

What are ACEs?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that can dramatically upset a child's sense of safety and well-being.

In the mid-1990s, more than 17,000 adult members of the Kaiser Permanente health plan in San Diego, California, were surveyed about exposure to **10 types of childhood trauma:**

ABUSE	Physical, Emotional, Sexual
NEGLECT	Physical, Emotional
HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION	Substance Abuse, Incarcerated Family Member, Mental Illness, Battered Mother, Separation/Divorce

The results, combined with initial physical exams and long-term tracking of members' health, showed a strong link between ACEs and negative social, behavioral, medical and mental health outcomes later in life.

The Central Iowa ACEs 360 Steering Committee is made up of representatives from more than 10 organizations dedicated to addressing adverse childhood experiences in Iowa. Since its formation in 2011, the committee has led efforts to collect Iowa ACEs data, raise awareness of the life-long impact of childhood trauma, and support efforts to prevent and reduce the effects of ACEs.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

A New Way of Understanding Adult Health Risks in Iowa

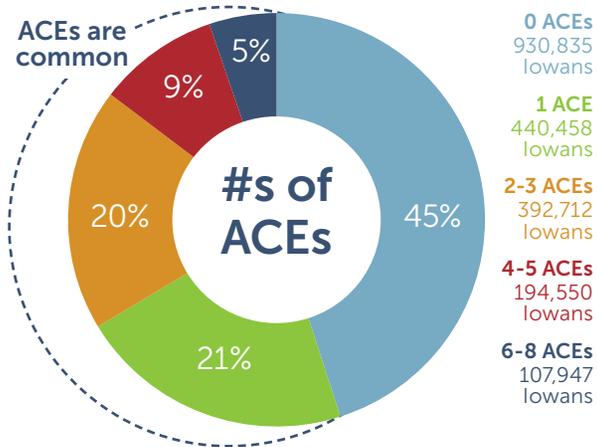


learn more at
iowaaces360.org



ACES IN IOWA

A 2012 study surveyed Iowa adults on whether they experienced eight types of abuse and household dysfunction prior to age 19. The results were compared with a person's current health status. The findings are similar to the original ACE Study.



When not addressed, ACEs can impact lifelong wellbeing. Adults with four or more ACEs compared to those with 0 ACEs were more likely to:

Report poor health	2.3x as likely
Have clinical depression	5x as likely
Smoke cigarettes	1.5x as likely
Have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	4x as likely
Have heart disease	3x as likely
Have diabetes	2x as likely

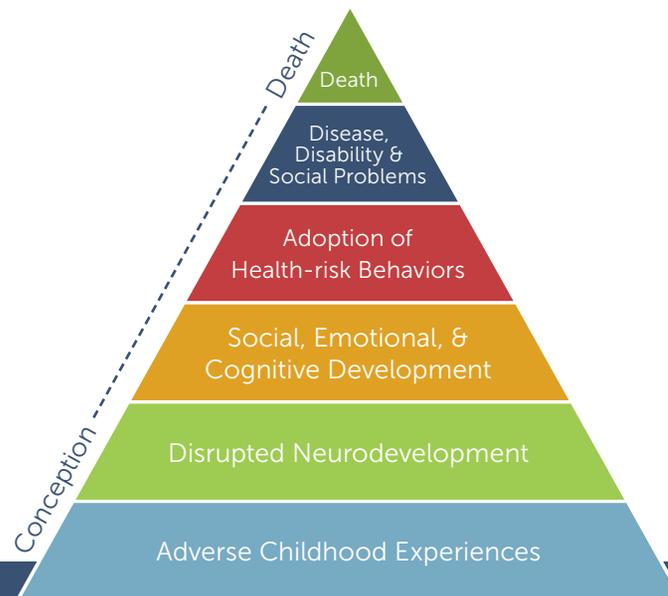
IMPACT OF ACES

Learning to cope with stress is an important part of child development. If we feel threatened, our bodies help us respond by increasing stress hormones, which raise our heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tone.

When a young child experiences stress within an environment of supportive adult relationships, the effects of stress are buffered and brought back down to baseline easily. This helps a child develop a healthy response to stress.

When a child experiences strong, frequent and/or prolonged adversity without adequate adult support, that child's stress response system remains on at all times. This high level of stress can disrupt the development of the brain and other organs and increase the risk for poor health, learning and social outcomes.

The ACEs pyramid shows how adversity in childhood can impact development and lead to poor outcomes. As the pyramid's shape suggests, ACEs don't guarantee bad outcomes, but can increase their likelihood.



CALL TO ACTION

With support, caregivers can build the safe, nurturing environments children need for healthy development. Through treatment and compassion, we can lessen the impact of ACEs on people's lives. Here's how you can help:

- Learn more about ACEs and share this information with others.
- Request services that can help you build resilience and reduce ACEs impact on your well-being. Call 211 for local resources.
- Respond to others with better understanding by considering what happened instead of what is wrong with someone.
- Help provide safe, stable and nurturing environments for the children you touch in your professional and personal roles.
- Advocate for strategies that help caregivers build resilience, parenting knowledge and access to resources.
- Integrate a trauma-informed approach within your organization.

The findings of The ACE Study "are all statistics that we have experienced on a personal level. I think the compelling thing is that we can intervene early. It's not just if, we must intervene early to put the proper protocols in place so these kids have a chance. It's not just changing an outcome; it's changing a life."

– Kirsten, mother of two adopted sons