What are ACEs?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are specific types of childhood experiences that include abuse, neglect, and other traumatic experiences that occur to individuals under the age of 18. Examples of ACEs include physical, sexual, or emotional abuse; neglect; and exposure to violence in the home.

How common are ACEs?

![Pie chart showing the percentage of people with different numbers of ACEs.](chart1.png)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of ACEs</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Types of ACEs

![Bar chart showing the distribution of ACEs.](chart2.png)

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Substance abuse
- Parental mental illness
- Parental criminal behavior
- Parental domestic violence
- Parental separation or divorce
- Other

How do ACEs affect our lives?

ACEs can have lasting effects on physical and mental health behaviors. They are associated with serious illness and premature death. The ACE Study showed dramatic links between adverse childhood experiences and risky behavior, psychological issues, and physical and mental health problems.

How do ACEs affect our society?

Life expectancy

People with a score of six or higher are 20 years younger on average than those without ACEs.

Economic toll

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that the lifetime costs associated with child maltreatment at the national level are $122 billion, of which $83.5 billion is economic loss.

What can be done about ACEs?

Strategies that address the needs of children and their families include:

- Nurturing relationships
- Parent support programs for teens and families with newborns
- Home visiting to pregnant women and parenting training programs
- Intimate partner violence prevention
- Social support for parents

References and resources

- Essentials for Childhood
- Economic Cost of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Welfare Information Gateway
- ACE Study

*Participants in the study reflected a cross-section of middle-class American adults.

**Having an ACE score of zero does not imply an individual was free of risk factors for these health behaviors.**