Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in California

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), ACEs 2013-2019

June 29, 2022
Viewpoints and thoughts shared are not necessarily representative of the California Department of Public Health, the California Department of Social Services, or the State of California.
Zoom Webinar Housekeeping

Minimize Distractions
Lines have been muted, but please chat the host if you wish to speak.

Engage and Participate!
Ask questions in the Q&A box.

Technical Issues
For any technical issues, please send a message directly to the host through the chat box.
Essentials for Childhood (EfC) Initiative
Mission & Vision

V
All California children, youth, and families thrive in safe, stable, nurturing relationships and communities where they live, work, and play.

M
Support and participate in mutually reinforcing activities and strategies across multiple agencies and stakeholders that optimize the health and well-being of all children in California.
Webinar Presenters

Beth Jarosz
Program Director

Nathan Porter
Senior Research Associate
Overview

• Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events that occur before age 18
  • Can disrupt brain development, alter the immune and endocrine systems, and change stress responses
  • Can negatively impact education, employment, earnings, and health outcomes over the life course
  • Experiencing 4+ ACEs is associated with increased risk for heart disease, stroke, cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diabetes, Alzheimer’s, and suicide

• ACE Study—by Kaiser Permanente and the CDC, 1995 to 1997:
  • ACEs are very common. Two-thirds of study participants experienced at least 1 ACE category, and one-eighth experienced 4+
  • Higher ACE scores are linked to higher risk of developing long-term health problems such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes
### Types of ACEs

#### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

ACEs are potentially traumatic childhood events that can result in toxic stress. Prolonged exposure to ACEs can create a toxic stress response, which can damage the developing brain and body of children, affect overall health, and cause long-term health problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abuse</th>
<th>Neglect</th>
<th>Household Challenges</th>
<th>Other Forms of Adversity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Physical (including food restriction)</td>
<td>Divorce &amp; family separation</td>
<td>Bullying &amp; violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Substance use</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>Untreated mental illness/suicidality</td>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>Inequality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Incarcerated relative</td>
<td>Infectious disease outbreak (pandemic) or medical trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Involvement in child welfare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above image was adapted from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.\(^5\)\(^{-12}\)\(^,13\)
New Data Report Partnership

Partners include the:
- California Department of Public Health, Injury and Violence Prevention Branch
- California Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention
- EfC Initiative Data Subcommittee
- Violence Prevention Initiative Steering Committee
- Office of the California Surgeon General
- KidsData
Differences From Previous Reports

- 13,983 respondents, a decline from more than 20,000 respondents in the 2011-2017 Report
  - Variation in the number of BRFSS respondents to the ACEs module between years
- Prevalence of specific ACEs are not comparable to prior data reports
  - In prior analyses, childhood emotional abuse was coded as "yes" only if it occurred more than once; in this analysis, it was coded as "yes" if it occurred one or more times
    - Change made to align with standard methods for coding the BRFSS ACEs module, as outlined by the CDC
    - Dichotomizes responses to show exposure status (follows the same response convention as other variables)
1. Did you live with anyone who was depressed, mentally ill, or suicidal?
2. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or an alcoholic? OR Did you live with anyone who used illegal street drugs or who abused prescription medications?
3. Did you live with anyone who served time or who was sentenced to serve time in a prison, jail, or other correctional facility?
4. Were your parents separated or divorced?
5. How often did your parents or adults in your home ever slap, hit, kick, punch or beat each other up?
6. How often did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt you in any way?
7. How often did a parent or adult in your home ever swear at you, insult you, or put you down?
8. How often did anyone at least 5 years older than you or who was an adult, ever touch you sexually, try to make you touch them sexually, or forced you to have sex?
Key Findings

BRFSS ACEs Module 2013-2019
Get the data
KidsData.org

- Data by Topic
- Data by Region
- Data by Demographic
- Data in Action
- KidsData News
2/3rds of California Adults Experienced at Least One Adverse Childhood Experience

Nearly 40% of California Adults Experienced Verbal Abuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACE Type</th>
<th>Adults in households with children</th>
<th>Adults in households without children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbally abused at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents separated or divorced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance abuse in household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically abused at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnessed domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental illness in household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually abused</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household member jailed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One in Five Hispanic/Latino Adults Experienced 4+ ACEs

ACEs by Race/Ethnicity

- **Asian**: 8% 4 or more ACEs, 42% 1-3 ACEs, 50% 0 ACEs
- **African American/Black**: 18% 4 or more ACEs, 56%[!] 1-3 ACEs, 27%[!] 0 ACEs
- **White**: 18% 4 or more ACEs, 49% 1-3 ACEs, 34% 0 ACEs
- **Hispanic/Latino**: 20% 4 or more ACEs, 50% 1-3 ACEs, 30% 0 ACEs

**Note**: [!] indicates a margin of error between 5 and 10 percentage points.

Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Adults Have Nearly Double the Rate of 4+ ACEs

ACEs by Sexual Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Orientation</th>
<th>4 or more ACEs</th>
<th>1-3 ACEs</th>
<th>0 ACEs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual/Straight</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual</td>
<td>33%[!]</td>
<td>50%[!]</td>
<td>17%[!]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: [!] indicates a margin of error between 5 and 10 percentage points.

Adults With Highest Level of Education Have Lowest Rate of 4+ ACEs

ACEs by Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>4 or more ACEs</th>
<th>1-3 ACEs</th>
<th>0 ACEs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least 4-year degree</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not finish high school</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adults With Highest Income Have Lowest Rate of 4+ ACEs

ACEs by Annual Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>0 ACEs</th>
<th>1-3 ACEs</th>
<th>4 or more ACEs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 or higher</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$49,999</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $25,000</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: [!] indicates a margin of error between 5 and 10 percentage points.
More Than One in Five Adults With Medi-Cal or Uninsured Have 4+ ACEs

ACEs by Primary Health Insurance

- Medicare
  - 4 or more ACEs: 14%
  - 1-3 ACEs: 46%
  - 0 ACEs: 40%

- Private insurance
  - 4 or more ACEs: 17%
  - 1-3 ACEs: 50%
  - 0 ACEs: 34%

- None (uninsured)
  - 4 or more ACEs: 21%
  - 1-3 ACEs: 48%
  - 0 ACEs: 31%

- Medi-Cal
  - 4 or more ACEs: 22%
  - 1-3 ACEs: 49%
  - 0 ACEs: 29%

Poll: How Many Sources of ACEs Data Can You Find on KidsData.org?
Poll Answer: Four

• BRFSS (adult retrospective)
• MIHA (maternal retrospective)
• NSCH (adult report on child experiences)
• Family Experiences During the COVID-19 Pandemic (adult report on child experiences and adult retrospective)
Stay up to date:

KidsData.org
Find data about the health and well-being of children in communities across California:

Enter a location and/or a topic, e.g., "Los Angeles foster care"
See Data by Topic

Make a selection:
(Expand all)

- Child and Youth Safety
  - Children with Special Health Care Needs
  - Demographics
  - Education & Child Care
  - Emotional & Behavioral Health
  - Environmental Health
  - Family Economics
  - Physical Health
Select a region:
(Expand all | Collapse all)

California (State-level Data)
- Legislative Districts
  - State Assembly Districts
  - State Senate Districts
  - U.S. Congressional Districts
- Counties, Cities and School Districts
  - Alameda County
  - Alpine County
  - Amador County
  - Butte County
Sneak preview!

Video draft not yet approved for distribution.

Photo by Manos Gkikas via Unsplash
Summary: ACEs Are Common

• Data suggests ACEs are common in California
  • 2/3rds of adult BRFSS respondents in CA experienced 1+ ACEs before age 18
  • 17% experienced 4+ ACEs

• Experiencing 4+ ACEs is more common among certain groups in CA
  • Hispanic/Latino
  • Those with lower household incomes
  • Those with Medi-Cal or no health care coverage
  • Those who do not identify as heterosexual
Next Steps

• Primary prevention efforts include interventions that create social norm change and policies that strengthen economic support for families
  • Examples:
    • California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC)
    • Paid Family Leave (PFL)

• For more information about strategies that create change and improve the lives of children, please see the CDC’s Technical Package
Additional Resources and Tools

• PACEs Connection
  • Map the Movement (shinyapps.io) includes information on U.S. states that have completed ACE surveys

• CDC Website on ACEs
• KidsData
• EfC Initiative Resources
• American Academy of Pediatrics
• ACEs Aware
• Office of the Surgeon General
  • Surgeon General’s Report on ACEs and Toxic Stress
Questions?
Complete the Webinar Evaluation

We Value Your Feedback!

Respond via the chat survey link in chat or the below QR Code

Please complete by COB, June 30th
Thank You!
Sources


References


References


16. CDC, Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences: Leveraging the Best Available Evidence.


