Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Research: Extension, Integration & Implications

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The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

The largest study of its kind ever done to examine the health and social effects of adverse childhood experiences over the lifespan (Felitti & Anda)



Experiences while growing up that deeply impact a young person and profoundly affect emotional and physical health later in life.



(Thank you to Vincent Felitti for slides)

Categories of Adverse Childhood Experiences

Abuse, by Category	Category Prevalence (%)
 Psychological (by parents) 	11%
 Physical (by parents) 	11%
 Sexual (anyone) 	22%
Household Dysfunction, by Cate	egory
 Substance Abuse in family 	26%
 Mental Illness in family 	19%
 Domestic Violence 	13%
 Imprisoned Household Member 	3%
 Loss of parent 	23%

Adverse Childhood Experiences Score

Number of categories of childhood experiences are summed

ACE Score

Prevalence (after Wave 2)

0 33%

1 25%

2 15%

3 10%

4 6%

5 or more 11%



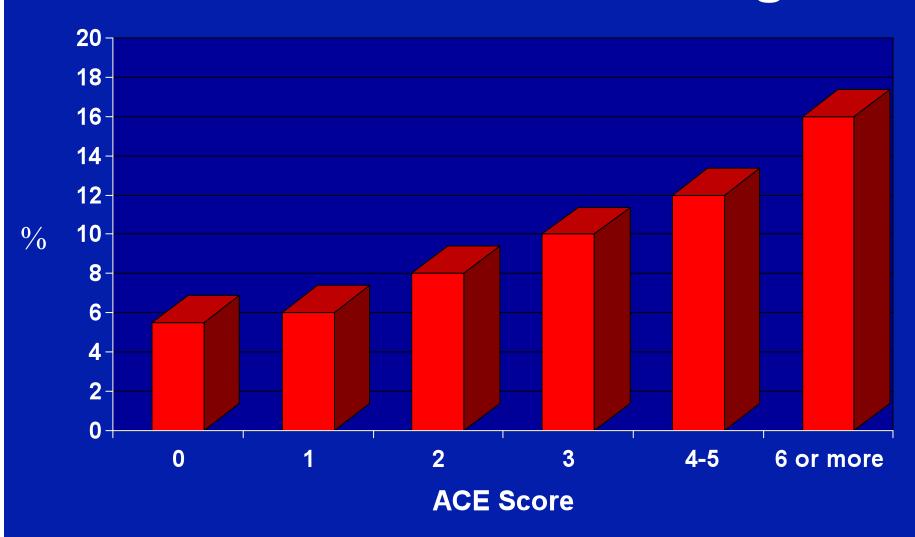
- Approximately two-thirds have at least one ACE
- More than one-third have experienced
 2 4 ACE categories

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

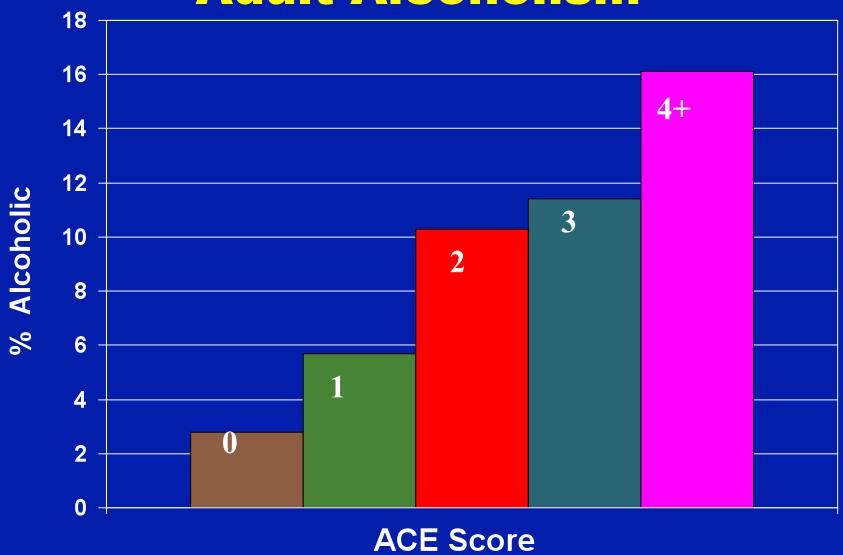
Summary of Findings:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are very common
- ACEs are strong predictors of adult health risks and disease
- ACEs are implicated in the 10 leading causes of death in the U.S.!
- "I was actually stunned and I wept over what I saw." ACEs researcher Rob Anda, M.D.
- Virtually every study shows that ACEs are strong predictors of homelessness (Burt, 2001)

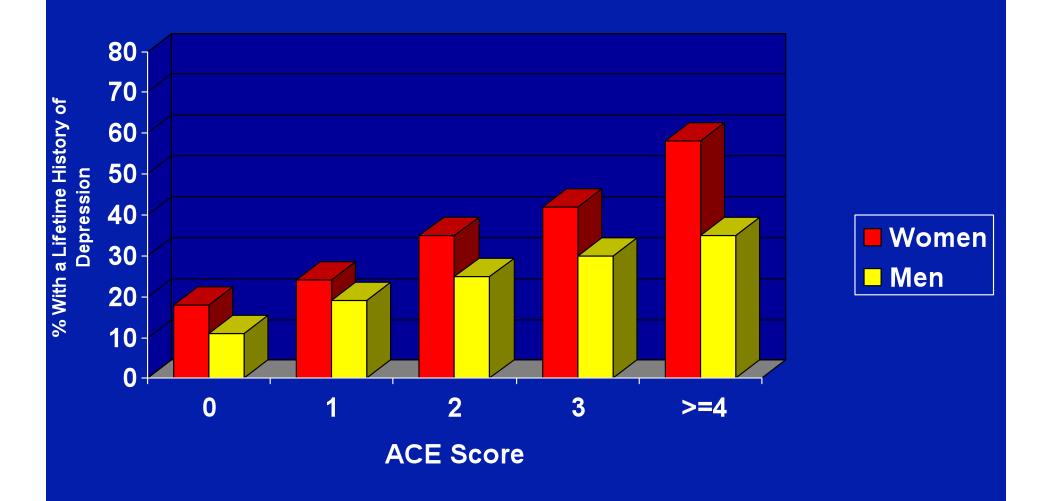
Adverse Childhood Experiences and Current Smoking



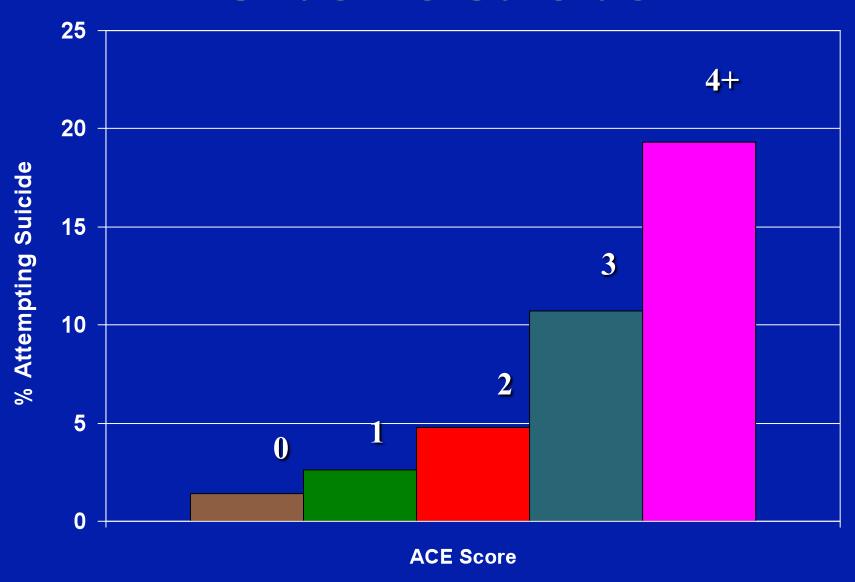
Childhood Experiences and Adult Alcoholism



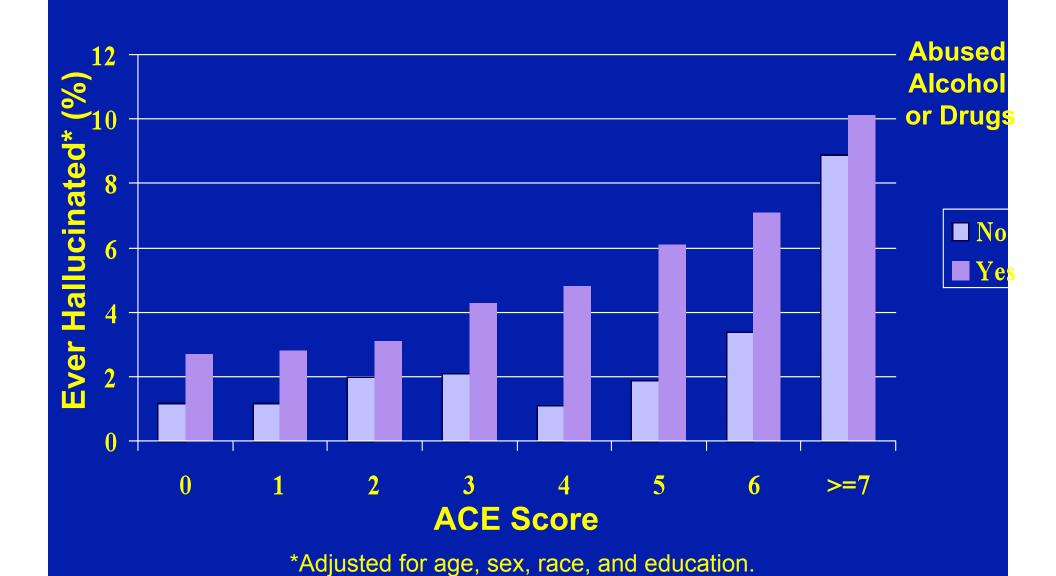
Childhood Experiences Underlie Chronic Depression



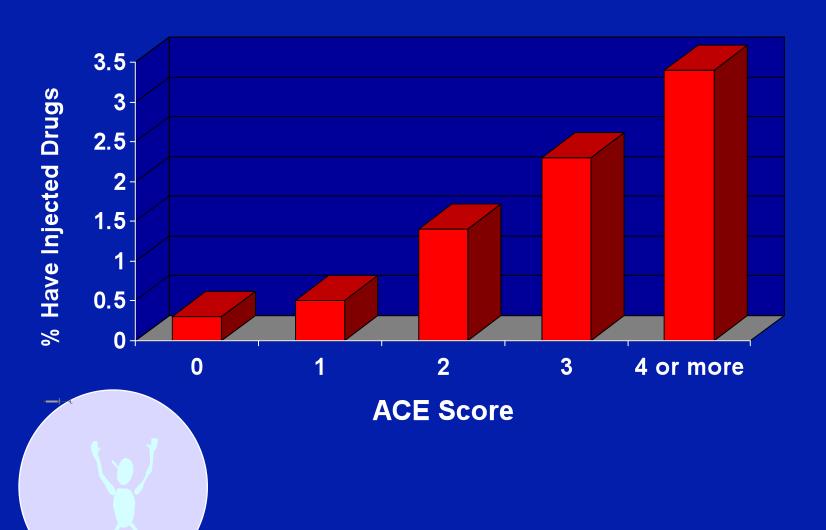
Childhood Experiences Underlie Suicide



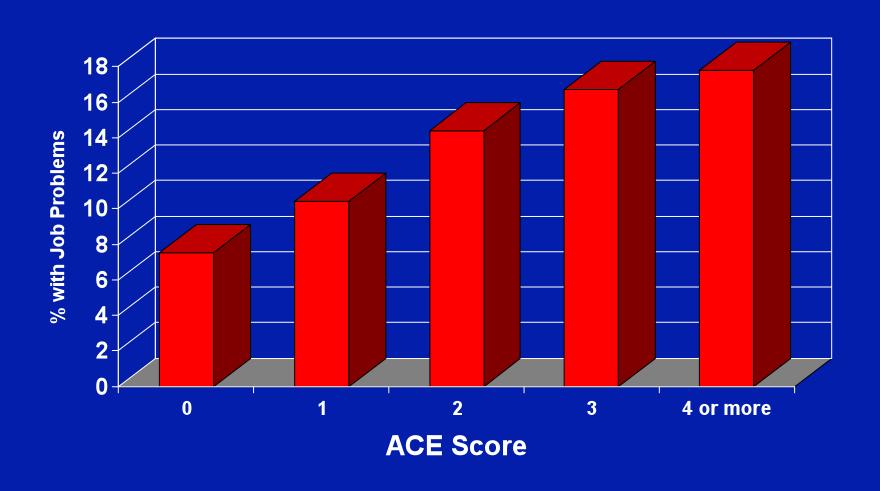
ACE Score and Hallucinations



ACE Score and Intravenous Drug Use



ACE Score and Serious Job Problems



Death

Early Death

Disease, Disability, and Social Problems

Adoption of Health-risk Behaviors

Social, Emotional, and Cognitive Impairment

Disrupted Neurodevelopment

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Conception

Mechanisms by Which Adverse Childhood Experiences

A Connection with Homelessness

 Mental illness and substance abuse problems are more common among homeless people

- ACEs connection to substance abuse and mental illness
- Even non-homeless people with either substance abuse problems or mental illness are less likely to hold a job

University at Albany School of Social Welfare: ACE Response

Enhance our understanding of ACEs

Integrate with literature on resiliency and protective factors

Prevention and Intervention for each ACE outcome

Support systems transformation

Person-in-Environment: A complex interplay of risk and resources

ACE impact on developing self (overwhelming feelings, activation of defense mechanisms, etc.)

Health Risk Behaviors (substance abuse, sexual and other risk-taking, etc.) Medical problems (both short & long-term) Changes in developing brain

INDIVIDUAL

COLLECTIVE

Family meanings
Cultural values
Social taboos

Victim blaming

"rugged individualism"

Family relational system/ACEs

Social violence

Health, Mental health, & Substance abuse

services

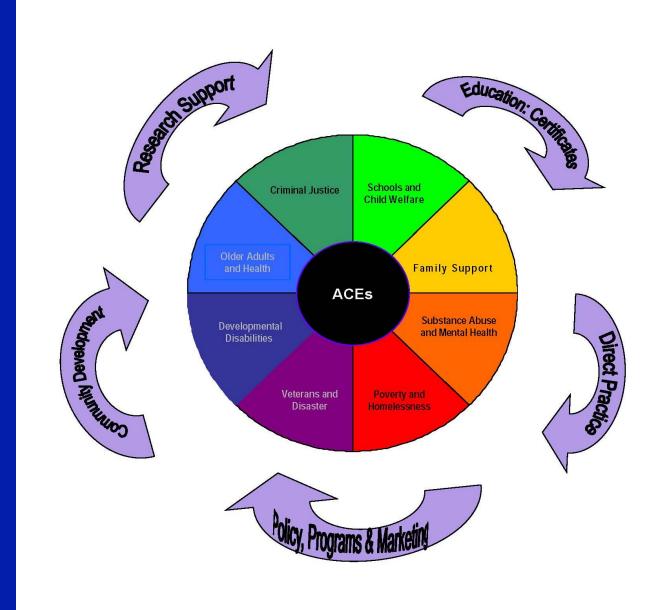
Social service, school, & criminal justice

systems

Public health policy responses

Development, behavior, health, culture, and systems

- Developmental theorists (Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan, Loevinger, Freud, and others)
- Impact of ACEs and health risk behaviors on development
- The role of culture and social systems
- Service interventions that prevent or effectively treat ACEs sooner might prevent homelessness (& other serious health and social outcomes) later in life



Key Milestones

- Felitti and Anda visits 2007, 2008, 2009
- Policy Lunch May 2009
- Council on Children and Families June 2009, September 2009
- ACE Think Tank and Action Teams
 - Rob Anda, Vincent Felitti, Fred Bolton
- ACE Steering Committee
- NYS Omnibus Survey
- Multi-state ACE Learning Community
- ACE Response website January 2011 (www.aceresponse.org)

Implications

- ACE Response: Fostering resilience & mobilizing protective factors
- Workforce development
- Practice, programs, policies that take trauma into account
- Cross-system linkages/ service integration (TRANSFORMATION)