



DIGITAL DIALOGUE

TRAUMA & RESILIENCE



Are the words “toxic stress” toxic?



**Center for the
Study of Social Policy**

Ideas into Action



Speakers

*Join the National
Conversation
on Child Abuse
and Neglect*



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While some stress is normal and can have a positive effect, severe chronic stress can trigger a toxic stress response.



Learn more: Center on the
Developing Child
<http://developingchild.harvard.edu/>

Positive Stress


Moderate and brief. When a young child is protected by **supportive relationships with adults**, she learns to cope with everyday challenges and her stress response returns to baseline. *Example: sports*

Tolerable Stress

Occurs when more serious difficulties, such as the loss of a loved one, a natural disaster, or frightening injury, are **buffered by caring adults**. *Example: death of a relative*

Toxic Stress

When strong, frequent or prolonged adverse experiences such as extreme poverty or repeated abuse are experienced **without adult support**, a physiological “toxic stress response” can occur.



* Knowledge
about the impact
of early trauma
and toxic stress is
expanding

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**Risk factors
are not
predictive factors
because of
protective factors.**

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What do you associate with the word “toxic”?

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Permanent

Blame

Damaged

Harmful

Broken

Unfixable

Dangerous

Unclean

Contagious

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What words should be anchoring our work with families?

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Prevention

Root causes

Healing & Recovery

Inequality

Buffering

Protective factors

Resilience

Thriving

Family support

Trauma and Toxic Stress:

Shifting the Conversation

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- It needs to be about more than *understanding* and *intervening*. It's equally important to:
 - ✓ Tackle root causes of stress.
 - ✓ Help parents and caregivers buffer their children from toxic stress responses.
 - ✓ Build protective factors in families and communities.
 - ✓ Celebrate, research, and promote resilience and thriving.
 - ✓ Build community-level strategies to support families, reduce and address adversity, and promote healing.



+2 DEFINING TOXIC STRESS FROM A COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

+3 ABOUT THE FRAMEWORK: WHY IT'S NEEDED AND HOW TO USE IT

+6 EXAMPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

WORKING TOWARD Well-Being COMMUNITY APPROACHES TO TOXIC STRESS

An issue brief from the Early Childhood-LINC Learning Lab on Community Approaches to Toxic Stress convened by the Center for the Study of Social Policy.

www.cssp.org

About the Early Childhood-LINC Learning Lab on Community Approaches to Toxic Stress

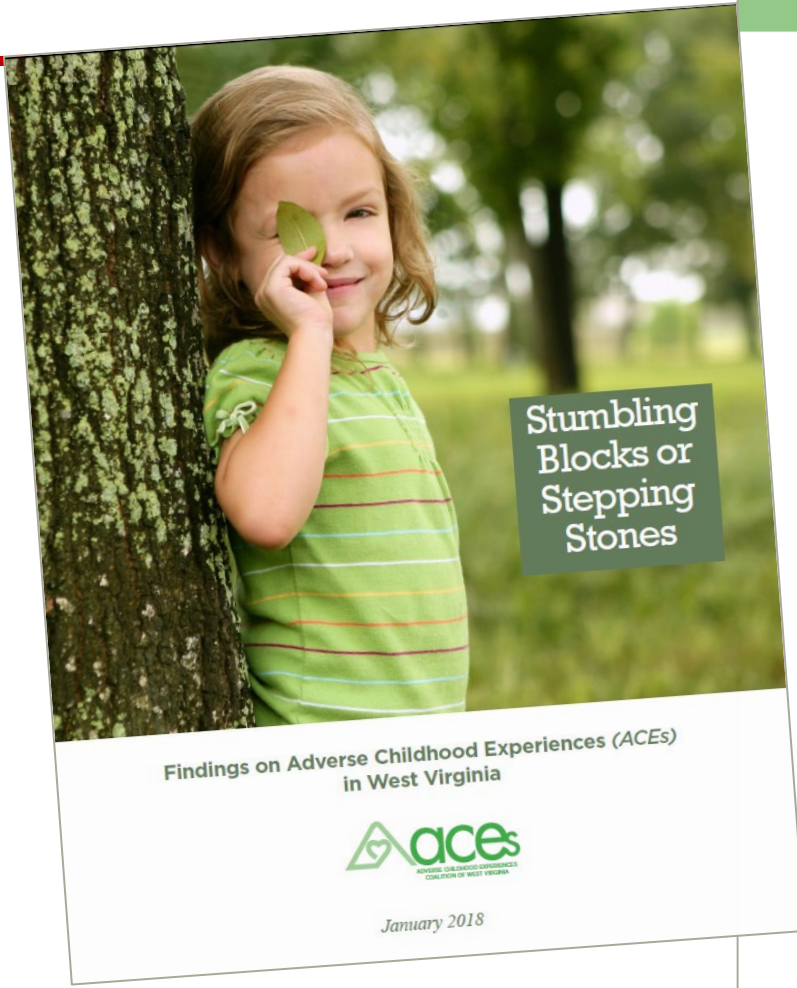
Early Childhood-LINC is a learning and innovation network for communities—a network of communities that have come together with CSSP to demonstrate effective approaches to developing local early childhood systems. Together, the participating communities tackle tough problems, test new solutions and accelerate progress toward securing that all young children and their families thrive.

Learning labs are a process by which leaders from Early Childhood-LINC communities share expertise and local experiences and develop recommendations for action. Over a period of six to eight months, leaders talk regularly, pool ideas, and refine their recommendations about how to improve services, programs, and

In recent years, significant attention has been paid to the concept of toxic stress and the impact of adverse experiences in childhood on lifelong health and development. As scientific understanding continues to grow, community leaders are searching for ways to prevent and respond to toxic stress in the lives of young children and their families as part of their broader efforts to achieve healthy development and well-being for all children. Leaders from six communities worked together in 2015 with the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) through its the Early Childhood-LINC Learning Lab on Community Approaches to Toxic Stress (see sidebar) to learn from each other's experiences, discuss the challenges and opportunities they face and generate ideas to improve the response to toxic stress in their own communities and in others.

This issue brief distills the experiences and recommendations of leaders from these six communities and from CSSP. It provides:

- ◆ A definition of toxic stress from a community perspective
- ◆ A framework for a comprehensive community approach to toxic stress, nested within the broader context of working toward healthy development and well-being
- ◆ Practical examples of how member communities of the Early Childhood-LINC network are taking action
- ◆ Recommendations for next steps to promote and further develop



Introduction

In West Virginia, we care about each other, and we want our children to have long, healthy, happy lives. We all want our children to reach their fullest potential.

We know that our earliest experiences as children are critical in shaping who we become as adults. Positive experiences in childhood can build a strong foundation for learning, strengthen brain development and help us be healthier.

A growing body of research shows that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma also have a profound impact and can be a stumbling block to our health and well-being. When negative experiences outweigh positive experiences, it can lead to a physiological response in our bodies, which increases risks of many health issues.

The good news is that research also confirms that the presence of protective factors can buffer the impact of ACEs, so that adversity in childhood does not need to remain a stumbling block, but can be transformed into a stepping stone for a healthy, successful life.

This Issue Brief highlights the linkages between high ACE scores and common contemporary health problems facing West Virginians, including the ongoing opioid epidemic. More importantly, the Issue Brief also highlights effective strategies and protective factors that help prevent childhood adversity and build resilience for those who have experienced trauma.

We know that opportunity and adversity are not equally distributed across our population. Too many families are facing trauma and adversity on a daily basis and have experienced ACEs during their childhoods. We must work to enact policies and implement strategies that build protective factors that can counterbalance the effects of adversity and produce better outcomes, as well as preventing ACEs from occurring in the first place.

<https://www.wvaces.org/>



A photograph of a man and a young girl embracing outdoors. The man is on the left, wearing a brown sweater, and the girl is on the right, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and a white bow in her hair. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The background is a soft-focus bokeh of green and yellow light. A large, semi-transparent white circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing text.

Discussion

- Please type questions into the chat box

Resources

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- A Guide to Toxic Stress:
<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/guide/a-guide-to-toxic-stress/>
- Working Toward Well-Being: Community Approaches to Toxic Stress:
<https://cssp.org/resource/working-toward-well-being-community-approaches-to-toxic-stress-2/>
- Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework: <https://cssp.org/our-work/project/strengthening-families/>
- West Virginia ACEs Report:
<https://www.wvaces.org/>

WE CAN – Work to End Child Abuse and Neglect

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twitter.com/cantasdcenter

All of the graphics are available for download on the CANTASD website:
<https://cantasd.acf.hhs.gov/we-can/>



Hashtags:

#WECANPreventChildAbuse

#NCAPM2019

#PreventionMonth

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21st National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect

April 24—26, 2019 * Join us via Live-Stream!

More information is available at nccan.acf.hhs.gov

cantasd.acf.hhs.gov



Thank You & Next Steps

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- Download the handouts to learn more. Click on the files in the “Handouts” box on your screen.
- Do you have innovative ideas, questions or concerns about trauma and resilience? Tell us about your work. Send an e-mail to **hello@CANTASD.org** with “Trauma and Resilience” in the subject line.

Upcoming:

*April 11th: Workforce
Well-being—Centering
Yourself to Better
Support Others*

*April 17th: Integrating
Mindfulness to
Support Well-Being
and Resiliency for
Those Working on
Child Abuse and
Neglect*

NCCAN April 24-26th

- *3 Plenary Sessions*
- *5 Master Sessions*