

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Protective Factors



Mental Health Awareness

Definitions

Adverse Childhood Experiences: are defined as abuse, trauma or stressful situations experienced before the age of 18.

Types of Adverse Child Experiences (ACE)

Emotional Abuse
Physical Abuse
Sexual Abuse
Witnessing Domestic Violence.
Exposure to Substance Abusing Family Members.
Chronic Medical Issues

Exposure to family member suffering from mental illness.
Divorce or separation of parental figures.
Incarceration of a household family member.
Emotional & Physical Neglect.



Impacts of ACE

Adverse Child Experiences (ACE)

Physical: weak immune system, physical harm (abuse), changes in appetite, digestive problems, sleep, somatic symptoms

Psychological/Emotional: brain development disruption, anxiety, depression, PTSD, ADHD, other mental health conditions, behavioral problems, low self-esteem/confidence, poor concentration, impulsivity

Social: difficulty forming relationships, difficulty interpreting social cues, social anxiety, social withdrawal, promiscuity

Academic: difficulty concentrating, learning disabilities, absenteeism, decline in grades

Risk Factors

Listed below are some possible risk factor that may have been experienced:

Prior history or experience of ACES/trauma.

Predisposition to Mental Illness.
Developmental Disorders

Unmet basic needs

Single caregiver/very young caregivers.



951-360-4175 - Main PICO Number
951-416-1572 - Behavioral Health
951-222-7872 - Parent & Early Child Development

Rick Factors Continued....

Caregiver Stress
High Conflict Familial Environment
Caregiver/child Substance Abuse
Family's Socio- Economic Status
Community Violence

Child's use of positive coping strategies.
Child's temperament and personality
(positive/negative world views).
Child's attitude
Positive family, social and community supports
Ceased exposure to adverse
experience/traumatic event.
Access to community resources (i.e therapy)

Protective Factors



Protective factors help in reducing the impact of ACEs/trauma and can help a child continue to thrive and function despite the exposure to an adverse event. Examples of protective factors include:

Resiliency & Post Traumatic

A child's ability to "thrive" despite the exposure to the adverse experience/trauma.

Posttraumatic Growth: "is positive change experienced as a result of the struggle with a major life crisis or a traumatic event." (UNCC, 2014)

Strengthening of social support
Building empathy towards other trauma survivors.

Increased sense of strength
Increased appreciation for life
Increase of faith or new spiritual beliefs

Self- Care

What is self-care? "Self-care refers to activities and practices that we can engage in on a regular basis to **reduce stress and maintain and enhance our short- and longer-term health and well-being.** "

Caring for one's overall health (physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual). Managing and reducing stress, honoring emotional and spiritual needs, fostering and sustaining relationships, balancing one's personal, school, and work lives.



Resources/Services

Parent Involvement & Community Outreach (PICO)
Behavioral Health Services

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