



# Adverse Childhood Experiences

# What is ACES?

- ▶ 1998 study asked middle class Americans about traumas experienced as a child
- ▶ Traumas include physical abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, having a parent in jail
- ▶ Developed as ACE score based on answers
- ▶ Score can be 0-10

# What is your ACES Score?

- ▶ Group exercise to take the test and produce your own score
- ▶ Can be found online at <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/03/02/387007941/take-the-ace-quiz-and-learn-what-it-does-and-doesnt-mean>

# ACES Studies in Alaska

- ▶ 2 Key Findings
  - ▶ Childhood trauma is far more common than previously realized
  - ▶ The impact of this trauma affects individuals over a lifetime and societies over generations

# ACES Scores in Alaska

ACES Score	Prevalence
0	33%
1	26%
2	16%
3	10%
4+	16%

# Select Negative Health Outcomes

- ▶ Medicaid
  - ▶ 40.6%
- ▶ Current Smoker
  - ▶ 32%
- ▶ Heavy Drinking
  - ▶ 20.5%
- ▶ Poor Physical Health
  - ▶ 33.2%

# Costs Associated with ACES

- ▶ Reduce smoking cost of \$576 million by 32% = \$186 million in savings
- ▶ Reduce substance abuse by 20% = \$350 million in savings
- ▶ Reduce Medicaid costs by 40.6% = \$350 million in savings
- ▶ Total = \$886 million in annual savings by preventing ACES

# Opportunities for Prevention

- ▶ Trauma-informed health care
- ▶ Trauma informed curriculum
- ▶ Raise awareness by distributing information related to ACES to state and local entities
- ▶ Increase community's ability to respond to, prevent, and address ACES
- ▶ Pilot programs to conduct Alaska based research



# Building a Statewide Movement

- ▶ 27 letters of support from organizations across the state
  - ▶ Alaska Children's Trust
  - ▶ Sealaska Heritage
  - ▶ Juneau Suicide Prevention Council
  - ▶ Alaska Mental Health Board & Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
  - ▶ Best Beginnings
  - ▶ Alaska Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health
  - ▶ Sunshine Community Mental Health Center

# ACES is About Connecting the Dots

- ▶ Understanding ACES brings together the professionals in the areas of early learning, mental health, substance abuse, pediatrics, behavioral health, domestic violence, and education
- ▶ Understanding ACES impact on early life and the age at which young Alaskans accumulate ACES (Young Alaskans have acquired half of ACES by age 3)
- ▶ Building awareness is part of the effort and can be accomplished without funding a new program
  - ▶ Sharing information this month for Child Abuse Prevention Month & Sexual Assault Awareness Month
  - ▶ Offering training opportunities for educators and practitioners or support groups for skill building at organizations
  - ▶ Create policy alternatives that can work for Alaska