

# ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

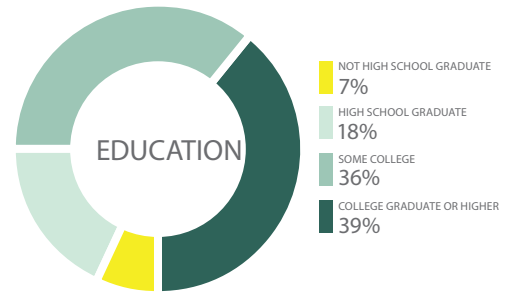
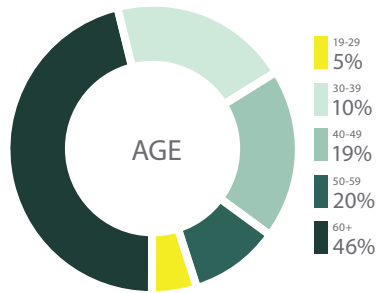
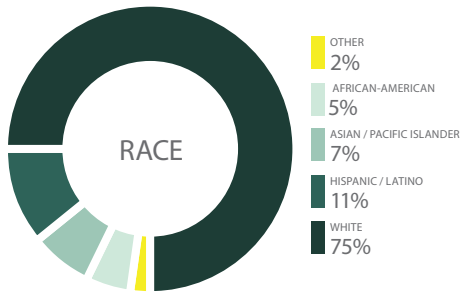
*— looking at how ACEs affect our lives & society —*

## WHAT ARE ACEs?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is the term given to describe all types of abuse, neglect, and other traumatic experiences that occur to individuals under the age of 18. The landmark Kaiser ACE Study examined the relationships between these experiences during childhood and reduced health and well-being later in life.

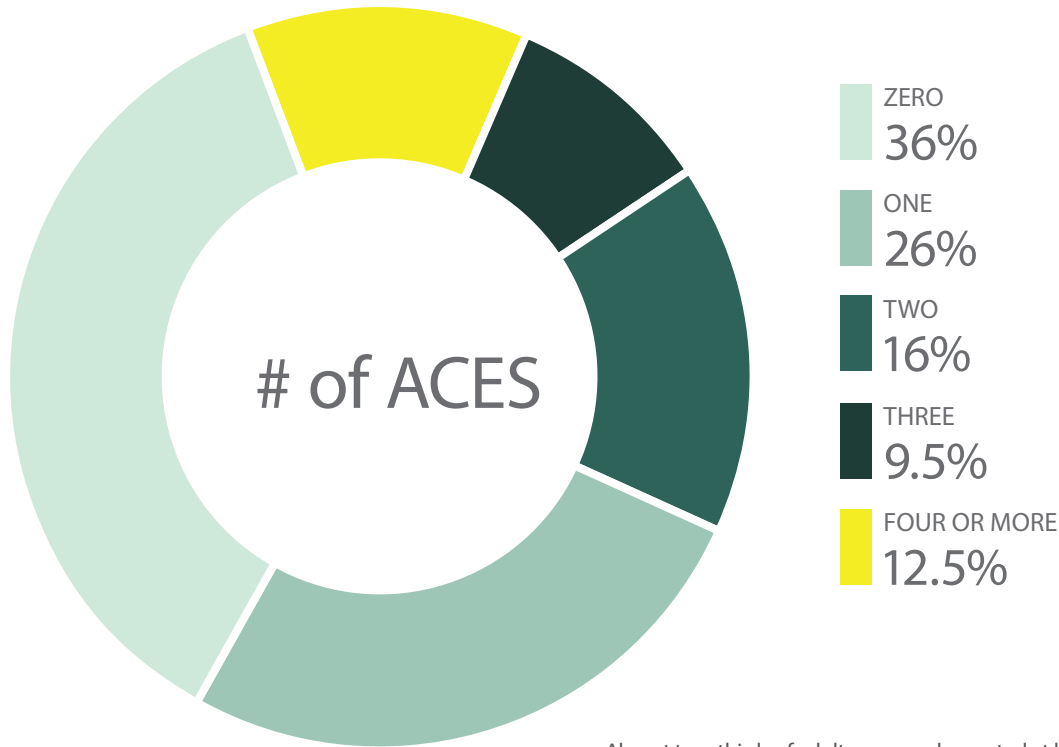
## WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE ACE STUDY?

Between 1995 and 1997, over 17,000 people receiving physical exams completed confidential surveys containing information about their childhood experiences and current health status and behaviors. The information from these surveys was combined with results from their physical exams to form the study's findings.



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

# HOW COMMON ARE ACES?

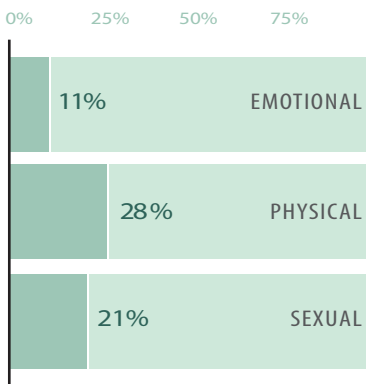


Almost two-thirds of adults surveyed reported at least one Adverse Childhood Experience – and the majority of respondents who reported at least one ACE reported more than one.

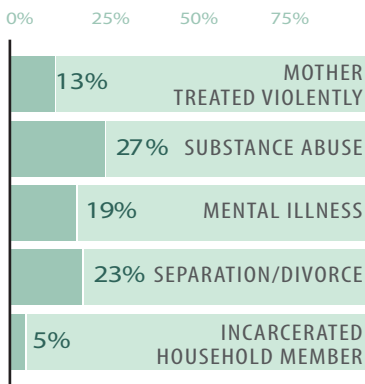
## TYPES of ACES

The ACE study looked at three categories of adverse experience: **childhood abuse**, which included emotional, physical, and sexual abuse; **neglect**, including both physical and emotional neglect; and **household challenges**, which included growing up in a household where there was substance abuse, mental illness, violent treatment of a mother or stepmother, parental separation/divorce or had a member of the household go to prison. Respondents were given an **ACE score** between 0 and 10 based on how many of these 10 types of adverse experience to which they reported being exposed.

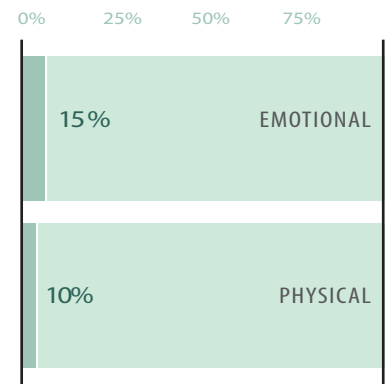
### ABUSE



### HOUSEHOLD CHALLENGES



### NEGLECT



# HOW DO ACES AFFECT OUR LIVES?

## ACES CAN HAVE LASTING EFFECTS ON BEHAVIOR & HEALTH...

Simply put, our childhood experiences have a tremendous, lifelong impact on our health and the quality of our lives. The ACE Study showed dramatic links between adverse childhood experiences and risky behavior, psychological issues, serious illness and **the leading causes of death**.

The following charts compare how likely a person with 1, 2, 3, or 4 ACEs will experience specified behaviors than a person without ACEs.

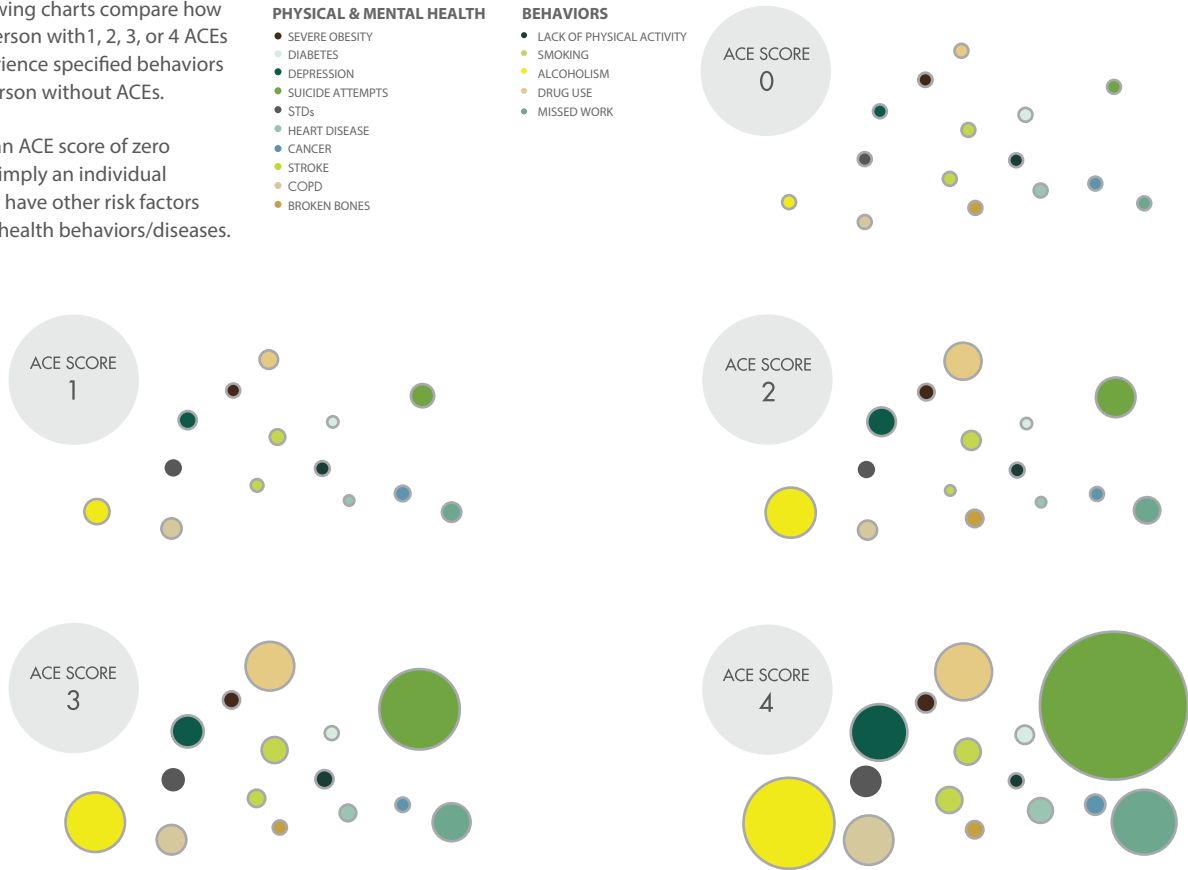
\*Having an ACE score of zero does not imply an individual could not have other risk factors for these health behaviors/diseases.

### PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH

- SEVERE OBESITY
- DIABETES
- DEPRESSION
- SUICIDE ATTEMPTS
- STDs
- HEART DISEASE
- CANCER
- STROKE
- COPD
- BROKEN BONES

### BEHAVIORS

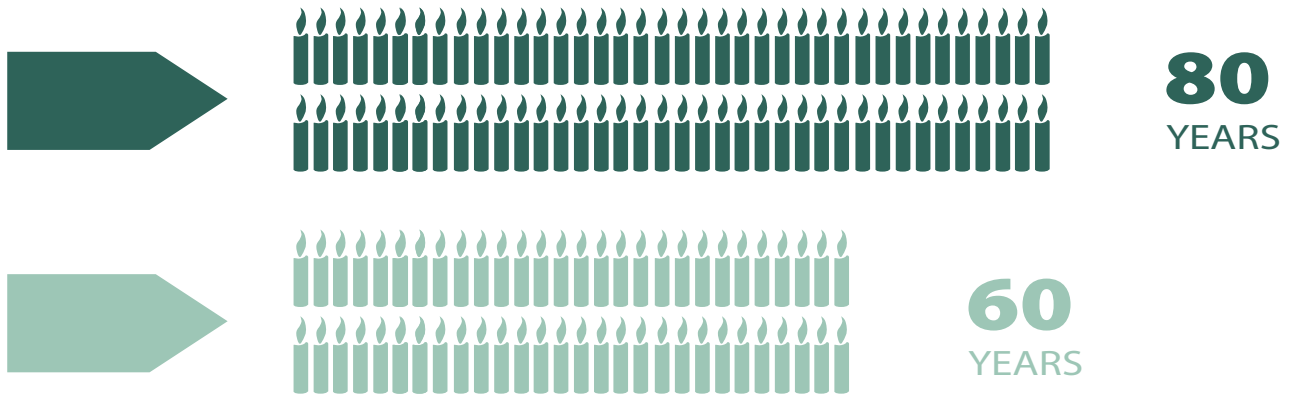
- LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- SMOKING
- ALCOHOLISM
- DRUG USE
- MISSED WORK



# HOW DO ACES AFFECT OUR SOCIETY?

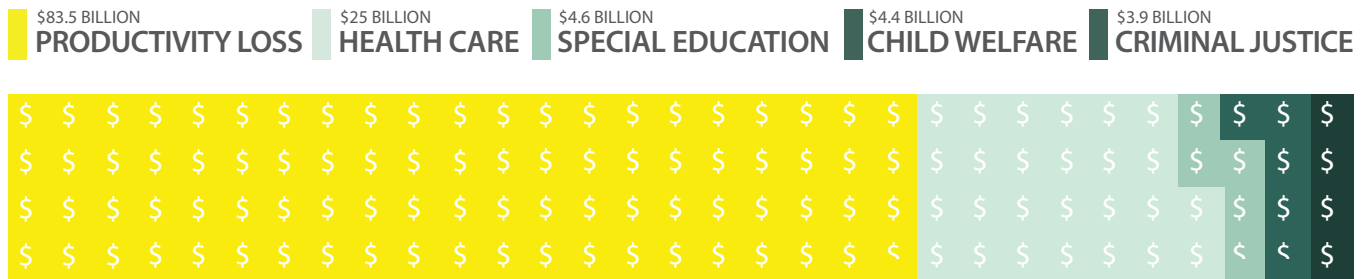
## LIFE EXPECTANCY

People with six or more ACEs died nearly **20 years earlier on average** than those without ACEs.

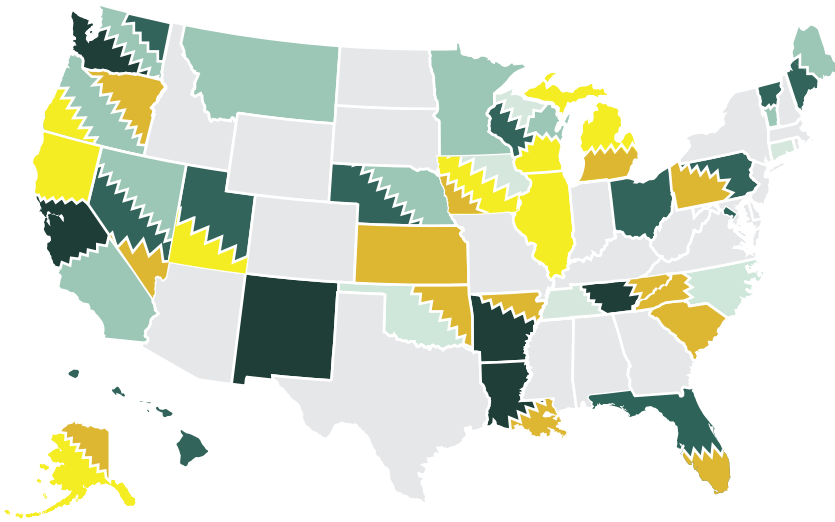


## ECONOMIC TOLL

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that the lifetime costs associated with child maltreatment at **\$124 billion**.



# THE ACE STUDY CONTINUES



- 2009  
AR, CA, LA, NM, TN, WA
- 2010  
DC, FL, HI, ME, NE, NV, OH, PA, UT, VT, WA, WI
- 2011  
CA, ME, MN, MT, NE, NV, OR, VT, WA, WI
- 2012  
CT, IA, NC, OK, TN, WI
- 2013  
AK, CA, IL, IA, MI, OR, UT, WI
- 2014  
AK, AR, FL, IA, KS, LA, NC, NV, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, WI

Although the study ended in 1997, some states are collecting information about ACEs in their population through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).

## What *can* Be Done About ACEs?

These wide-ranging health and social consequences underscore the importance of preventing ACEs before they happen. Safe, stable and nurturing relationships **and environments** (SSNRs) can have a positive impact on a broad range of health problems and on the development of skills that will help children reach their full potential. Strategies that address the needs of children and their families include:

Voluntary home visiting programs can help families by strengthening maternal parenting practices, the quality of the child's home environment, and children's development.  
Example: Nurse-Family Partnership



Home visiting to pregnant women and families with newborns



Parenting training programs



Intimate partner violence prevention



Social support for parents



Parent support programs for teens and teen pregnancy prevention programs



Mental illness and substance abuse treatment



High quality child care



Sufficient income support for lower income families

# REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

## REFERENCES

[ACE Study](#)

[Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)

[Economic Cost of Child Abuse and Neglect](#)

[Essentials for Childhood](#)

