

TIPS for...

UNDERSTANDING ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Adverse Childhood Experiences

ACES

is a broad term referring to experiences in childhood that can have a direct and lasting impact on children's health that can spill into adulthood. ACEs can impact mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.

Examples of ACEs

Environment

Climate Crisis

- Record heat & droughts
- Wildfires & smoke
- Record storms, flooding & mudslides
- Rising sea levels

Natural Disasters

- Tornados & hurricanes
- Volcano eruptions & tsunamis
- Earthquakes
- Pandemic

Community

- Discrimination
- Violence
- Historical trauma
- Substandard school
- Structural racism
- Poor water & air quality

- Lack of jobs
- Food scarcity
- Substandard wages
- Poverty
- Poor housing quality and affordability

Household

- Divorce
- Homelessness
- Parental mental illness
- Substance abuse
- Emotional & sexual abuse
- Bullying
- Maternal depression
- Domestic violence
- Physical & emotional neglect
- Incarcerated family member

What are PACEs?

PACEs is the combination of Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences. If we are able to level out negative experiences with positive experiences or trauma-integrated care, not all ACEs will result in trauma.

Adapted from: <https://www.pacesconnection.com/blog/aces-101-facts>



TIPS for...

MANAGING ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014)
(Goddard, 2021)

RESISTING RETRAUMATIZATION

- Knowing what trauma is
- How it affects people
- How it shapes groups
- How it presents itself through behaviour
- Understanding ourselves in relation

REALIZATION

- Understanding 'triggers' and signals
- Working on self-regulation
- Understanding what responses might lead to retraumatization (e.g., raising your voice)

- We can be proactive and reactive in our responses
- Shape responses to the person and context at hand
- Incorporate trauma-informed care into your practice

- Disordered eating
- Sleep problems
- Behavioural problems (e.g., fighting)
- Disorganization
- Memory loss
- Difficulty learning new skills

RESPONDING

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS

The 4 R's Approach

This approach integrates trauma-informed care into our daily lives so we can realize and understand trauma as a whole, recognize the signs of ACEs, respond in a trauma-integrated way, and avoid retraumatization through our actions.

