

The impact to children from adverse parenting issues

Project ref. No. 2019-1-UK01-KA205-060936



ACEs

Adverse childhood experiences



What are ACEs ?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) include stressful and potentially traumatic events associated with higher risk of long-term behavioural problems and chronic illnesses.

Parents with greater exposure to ACEs are more likely to have children with behavioral health problems.

We can use adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) to predict early life behavioral problems and adult chronic illness risk and severity across the life span

[Parents' Adverse Childhood Experiences and Their Children's Behavioral Health Problems | American Academy of Pediatrics \(aappublications.org\)](#)



Positive Stress

The body's normal and healthy stress response to a tense situation/event.

Example:

First day of school or work.

Tolerable Stress

Activation of the body's stress response to a long-lasting or severe situation/event.

Example:

Loss of family member, but with supportive buffers in place.

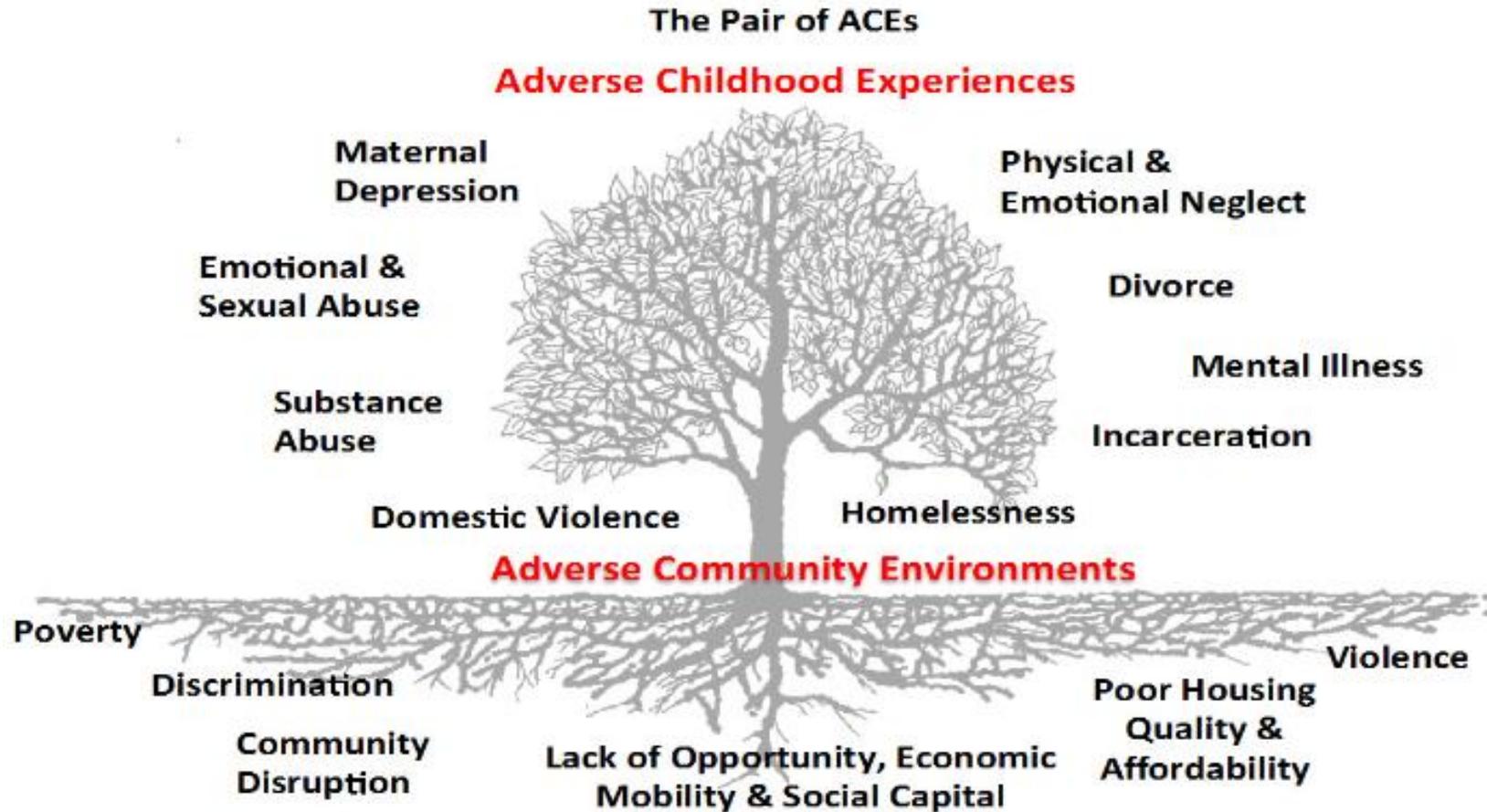
Toxic Stress

Prolonged activation of the body's stress response to frequent, intense situations/events.

Example:

Witnessing domestic violence in the home, chronic neglect.²

Types of Adverse parenting Issues



How common are ACEs

<https://youtu.be/CdTiXrYTB7A>

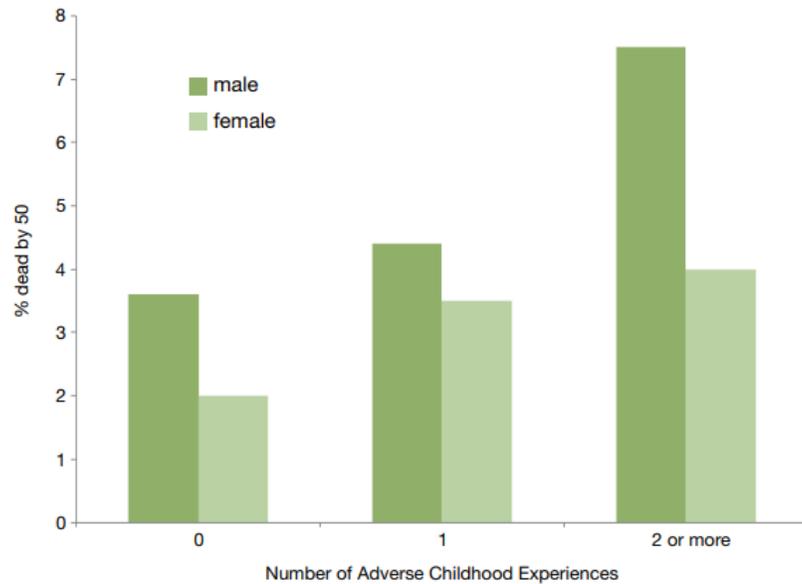
- ▶ 1 in 6 adults experienced four or more types of ACEs.
- ▶ At least 5 of the top 10 leading causes of death are associated with ACEs.
- ▶ Preventing ACEs could reduce the number of adults with depression by as much as 44%.
- ▶ Females and several racial/ethnic minority groups were at greater risk for experiencing 4 or more ACEs.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) | VitalSigns | CDC



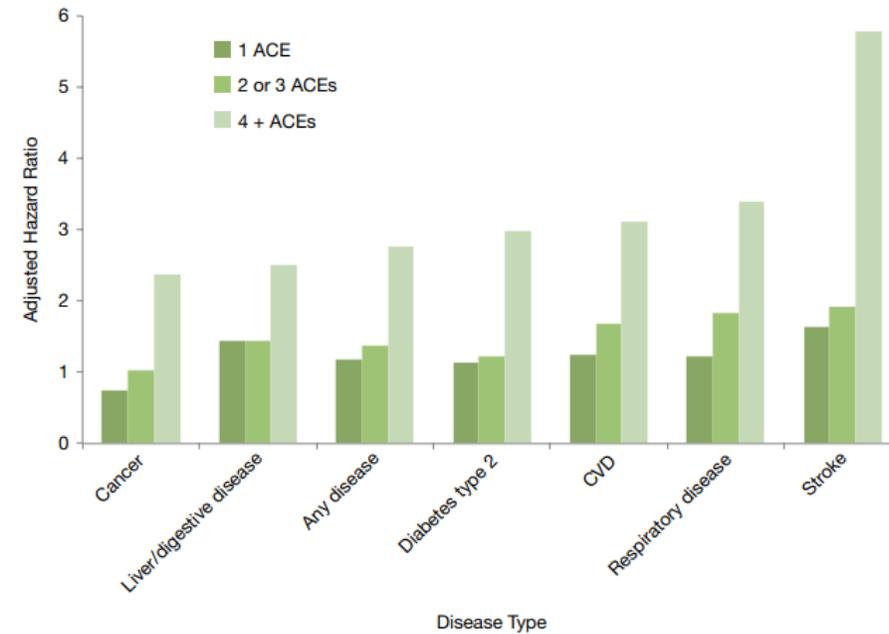
How common are ACEs

Figure 1
All-cause mortality rate by age 50 according to prevalence of adverse childhood experiences, British men and women, 2008



Source: Data from (5)

Figure 2
Changes in risk of disease development with increased history of ACE, English survey data, 2013



Source: (3)

[impact-of-adverse-experiences-in-the-home.pdf \(instituteofhealthequity.org\)](https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/publications/impact-of-adverse-experiences-in-the-home.pdf)



ACEs and the Brain

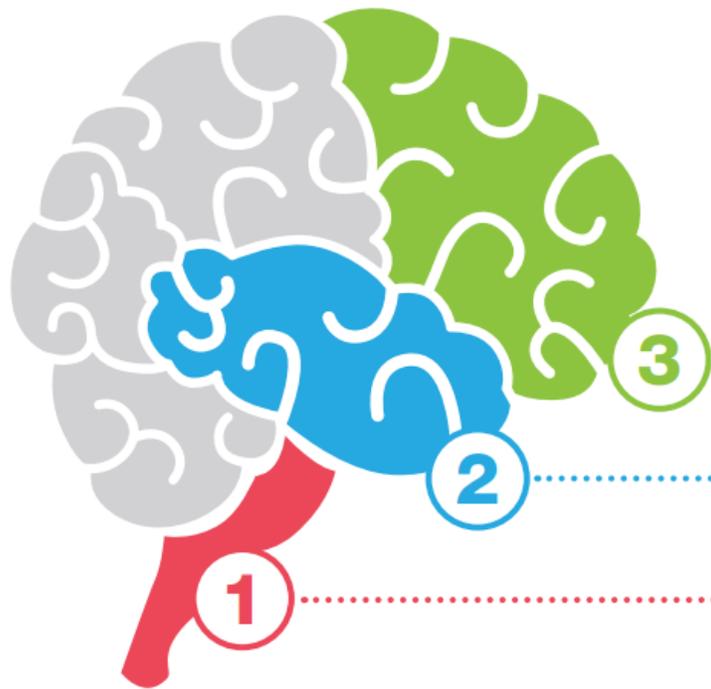


Brain Development

The human brain is an incredibly complex organ with two **key stages of development**. **The first stage is during the first 3 years of life where it is estimated 90% of brain development has occurred.** **The second stage is during the adolescent years approximately between the ages of 12 - 25 years.** This is an intense period of rapid wiring and insulating of neural pathways; potentially a challenging time for adolescents as the higher executive functions of the cortical brain are still developing. **The limbic brain is particularly active during this period of development; emotional regulation and attachment relationships associated with the notion of belonging, are particularly important for adolescents.**

- 3 Prefrontal Cortex - develops third**
Thinking, learning, language, identity.
- 2 Limbic Brain - develops second**
Emotions, attachment, memory and responses.
- 1 Brainstem - develops first**
(known as the Primitive Brain)
Sensory, motor, survival responses.

ACEs and the Brain



Developmental Trauma

Early trauma causes disruption in brain development. A child or adult who may have experienced early trauma without any mitigating factors, may operate in 'survival mode'. During this 'survival mode' the primitive brain is extremely active; it is specifically concerned with the concept of 'Am I safe?' Behaviour is adapted to maintaining safety and surviving, initiating the responses known as: fight/flight/freeze or flop. Children become particularly concerned with staying 'present' in the minds of adults which will be communicated through their behaviour. It is important to recognise that behaviour is a form of communication; for some that communication may be a representation of their trauma. The diagram, starting at number 1 explains how messages can become stuck within the lower regions of the brain, leaving little space for the development of empathy, reasoning and secure attachment relationships. The diagram gives examples of particular difficulties individuals experiencing trauma may have; allowing interpretation of behaviour as potentially their 'language of trauma.'

3 Difficulties with processing:

Executive function disturbance: problems, planning, remembering, recalling, disorientated, blocked memory, self-hate and self-blame

2 Difficulties with regulating emotions and attachments:

Clinging, rejecting, hiding, stealing, deadened emotions, aggression, anger, fear, self-harming

1 Sensory difficulties:

Disrupted sleep patterns, abnormal breathing, lack of coordination, fight, flight, freeze, flop

Impact to children

- ▶ Poorer educational attainment
- ▶ Less employment opportunities
- ▶ Higher chance of involvement in crime
- ▶ More risk of family breakdown
- ▶ Health and wellbeing issues

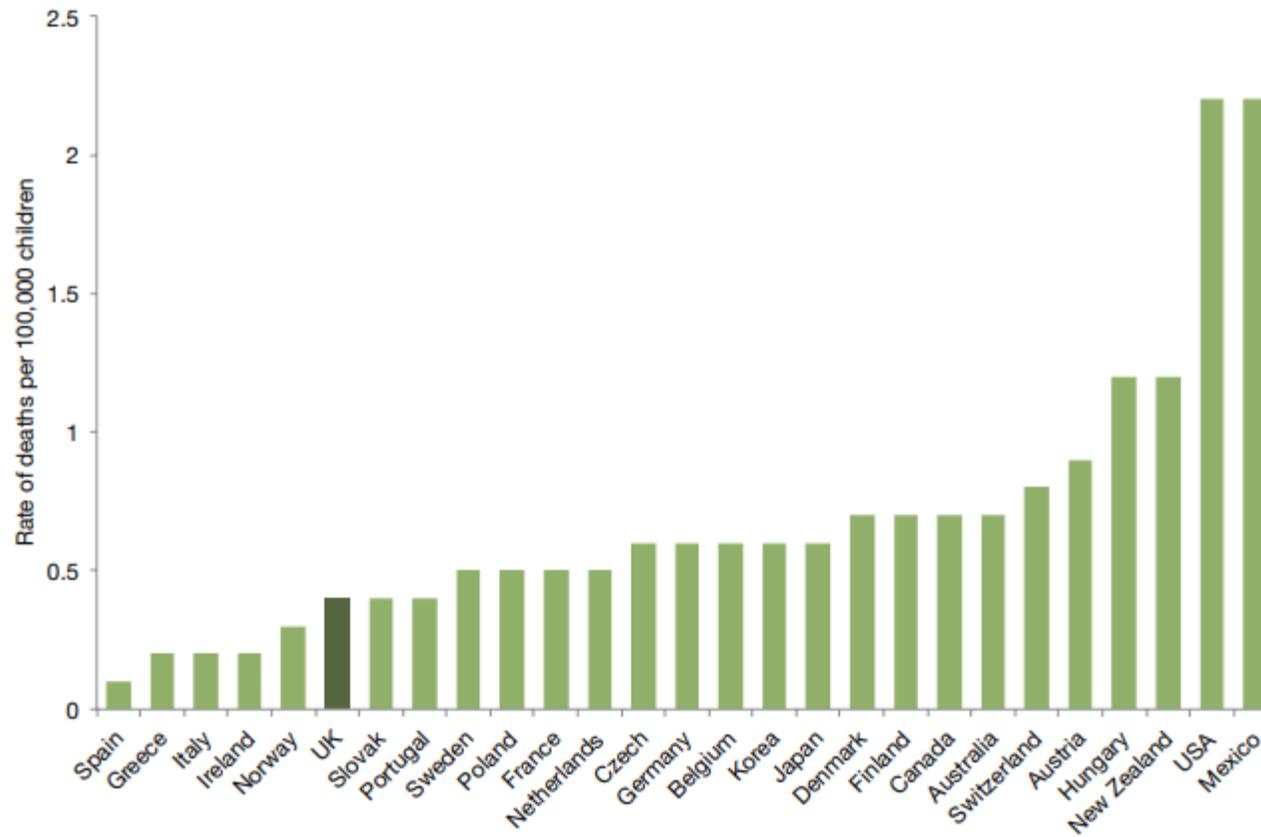


Early Adversity has Lasting Impacts



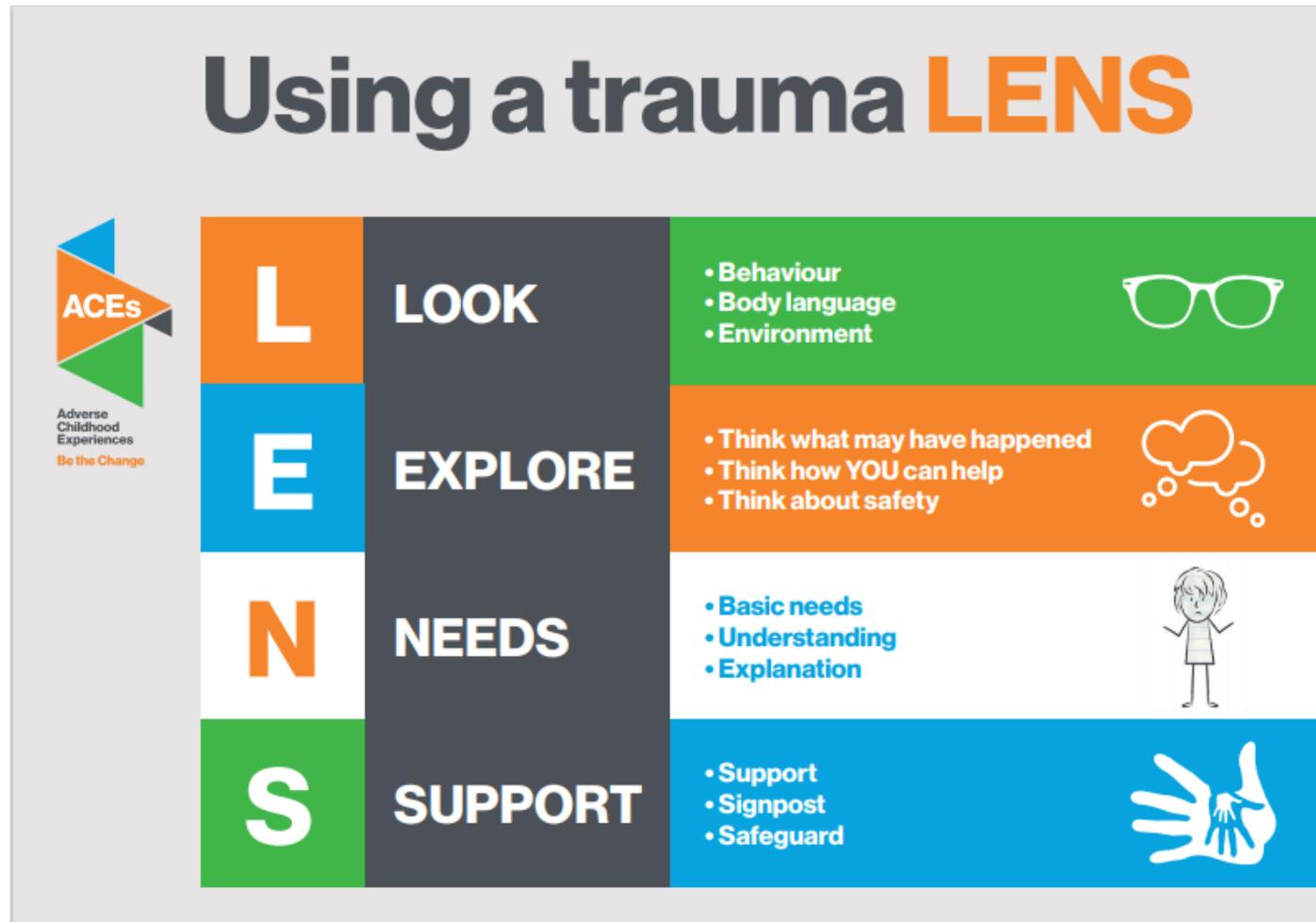
Figure 12

Rate of deaths from maltreatment, children under 15 years old, selected OECD countries, 2003



Source: (112)

How can we mitigate the harmful effects of ACEs





Adverse
Childhood
Experiences
Be the Change

L	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look at behaviour - agitated / shouting / lashing out / withdrawn / crying• Look at body language - sweating / shivering / facial expression• Look at the environment - is it safe?• Look at their clothing
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think what might have happened?• How can you help?• Do they understand what has happened?• Who supports them?• Are they afraid?• Are you safe?
N	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What might they need?• To feel safe - help if you can• To know who you are and what your role is• To have clear boundaries• Food, water, warmth, protection
S	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signpost - Do they need your service or something else? Offer leaflets / Information sheets• Safeguard - Does this person need protected? Are they vulnerable? Are they safe?• Support - Give them some time. Listen in an active way

www.safeguardingni.org/aces



- Having 1 or more stable caring adult-child relationship
- Feeling able to overcome hardship and guide their destination
- Being equipped to manage emotions and behaviour
- Being involved and connected

ACEs do not define children

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)	Counter-ACEs
Physical abuse	Liking school
Verbal abuse	Teachers who care
Sexual abuse	Opportunities to have fun
Physical neglect	A predictable home routine
Emotional neglect	Feeling comfortable with yourself
An alcoholic parent	Having a caregiver whom you feel safe with
A family member in jail	Beliefs that provide comfort
The disappearance of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment	Having good friends and neighbors
A family member diagnosed with a mental illness	
A mother who's a victim of domestic violence	

Referenced from [https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(98\)00017-8/pdf](https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(98)00017-8/pdf) and <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0145213419302662>

What help is available?

Its important if you are experiencing trauma you ask for help as soon as pregnancy (or before) but its never to late.

- ▶ Midwife
- ▶ Health visitor
 - ▶ GP
- ▶ Counsellor
 - ▶ Police
- ▶ Teachers/coaches
- ▶ Housing authority
 - ▶ Charities

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES IMPACT ADULTHOOD

If ACEs could be eliminated...

61↑

Work productivity could increase by 61%.

67↓

Suicide & life dissatisfaction could decrease by 67%.

56↓

Anxiety could be reduced by 56%.

Source: <http://www.aceinterface.com>

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT ARE PREVENTABLE ACEs.



<https://youtu.be/XHgLYI9KZ-A>



Thank You

▶ Questions

▶ Contact Information

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