

A Public Health Crisis: Adverse Childhood Experiences

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What are ACES?

- ▶ 1998 study asked middle class Americans about traumas experienced as a child
- ▶ Used 10 question quiz to assess exposure to trauma
- ▶ Developed as ACE score based on answers
- ▶ Score can be 0-10

What Kind of Childhood Trauma?

- ▶ Trauma in three categories: Abuse, Neglect, Household dysfunction
- ▶ Traumas in two categories for impact: things done to you and things done around you
- ▶ Traumas include physical abuse to person, sexual abuse to person, domestic violence to adult family member, having a parent in jail

What is your ACES Score?

- ▶ Group exercise to take the test and produce your own score
- ▶ Develop your own ACE score as a reference

ACES Studies in Alaska

► 2 Key Findings

- Childhood trauma is far more common, and more expensive, than previously realized
- The impact of this trauma affects individuals over a lifetime and societies over generations

Select Negative Health Outcomes

- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Drug abuse
- ▶ Fetal death
- ▶ Frequent headaches
- ▶ Hallucinations
- ▶ Insufficient sleep
- ▶ Sexual assault
- ▶ Teen pregnancy
- ▶ Low yearly income
- ▶ Medicaid participation
- ▶ Home ownership
- ▶ Separation and divorce
- ▶ Liver disease
- ▶ Intimate partner violence

Select Negative Health Outcomes

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

The Price of Not Intervening Before Trauma Occurs

- ▶ 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 = approximately \$900 million in annual savings by preventing ACES**

Overcoming ACES in Alaska Building a Statewide Movement

- ▶ Strong statewide support, including:
 - ▶ Alaska Children's Trust and Alaska Resilience Initiative
 - ▶ 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

Overcoming ACES in Alaska: Connecting people and policies

- ▶ In 2017, State OCS has 50 reports of child abuse or neglect a day
- ▶ Most ACES happen to Alaska kids by age 3
- ▶ Bring together the professionals in the areas of early learning, mental health, substance abuse, pediatrics, behavioral health, domestic violence, and education

Overcoming ACES in Alaska:

- ▶ Statewide policy needed for trauma-informed services
- ▶ Raise awareness about evidence-based programs to increase community's ability to respond to, prevent, and address ACES
- ▶ Pilot programs needed for Alaska-based research