



Adverse childhood experiences (ACE) are strongly related to development and prevalence of risk factors for disease and health and social well-being throughout the lifespan.

The initial phase of the ACE Study was conducted at Kaiser Permanente from 1995 to 1997, and more than 17,000 participants had a standardized physical examination. Each study participant completed a confidential survey that contained questions about childhood maltreatment and family dysfunction, as well as items detailing their current health status and behaviors. This information was combined with the results of their physical examination to form the baseline data for the study.

To learn more about the ACE study visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/ace/index.htm>

Reference: Felitti, V. J., & Anda, R. F. (1997.)The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/ace/index.htm>

THE ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES STUDY

The ACE Study shows the significant correlation between the trauma of abuse and neglect in a child's life and negative outcomes throughout the lifespan. The more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as abuse and neglect that are present in a child's life, the more likely they are to have negative health and behavioral outcomes.

The first aspect of the ACE Study shows the prevalence of abuse. In a sample of 17,000 adults:

28% were physically abused	27% grew up with addiction
21% were sexually abused	19% exposed to mental illness in the home
11% were emotionally abused	13% witnessed mother treated violently
13% witnessed their mother being treated violently	5% had an incarcerated family member

The study shows that the more categories of abuse and neglect a child has, the more risk is increased for a whole host of negative outcomes and health effects. Children who are abused and neglected are more likely to develop cognitive delays, have conduct disorders, and to engage in aggressive, self-harming, or addictive behavior as they mature.

The study showed that as the number of ACEs increase, the risk for the following health problems increased in a strong, dose-dependent fashion:

- Alcoholism and other addiction
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Depression
- Fetal death
- Health-related quality of life
- Illicit drug use
- Ischemic heart disease (IHD)
- Liver disease
- Risk for intimate partner violence
- Multiple sexual partners
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Mental Illness
- Suicide attempts
- Unintended/ adolescent pregnancies
- Smoking
- Early initiation of sexual activity

Children below the age of 4, those with special needs and children who are low socioeconomic status have an increased risk for ACEs. All children who are exposed to multiple adversities can have these negative effects regardless of background.

Based on information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Adverse Childhood Experiences Study"