

**NATIONAL  
HEALTH CARE**  
*for the*  
**HOMELESS  
COUNCIL**



# Happy, Healthy Children in Shelter and in Supportive Housing

*Session Two:*

*Resiliency – Mitigating the Effects of  
Adverse Childhood Experiences*

Presenters:

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Director of Community Engagement

# Agenda:

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## Resiliency: The Good News

- Welcome – Introduction to the Project and Listening Sessions
- Children Experiencing Homelessness and Trauma
- What Determines Resiliency
- Encouraging Resiliency
  - As a program
  - As an individual helper
- Challenging Questions

# ACEs = Adverse Childhood Experiences

The 3 types of ACEs include

ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental Illness



Incarcerated Relative



Abuse toward Parent



Substance Abuse



Divorce

# Adverse Childhood Experiences

Traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and wellbeing



People with 6+ ACEs can die

**20 yrs**

earlier than those who have none



1/8 of the population have more than 4 ACEs



[www.70-30.org.uk](http://www.70-30.org.uk)  
[@7030Campaign](https://twitter.com/7030Campaign)

## 4 or more ACEs

**3x** the levels of lung disease and adult smoking

**11x** the level of intravenous drug abuse

**14x** the number of suicide attempts

**4x** as likely to have begun intercourse by age 15

**4.5x** more likely to develop depression

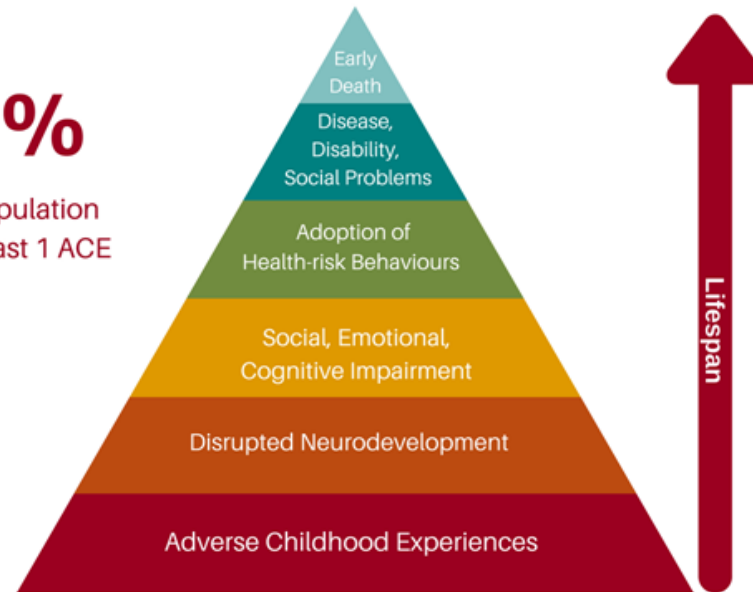
**2x** the level of liver disease

**“ Adverse childhood experiences are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat facing our nation today ”**

Dr. Robert Block, the former President of the American Academy of Pediatrics

**67%**

of the population have at least 1 ACE





# Childhood Trauma: Risk Factors

- **Severity of the event.**
- **Proximity to the event.**
- **Caregivers' reactions.**
- **Prior history of trauma.**
- **Family and community factors.**

**Trauma is in the eye of the  
beholder**





# Resiliency

To bounce back

To recover

To face negative circumstances  
and experience a positive  
outcome

Resiliency is not a recipe; it is  
not one size fits all

# Maintaining the Balance

- Risk Factors/Trauma
- Protective Factors/Personal Strengths







# Barriers to Resiliency

- Vulnerability
- Powerlessness
- Inability to attach or connect
- Victim Mentality
- Egocentricity
  - Everything is my fault
  - I am the cause, I am the solution

*How do homelessness and ACES contribute to these attitudes?*

# Encouraging Resilience: Personal Strengths

- Sense of humor
- Sense of self
- Perceived control
- Assertiveness
- Motivation
- Sense of independence
- Goals
- Problem solving skills
- Self Regulation
- Optimism about the future

# Encouraging Resilience: Protective Factors

- Positive relationships with caring adults
- Effective parenting
- Positive friends
- Faith/spirituality (purpose)
- Cultural values (purpose, identity)
- Effective teachers, academic influences
- Connection

***How does homelessness impact each of these?***



# ARC Framework

- Attachment: the capacity to form and maintain a healthy emotional bond with another person who is a source of comfort, safety, and caring
- Self Regulation: Developing and maintaining the ability to notice and control feelings such as frustration, anger, and fear
- Competency: mastering developmental tasks and developing the ability to plan and organize for the future





# How can we help? Nurture Attachment

- Unconditional love/respect (this will be tested)
- Unconditional acceptance
- We will not leave you
- We are stable and secure whether or not you are
- Predictability – routine, rituals
- ***Encourage attachment with individuals, institutions that are permanent***



# How can we help? Promote Self Regulation

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- Activities that encourage self awareness and the ability to identify and accept emotions
- Staff should be prepared to handle and accept intense emotions, anxiety
- Create a safe space for intense emotions
- Create opportunities for self expression





# How can we help? Encourage Social/Emotional Competency

- Create opportunities for positive peer interactions
- Develop problem solving skills
- Provide opportunities to demonstrate power and control
- Practice assertiveness and decision making skills



I make good decisions vs.  
I am rescued

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# Supporting the Family, not just the child

Strengths Based Approach

# Safety Planning

When mom and dad are fighting, I can...

When I feel \_\_\_\_\_, I can...

A safe person, a safe place, a safe activity...

Do not make promises you cannot keep.

*What else?*

# Everyday Messages

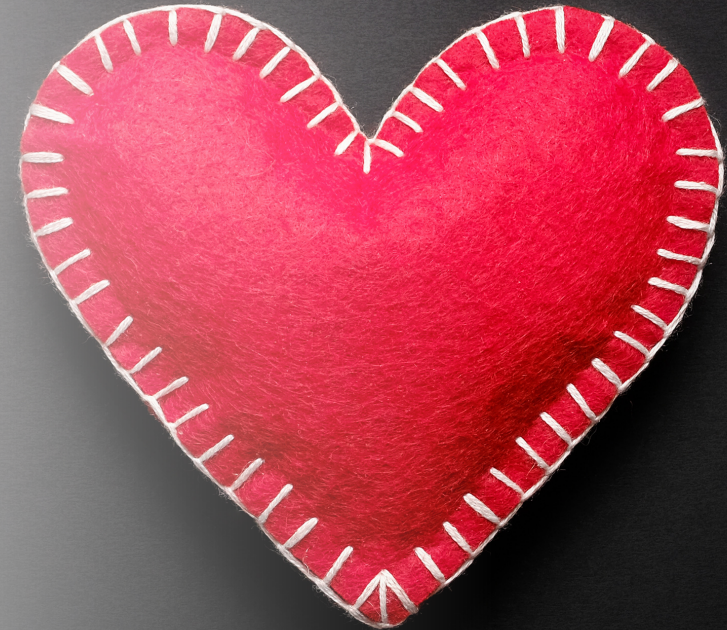
- This is not your fault.
- You did not break this. You cannot fix it.
- This is for mom and dad to work out.
- You are loved
- You are valuable
- You will be awesome – this is not all of life
- I remember when \_\_\_\_\_ and I am ok
- You are ok. I don't know what will happen with \_\_\_\_\_, but You will be ok (*how do I define ok?*)



Remember...

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- You are not the solution
- What are the sustainable options
- Resiliency is always possible
- Children who seem fine, may not be
- Children who seem to be in hopeless situations can overcome
- Love, goodness have power



# Resources

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Oppong Asante K. (2019). Factors that Promote Resilience in Homeless Children and Adolescents in Ghana: A Qualitative Study. *Behavioral sciences (Basel, Switzerland)*, 9(6), 64. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs9060064>

Jan Moore (2013). Research Summary: *Resilience and At-risk Children and Youth*. National Center for Homeless Education. [Http://www.serve.org/nche](http://www.serve.org/nche)

The ARC Framework for Runaway and Homeless Youth Serving Agencies. Hollywood Homeless Youth Partnership. [http://www.hhyp.org/downloads/HHYP\\_ARC\\_Framework.pdf](http://www.hhyp.org/downloads/HHYP_ARC_Framework.pdf)

Evelyn Reed-Victor (2008). Resilience: Strengthening Relationships, Fostering Hope. Project Hope of Virginia. No. 1 (Summer).  
<https://education.wm.edu/centers/hope/publications/infobriefs/documents/resilience2008.pdf>

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**Questions?**

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