

# ADVERSE Childhood Experiences

Research shows that having **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**, causes unhealthy levels of stress, called **toxic stress**. These high levels of stress, which are frequent and prolonged, can dramatically change how the brain develops and increase the risk of health and social problems throughout a lifetime.

## KIDS WITH A HIGHER NUMBER OF ACES ARE MORE LIKELY TO:



Score lower on standardized tests



Have language difficulties



Be suspended or expelled



Fail a grade

## ADULTS EXPERIENCING FOUR OR MORE ACES COMPARED TO THOSE WITH ZERO ARE:



**2.2x**  
more likely to have a heart attack



**2.3x**  
more likely to report serious financial problems



**3.6x**  
more likely to have serious job problems



**6x**  
more likely to have clinical depression

## 10 TYPES OF STUDIED ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

### ABUSE

- 1 Physical
- 2 Psychological
- 3 Sexual

### NEGLECT

- 4 Physical
- 5 Psychological

### HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION

- 6 Substance abuse
- 7 Parent with mental illness
- 8 Incarcerated parent
- 9 Divorce
- 10 Domestic violence

**3 OUT OF 5 GEORGIANS HAVE EXPERIENCED SIGNIFICANT CHILDHOOD TRAUMA**

## WE CAN PREVENT AND MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF ACES

### RELATIONSHIPS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF HEALTHY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AT ANY AGE



- In the absence of a caring relationship, trauma can disrupt healthy brain development
- Communities can promote healthy brain development through relationship building
- Promoting healthy brain development is essential to individual and community wellbeing

Positive experiences can buffer those bad experiences. Whenever we talk about ACEs, it is equally important to discuss relational wealth – being connected in a healthy way to a social network. Research reinforces that positive interactions and experiences for children and families foster healthy development. This can extend to the larger community, thus emphasizing that one caring adult can make all the difference.

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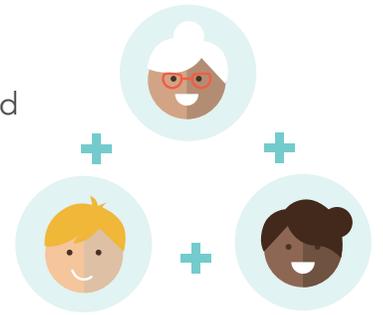
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# TRAINING THAT CAN IMPACT YOUR COMMUNITY

## WHAT IS CONNECTIONS MATTER?

The Connections Matter Georgia initiative is an **in-person training** designed to engage community members in building caring connections to:

- Improve resiliency,
- Prevent childhood trauma, and
- Understand how our interactions with others can support those who have experienced trauma.



The Connections Matter Georgia initiative is a collaboration between the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy and Prevent Child Abuse Georgia, using curriculum developed by Prevent Child Abuse Iowa.

## TAKE ACTION

Healthy minds enable individuals to reach their full potential. Businesses, child and family serving professionals, faith communities, and individuals can promote trauma-informed environments that help everyone manage stress and build stronger connections within the community.

### 1 Why attend a training?

- Interactive, discussion-based curriculum that helps people better understand trauma, brain development, resilience, and health
- Concrete knowledge about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) using Georgia data
- Strategies for increasing and improving your own connections and tools for strengthening both personal and community resilience

### 2 Who should attend?

- Parents, Caregivers, and Community Members
- Child-Serving Professionals
- Medical/Human Services Providers
- Faith Organizations
- Educators
- Businesses

Science is showing us that little things we do to connect make a big difference.

