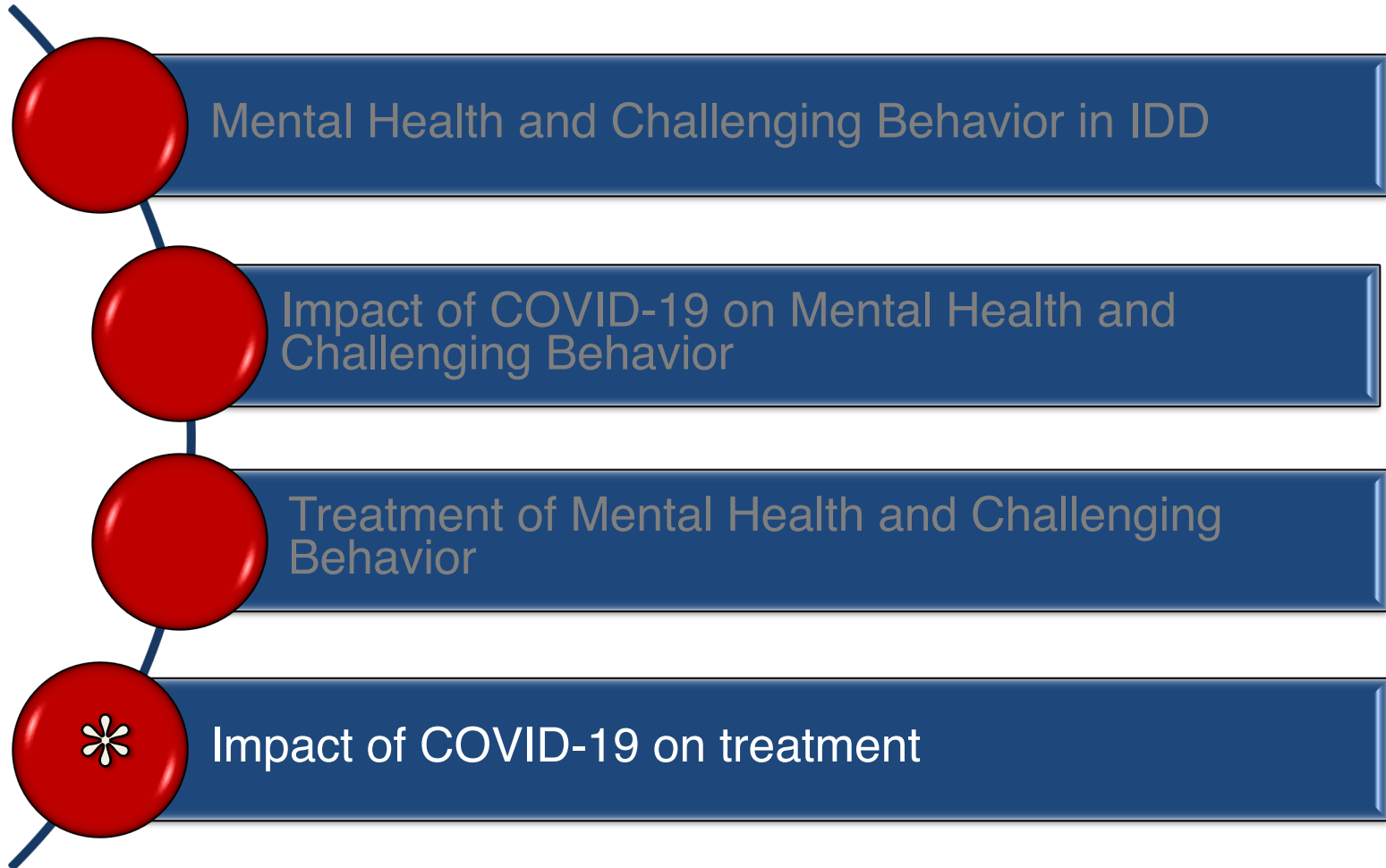
# CB Treatment Option

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# Today's Plan

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# Treatment Considerations

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- For ongoing clients – direction of services may need to shift to account for changing need
- Consider telehealth or a hybrid model whenever possible (Dent et al., 2018; Lindgren et al., 2016)
- Combination of working with the individual directly AND with their families is likely needed
- Checking in on old clients/patients



# Pulling on Past Research

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- Social stories to explain complex events
- Tool kits for discussing traumatic events
  - A trauma informed toolkit for providers in the field of IDD (Center for Disability Services)
- May need to implement past strategies that the individual has “grown out of”
- Talk to individuals about what they need

# Case Example

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- Johnny – 19 yo male with ASD and a moderate intellectual disability
  - History of perseverating on anxiety-evoking topics
- Routines are very important to Johnny and he has a hard time coping when routines are interrupted
  - Going to his grandmother's house is a preferred activity and part of his daily routine
  - Normally attends school 5 days a week
- History of issues with CB related to restriction of preferred items (e.g., iPad, TV)
  - Successfully discharged from an applied behavior analysis treatment program 2 years ago with reductions in CB

# Comments

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How do you think COVID-19 may be impacting Johnny?

# Case Example – COVID-19

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- Grandma's house is unavailable for several months
  - Identified an alternative of video chatting with Grandma
  - Taught him to communicate for this and put it on his schedule so he knew when it was available
- Incorporated a structured schedule including activities he could do alone and with Mom
- Helping Johnny understand COVID-19
  - Set period of time where Mom and Johnny talked about COVID
  - Social stories addressing one aspect at a time
- Restarted speech therapy via telehealth