

What is an Adverse Childhood Experience?

According to Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana, “Nearly 54 percent of Louisiana’s children have experienced an adverse event, compared to 46 percent nationwide, and 28.2 percent of those experienced at least two adverse events, up from the national rate of 21.7 percent.”

Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs is the term given to describe types of abuse, neglect and other traumatic childhood experiences. This concept was discovered in a landmark study by the CDC and Kaiser Permanente. They found that “the experience of adversity in childhood has a profound effect on health across the lifespan.” ACEs are 10 categories that include: Physical, Sexual and Emotional (Abuse), Physical and Emotional (Neglect), and Parental Divorce/Separation, Mental Illness, Substance Abuse and Incarceration (Household Dysfunction). In the study, 17,000 participants were surveyed and over 64% had one or more ACEs. Researchers also realized that 87% of those with one ACE were more likely to have additional ACEs. This led to the realization that ACEs were common and tended to cluster with participants.

As participants were studied, a “dose-response” relationship was revealed. As the ACEs increased in a population, so did the risk of health and social problems. They called these “ACE Attributable Problems.”

Examples of ACE Attributable Problems		
• Heart disease	• Chronic lung disease	• Stroke
• Diabetes	• HIV and STDs	• Lung Cancer
• Liver disease	• Suicide	• Injuries

Thankfully, hope is not lost! Researchers realized that the key to decreasing future generations from these various issues later in life was and is **PREVENTION**. By providing protective systems that promote resilience, there can be a difference made in the potential to developing these problems. Child Advocacy Services prides itself in having ACEs facilitators on hand to share how we can build resilient communities and help to decrease these Adverse Childhood Experiences. If you are interested in hosting a presentation for your employees, church group or for your local community, please contact our Prevention Services Coordinator, Jordyn G’sell, at jgsell@childadv.net .

For a brief overview on ACEs: KPJR FILMS LLC <https://vimeo.com/139998006>