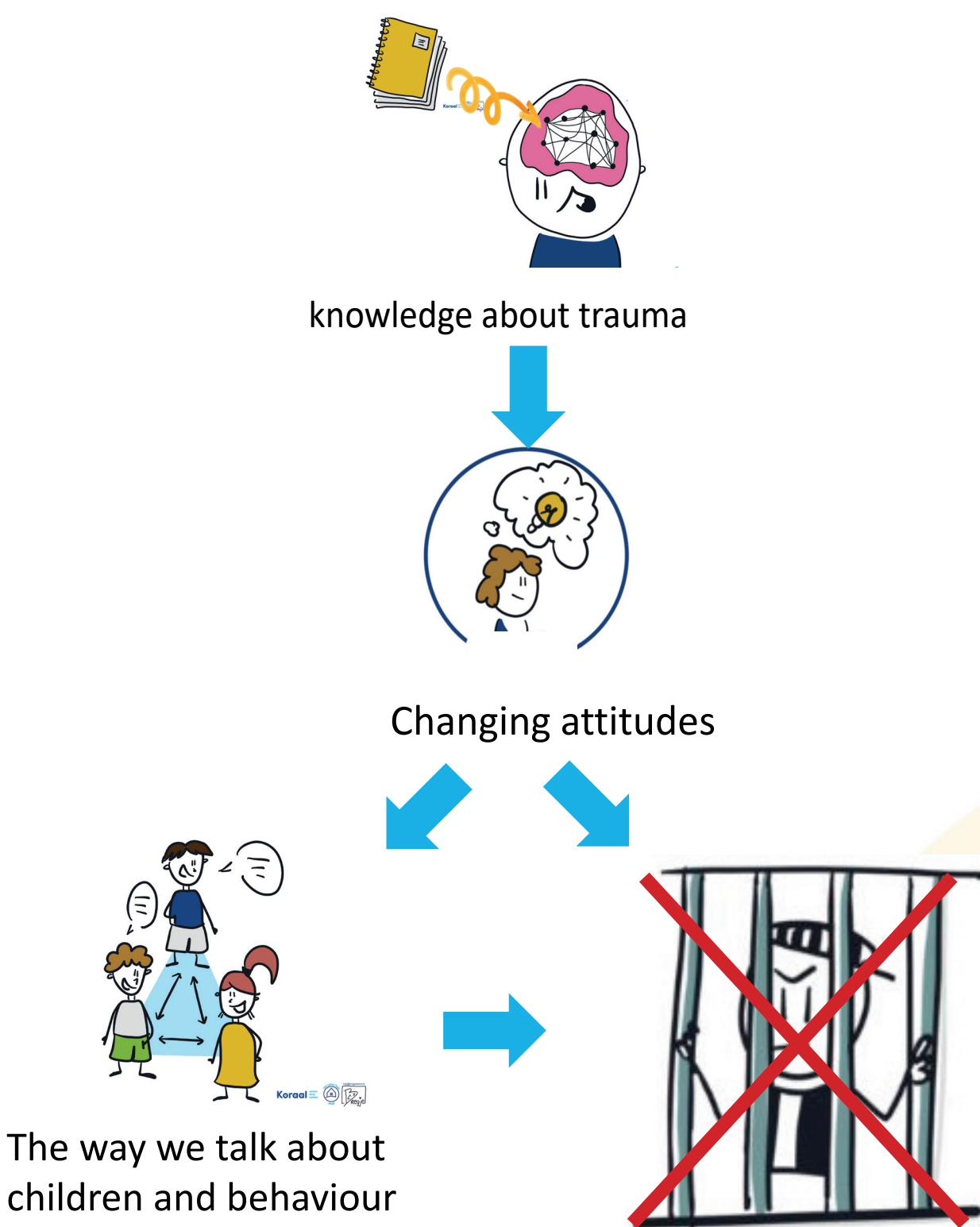


Reducing seclusion and restraint in youth care by increasing trauma-awareness

How increased staff knowledge about trauma-informed care leads to a change in attitude about coercive measures

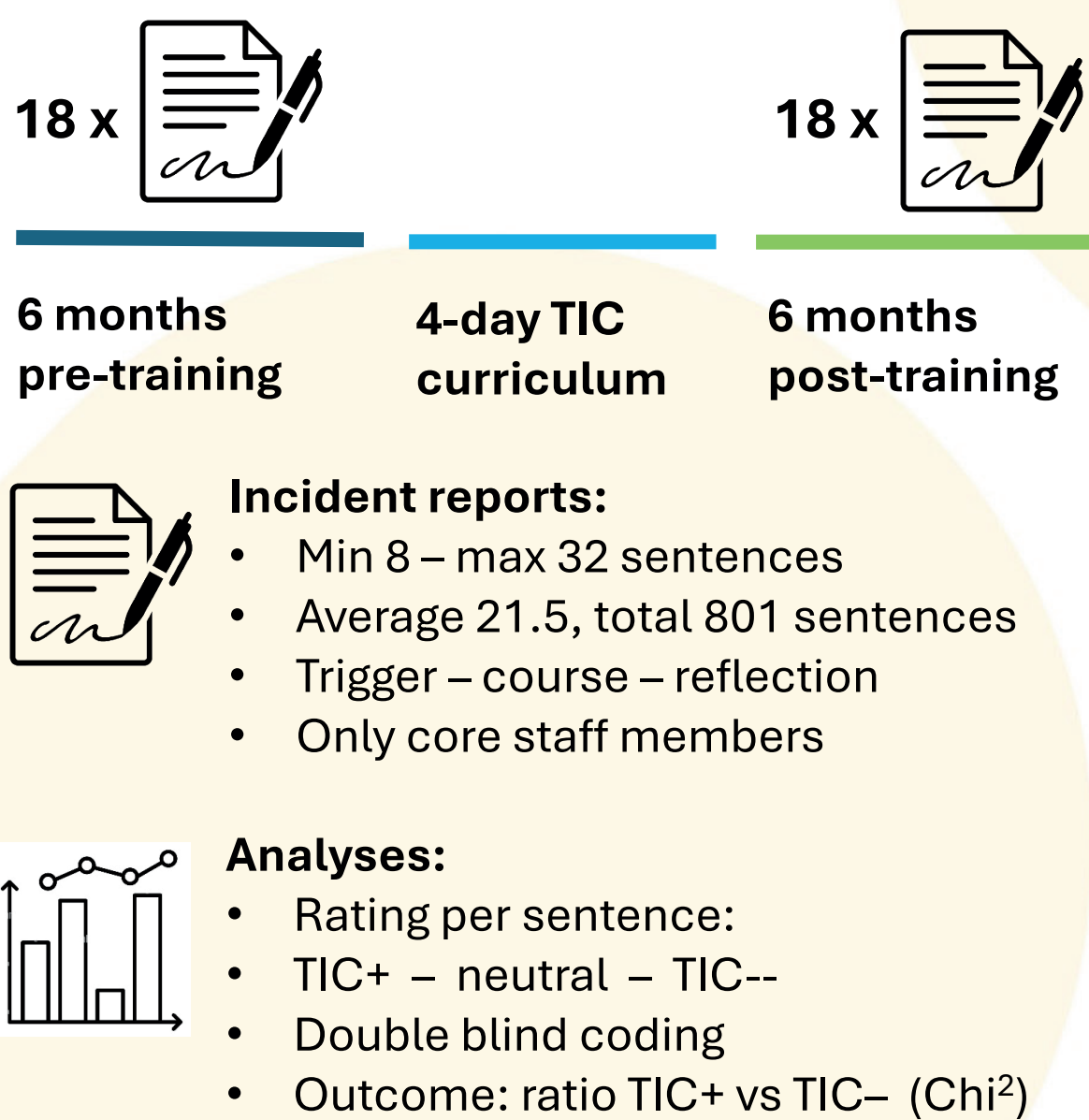
Premises:

- Incidence**
 - 90% of children in Dutch out-of-home youth care experienced at least 1 ACE; 20% experienced 4 or more ACEs (Vervoort et al., 2021).
 - In The Netherlands, coercive measures are applied to as much as 30%-60% of children living in residential care.
- Consequences**
 - Coercive measures can lead to injuries and death, feelings of victimization, loss of control, the re-experiencing of previous trauma, and PTSD.
 - As much as 46% of clients in psychiatric care who were subjected to coercive measures developed PTSD.
- Remedy**
 - Staff training on trauma and its consequences on (problematic) behaviour leads to different attitudes towards coercion and offers less-repressive treatment alternatives for staff who face client aggression.
 - At Koraal, an extensive trauma learning curriculum is part of ongoing organisation-wide efforts to implement trauma-informed care (TIC).
- Study goal**
 - To investigate whether TIC training leads to a change in staff attitudes and practices in regard to the use of coercive measures.



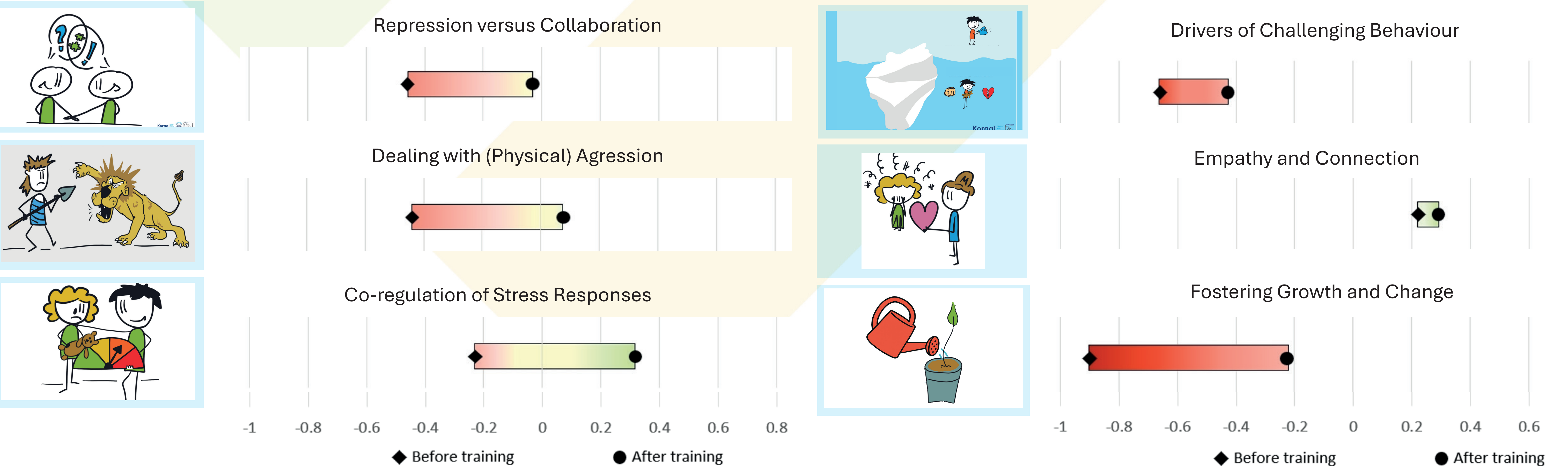
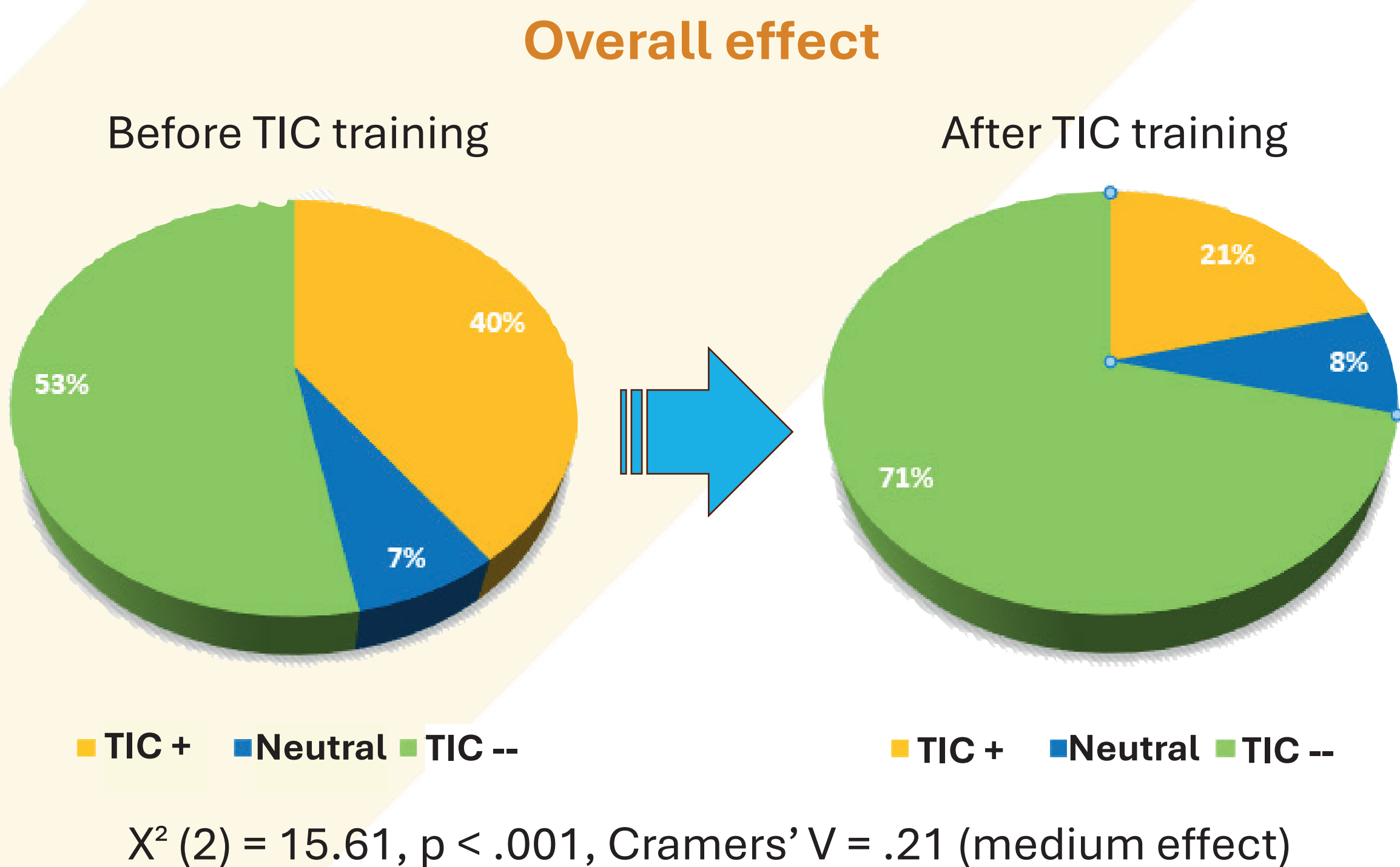
Methods:

- Study site**
 - This study was conducted at Koraal Youth, a multi-site organisation for the treatment of children and youth with intellectual disabilities and borderline intellectual functioning.
- Units of analysis**
 - Incident reports on the use of seclusion and restraint were analysed qualitatively. In these detailed reports, staff describe how and why seclusion and/or restraint had been applied. 36 reports, consisting of 801 lines of codeable text, were analysed.
 - In the course of analysis, a 6-theme coding framework emerged (see Results).
 - All lines were coded as being ‘TIC-favourable’, ‘neutral’ or ‘TIC-unfavourable’ under one or more of the coding themes.
 - We compared incident reports that predated the TIC training curriculum with reports filed after teams were trained.



Results:

- Overall**
 - Results showed a general but modest positive shift towards more trauma-sensitive attitudes and responses in managing challenging behavior.
 - We observed more collaboration, less repression, and a tendency to stay connected, even in times of distress and aggression.
- By theme**
 - Significant positive shifts were identified for the themes Repression versus Collaboration, Dealing with (Physical) Aggression and Co-regulation of Stress Responses.
 - No such shifts were observed for the subthemes Fostering Growth and Change, Drivers of Challenging Behavior and Empathy and Connection.
 - For all themes, room for improvement remained after training.



Interpretation:

- Professionals have started to realise and recognise the impact of trauma on behaviour.
- But they have yet to learn how to put the newly acquired knowledge into practice.
- Especially in heated, high-pressure situations!



Call to action:

- Both researchers and the professionals involved stress that more opportunities for coaching, intervention and supervision should be offered to translate knowledge into practice.
- Training and psycho education to support stress and emotion regulation skills is needed. For children, parents AND staff (so everyone can stay calm under stress!)

