



Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years). These negative experiences affect a child's brain and health as they grow into adults. Also included are aspects of the child's environment that can undermine their sense of safety, stability, and bonding. Examples include:

ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Caregiver with Mental Illness



Divorce or Separation



Mother Treated Violently



Incarcerated Relative



Caregiver with Substance Abuse

The examples above are not a complete list of adverse experiences. Many other traumatic experiences could impact health and well-being. This can include not having enough food to eat, experiencing homelessness or unstable housing, or experiencing discrimination.

The Impact of ACEs

Hope is the belief that the future will be better and you have the power to make it so.

-Dr. Chan Hellman, Leading Researcher in Hope Science



CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS*

Coronary heart disease • Stroke • Asthma
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
Cancer • Kidney Disease • Diabetes • Obesity



MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS*

Depression • Anxiety
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder



HEALTH RISK BEHAVIORS*

Smoking • Heavy drinking or alcoholism
Substance misuse • Physical inactivity • Risky sexual behavior • Suicidal thoughts & behavior



SOCIAL OUTCOMES*

Lack of health insurance • Unemployment • Less than a high school diploma or equivalent education

*Not an exhaustive list

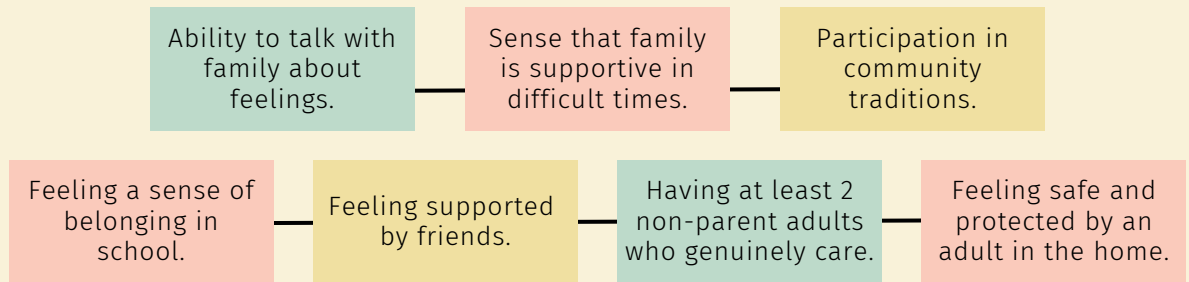
There is hope. Positive Childhood Experiences can buffer adversity

LEARN MORE



Positive Childhood Experiences

Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) come from safe, nurturing relationships and environments, helping protect children from trauma, toxic stress, and ACEs. Parents, caregivers, and community members play a key role in creating spaces where children feel safe and supported.



The more PCEs a child has, the more likely they are to be healthy and resilient.

Stress Busters

Managing stress can help you live a healthier, longer life. Stress Busters are seven proven ways to reduce daily stress and counter toxic stress from Adverse Childhood Experiences. They improve brain health, boost immunity, and balance stress hormones. See which ones work for you!



SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Who helps you? Support from others lowers our stress hormones and helps us live longer! Reach out to friends and relatives who support you.



QUALITY SLEEP

Get quality sleep. Experiencing stressful events can put our body on high alert, making it hard to sleep. Have a relaxing sleep routine, use stress-reduction strategies such as a nightlight, journaling, music, or a mindfulness app.



BALANCED NUTRITION

Consider how stress may be impacting what you eat. Satisfy cravings for sweets and fats with healthier choices (like peanuts, bananas, grapes). Eat with friends and family.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Get your body moving. Release stress energy with physical activity. Even 5- to 10-minute bursts of activity can help. Aim to get 30 minutes of physical activity at least 5 times every week.



EXPERIENCING NATURE

Spending time outside and in nature can lower our heart rate, blood pressure, and stress hormone levels. Choose trees over TV! Go to a park or playground. Take a walk just to get fresh air.



MINDFULNESS PRACTICES

Practice mindfulness. Being aware and present in the moment without judgment can lower our stress. Take moments throughout the day to notice how you are feeling, both physically and emotionally.



MENTAL HEALTHCARE

Find ways to use the stress busters every day, practice gratitude, focus on activities that provide meaning and purpose in your life, and take time throughout the day to pause to take a few slow, deep breaths.