

What is ACE and Why is it Important to You?

ACE

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

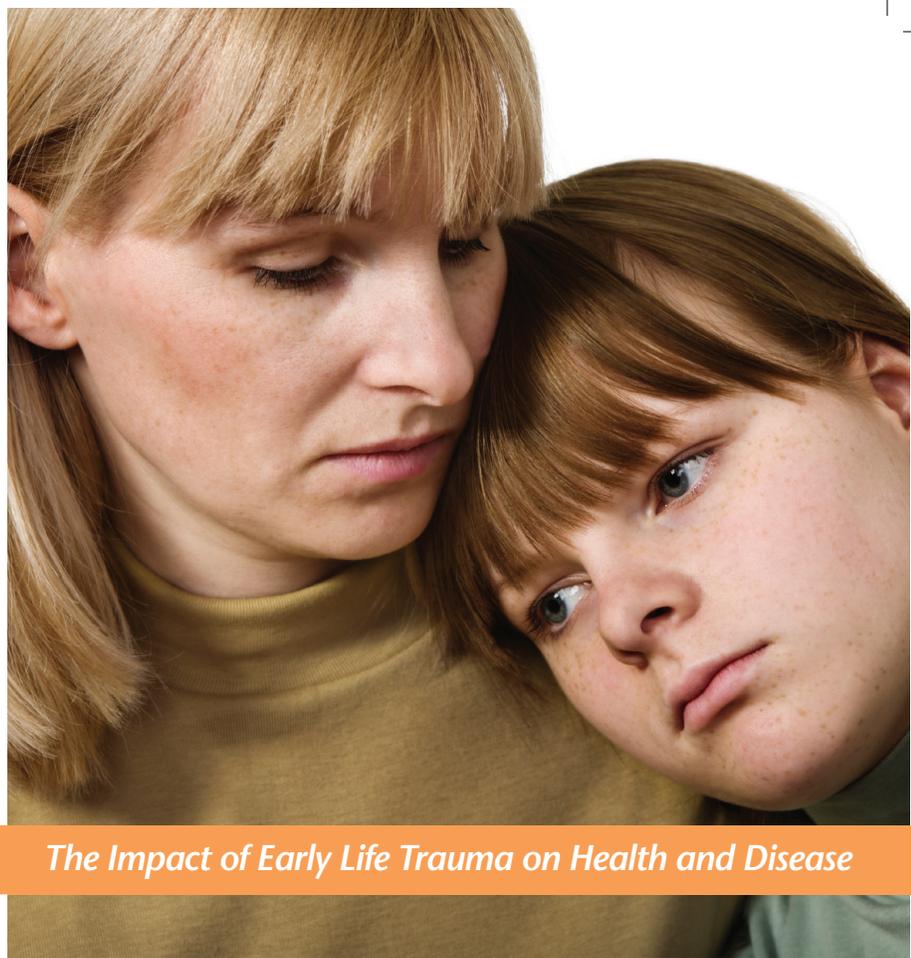
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is the term given to describe all types of abuse, neglect, and other traumatic experiences that occur to individuals under the age of 18.

Research has shown that childhood trauma injures a child's brain, impairing the brain's physical development and function. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) like abuse, neglect and household dysfunction cause kids to have difficulties learning, making friends, and trusting adults.

As adults, these experiences don't go away. They manifest themselves in different ways. Adults, who experienced multiple traumas in childhood, may see those experiences resurface in the form of unhealthy behaviors later in life. The ACE Study found a stunning link between childhood trauma and the chronic diseases people develop as adults as well as social and emotional problems. This includes heart disease, lung cancer, diabetes and many autoimmune diseases; as well as depression, violence, being a victim of violence and suicide.

Ref: acestoohigh.com

There are 10 types of childhood trauma measured in the ACE Study. Five are personal-physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect. Five are related to other family members: a parent who's an alcoholic, a mother's who's a victim of domestic violence, a family member in jail, a family member diagnosed with a mental illness, and the disappearance of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment.



The Impact of Early Life Trauma on Health and Disease

The landmark Kaiser ACE Study examined the relationships between these experiences during childhood and reduced health and well-being later in life.

A person with an ACE score of 6 or higher lives 20 years less than a person without it.

At least 70% of our population has an ACE Score of at least one. As a person's Ace score increases, so does the risk of heart disease, social and emotional problems.

Once you know your patient's score and its impacts, you can be assured that there are resources that exist to help you begin to improve their lives. Evidence-based protective factors such as asking for help, developing trusting relationships, forming a positive attitude, and listening to feelings are solutions to improving the lives of your patients and can assist in breaking the cycles of ACEs in their families. For adults who have high ace scores, evidence indicates that if they are treated based on their symptoms, their overall health and well-being will improve.

By investing in these solutions, both early in a child's life and as an adult, these protective factors and coping skills can act as a counter weight to adverse childhood experiences and their impact on your patient's families.

BuncombeACEs.org | **Know Your Number. Invest in the Solution.**