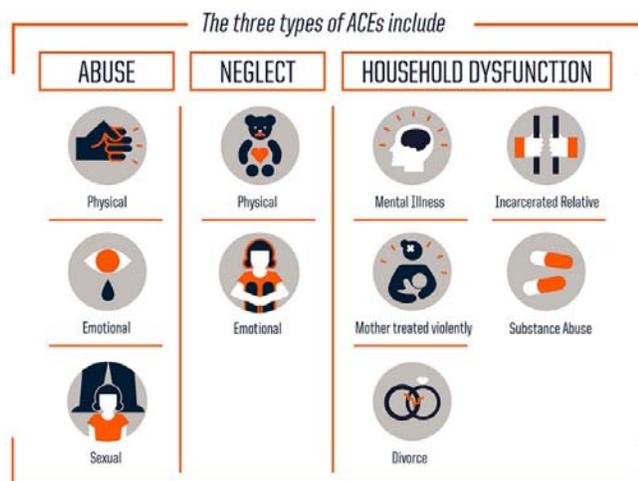


Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse childhood experiences, known as ACEs, are traumatic or stressful incidents that can lead to serious consequences with child development. In addition to physical, sexual or emotional abuse, ACEs include physical and emotional neglect, or growing up in a dysfunctional home with domestic violence, substance abuse, mental illness, parental separation or an incarcerated family member.

Published in 1998, The ACEs Study provided groundbreaking understanding. The study, which is still ongoing, is a collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta and the Kaiser Permanente health system in San Diego. The results are based on survey responses gathered from 1995-97 among more than 17,000 Kaiser Health Plan members.

The results were startling. Researchers found that ACEs are common. Nearly two-thirds of respondents reported at least one ACE, and more than 20 percent reported three or more. The study also established a link between ACEs and a wide range of health and social outcomes, including depression, smoking, illicit drug use and alcoholism.



Adult Health in Louisiana

- **24 percent** of Louisiana adults smoke compared to 17.8 percent nationally
- **17 percent** do not have health insurance compared to 13.4 percent nationwide
- **35 percent** of adults are obese – the nation's fourth highest rate
- **11 percent** of adult are diagnosed with diabetes compared to 9.3 percent nationally
- **40 percent** of adults have hypertension compared to 33 percent nationally

Centers for Disease Control, Trust for America's Health

The number of ACEs each participant experienced was compared with physical and mental evaluations. Researchers established an ACE score based on the number of categories each participant experienced. Among their findings:

- Those with an ACE score of 4 were twice as likely to become smokers and seven times more likely to develop alcoholism.
- An ACE score of 6 or higher results in a 30-fold increase in attempted suicide.
- Those with ACEs were also more likely to be affected by adolescent pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and intimate partner violence.

As the number of ACEs increase, so does the likelihood of emotional, cognitive, physical and behavioral challenges that often lead to other problems such as learning delays, adopting health-risk behaviors and lost productivity.

ACEs impact lifelong health and wellbeing:

- Adults with at least four ACEs were twice as likely to rate their health poorly compared to adult with no ACEs
- Those who experience a high number of ACEs reported five to seven bad health days each month compared to one to three days for adults with no ACEs
- Those with four or more ACEs were nearly five times as likely to be diagnosed with clinical depression compared to those with no ACEs
- People with high ACE scores are more likely to be violent, have more divorces and multiple marriages, suffer more broken bones, have more drug prescriptions, experience more depression and have more autoimmune diseases
- People with an ACE score of 6 or higher are at risk of their shortening their lifespan by 20 years

