



# The ACE Study

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The ACE Study

# The ACE Study

“The solution of all adult problems tomorrow depends in large measure upon the way our children grow up today.”  
 - Margaret Mead




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The ACE Study



The ACE Study links adverse (stressful) **early childhood experiences** to the risk of developing **our nation’s leading health and social problems.**




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The ACE Study

- Dr. Felitti in the 1980s- weight loss study
- Conducted by Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Health Plan
- 17,000 + adults
  - Solidly middle class
  - 75% had at least some college





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The ACE Study

### What Are ACEs?

Adverse Childhood Experiences



- ACEs are experiences in childhood that are unhappy, unpleasant, hurtful.




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The ACE Study

### What Are ACEs?

Adverse Childhood Experiences

**Two main areas of ACEs:**

- Child maltreatment
- Family dysfunction





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The ACE Study

Growing up in a household with:

- Recurrent physical abuse
- Recurrent emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional neglect
- Physical neglect
- An alcohol or drug abuser
- An incarcerated household member
- Someone who is chronically depressed, suicidal, institutionalized or mentally ill
- Mother being treated violently
- One or no parents

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The ACE Study



Study Findings

ACEs are common.

- 1/3 of adults have an ACE score of zero.
- 2/3 of adults have at least one ACE.




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The ACE Study



Study Findings

ACEs occur in clusters.

- If any ACE is present, there is an 87% chance at least one other ACE is present.




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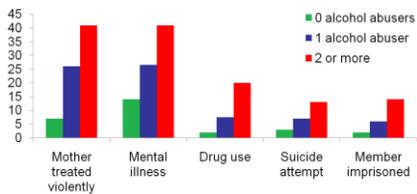
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The ACE Study

Alcohol Abuse in the Home and the Risk of Other Household Exposures During Childhood




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The ACE Study

Study Findings

- 25% of people have an ACE score of 1.
- 15% have an ACE score of 2.
- 10% have an ACE score of 3.
- 6% have an ACE score of 4.
- 11% have an ACE score of 5 or more.\*

\* Women are 50% more likely to have an ACE score of 5 or more.




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The ACE Study

The number of ACEs a person has determines their likelihood for developing the top ten risk factors for death in the United States.

- ACEs are the basis for many common public health problems.
- ACEs are strong predictors of later social functioning, well-being, health risks, disease, and death.




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The ACE Study

What are these risk factors?

- smoking
- severe obesity
- physical inactivity
- depression
- suicide attempt
- alcoholism
- illicit drug use
- injected drug use
- 50+ sexual partners
- history of STD

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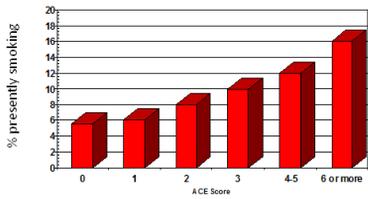
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ACEs vs. Smoking



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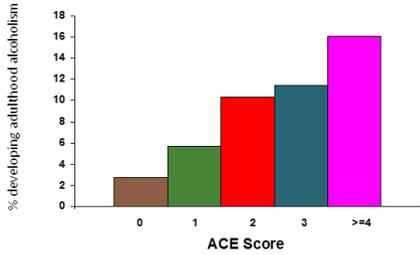
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ACEs vs. Adult Alcoholism



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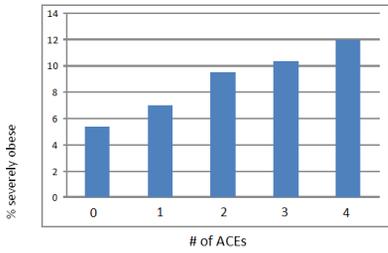
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ACEs vs. Severe Obesity



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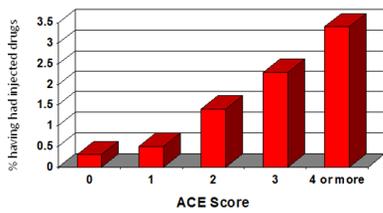
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ACEs vs. Intravenous Drug Use



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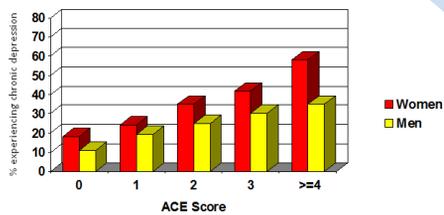
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ACEs vs. Chronic Depression



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# rumination

My thoughts about life →



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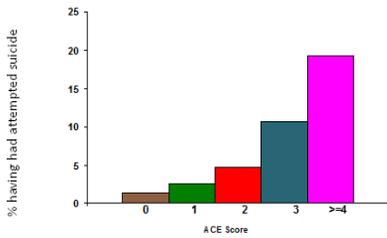
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ACEs vs. Attempted Suicide



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## The ACE Study

### Arizona is #1 in the experience of ACEs

- **26.4%** in Arizona have experienced 1 ACE
  - compared to 25.3% nationwide
- **31.1%** have experienced 2 or more ACEs
  - compared to 22.6% nationwide
- **60%** of children who are obese experienced 2 or more ACEs
- **55%** of children who miss **two or more weeks of school** have 2 or more ACEs
- **62%** of children who get held back a grade have 2 or more ACEs



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The ACE Study

## How and Why?

The ACE Study

- The behaviors underlying these adult conditions are actually **effective coping devices**.
- "Problem behaviors" are coping behaviors.





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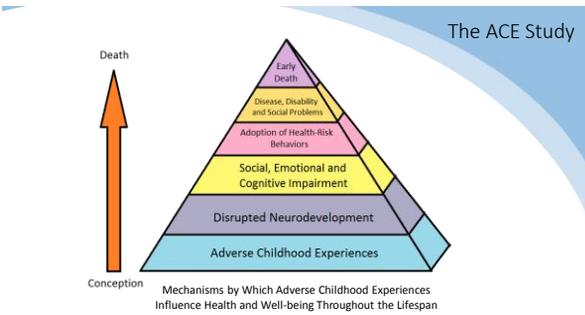
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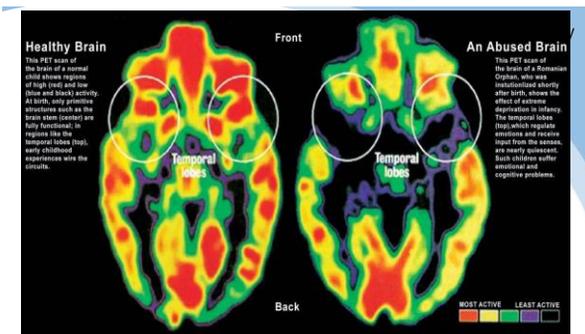
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The ACE Study

### What can we do?

We can all help reduce ACEs by promoting **Protective Factors**

**Protective factors** both work to **prevent ACEs from occurring** and to **promote resilience to the effects of ACEs.**




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### The Upstream Solution





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### Children in the River



- DCS receives about **3,700 reports** of child abuse and neglect every month
- DCS removes around **1,000 children** per month
- As of **December 2015**, there are **18,736 children** in out-of-home care (June 2008 – 9,148)

Source: Children's Action Alliance, azchildren.org




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### Cracking Boats, Tired Villagers

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SAFETY  
WORKLOAD PER AUTHORIZED AND FILLED POSITIONS COMPARED TO DCS STANDARD  
AS OF DECEMBER 2015

Category	Average Per Contract Standard	Average Per Authorized FTE	Average Per Current FTE
Investigations	13	14	23
In Home Cases	33	32	43
Out of Home Orders	20	22	30

DCS FY 2016 Budget:  
**\$847,515,800**

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### The Wind

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### The Hammer

The Carpenter

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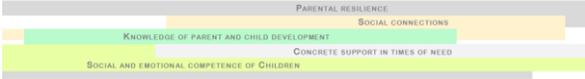
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### Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework

- The Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework is an approach to working with families is a way that **focuses on and develops their strengths.**
- Developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy with funding from Doris Duke Charitable Trust.




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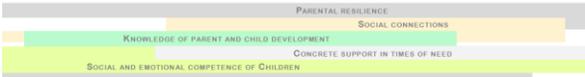
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### The Five Protective Factors

1. Parental Resilience
2. Social Connections
3. Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development
4. Concrete Support in Times of Need
5. Social and Emotional Competence of Children




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## Parental Resilience

Managing stress and functioning well when faced with challenges or adversity



**Prevent Child Abuse**  
Arizona

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### Social Connections

Positive relationships that provide emotional, informational, instrumental and/or spiritual support



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### Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Understanding human development and strategies that support physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development



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### Concrete Support in Times of Need

Access to concrete support and services that address a person's needs and helps minimize stress caused by challenges



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### Social and Emotional Competence of Children



Family and child interactions that help children develop the ability to communicate clearly, recognize and regulate their emotions, and establish and maintain relationships



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### The ACE Study

#### And another thing...

#### Be open to talking about difficult things.

Research shows that just asking about ACEs – significantly decreases doctor office visits and costs.



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### LEARN MORE:

[acestoohigh.com](http://acestoohigh.com)  
[strengtheningfamilies.net](http://strengtheningfamilies.net)

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