



Adverse Childhood Experiences

The Power of Connection: ACEs and The Importance of Healthy Relationships

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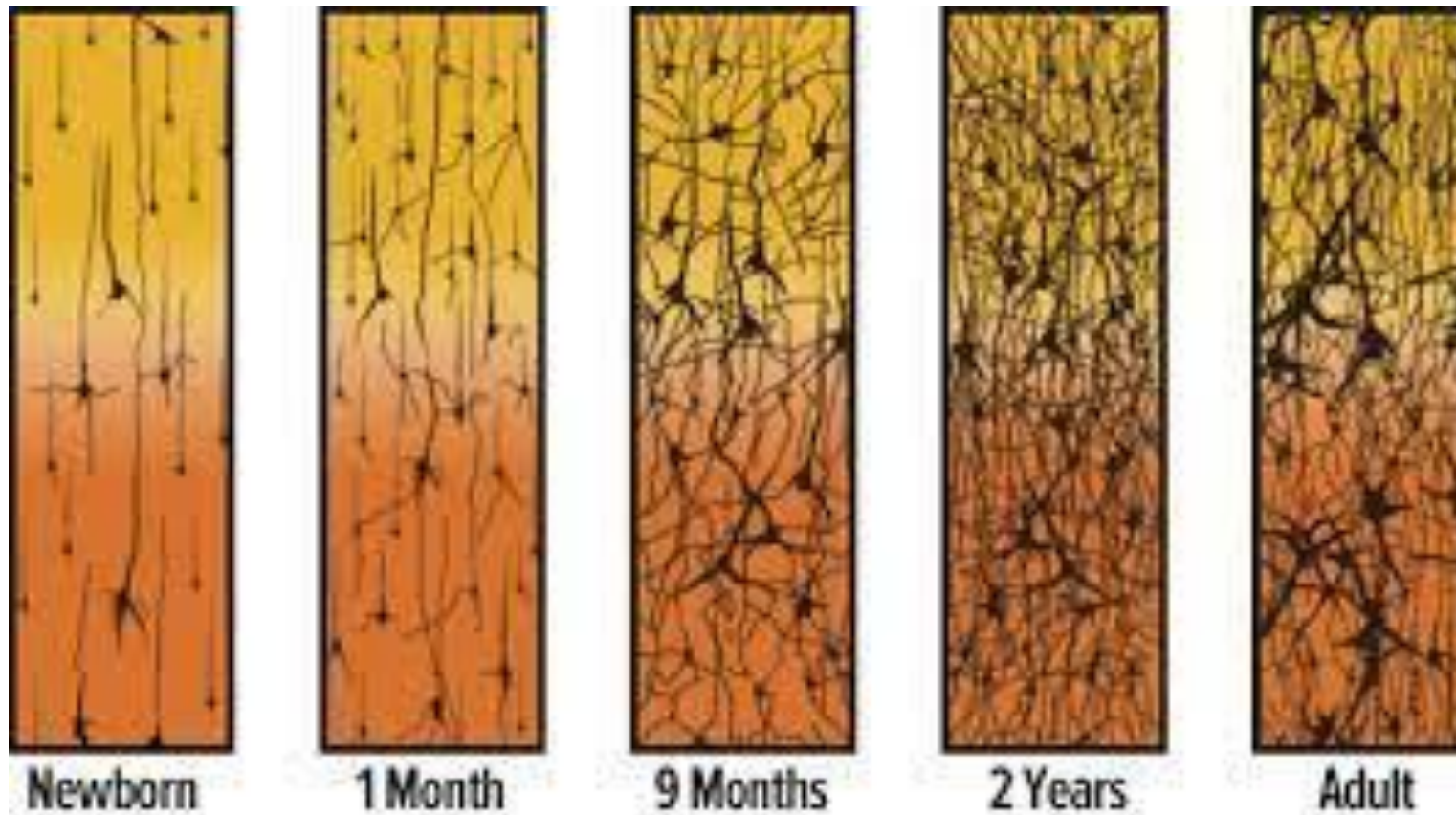
Agenda

- Early childhood brain development
- Importance of environments and relationships
- Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

First Steps



Brain Development



Activities that promote healthy brain development

- Talking
- Reading
- Singing
- Feeding
- Bathing
- Playing
- Structured activities
- Napping



What happens and what should happen



Challenges for Young Families

- Competing priorities
 - Young age
 - School
 - Employment/Career
- Poverty/low income/working poor
- High debt and low resources
- Health status
- Knowledge of child rearing
- Family support



2026 Kids Count Data

- 20% children in poverty
- 25% of parents without secure employment
- 59% of 3- and 4-year-olds not in school
- 72% Fourth graders not proficient in reading
- 36% children in single parent families
- 22/1000 Teens births (national 14/1000)



THE ANNIE E. CASEY
FOUNDATION

The ACE Study

01/12/14

NEWS

Early Adversity Increases Physical, Mental, Behavioral Problems, Scientists Report



Dr. Robert Anda & Dr. Vincent Felitti
Investigators

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention,
Kaiser Permanente Study

Over 17,000 study participants

The ACE Study confirms, with scientific evidence, that adversity early in life increases physical, mental and behavioral problems later in life.

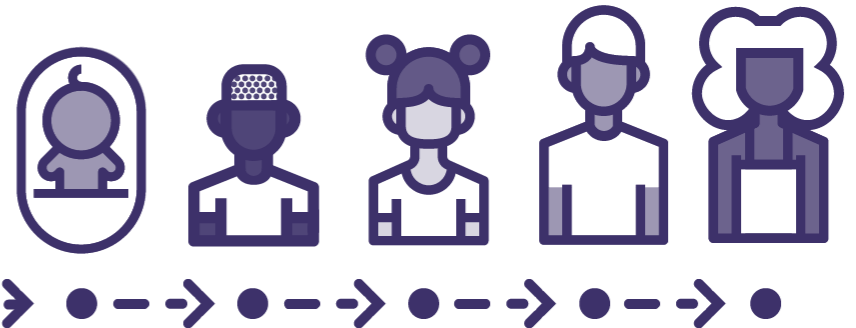
What Are Adverse Childhood Experiences?

Adverse childhood experiences, or **ACEs**, mean **potentially traumatic events in childhood (0-17 years)** such as neglect and experiencing or witnessing violence.



ACEs can negatively impact physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral development.

- ACEs can also have lasting effects on health, well-being, and prosperity well into adulthood.



Types of ACEs



ABUSE

- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual



NEGLECT

- Emotional
- Physical



HOUSEHOLD CHALLENGES*

- Substance misuse
- Mental illness
- Suicidal thoughts and behavior
- Divorce or separation
- Incarceration
- Intimate partner violence or domestic violence

Other Adversity

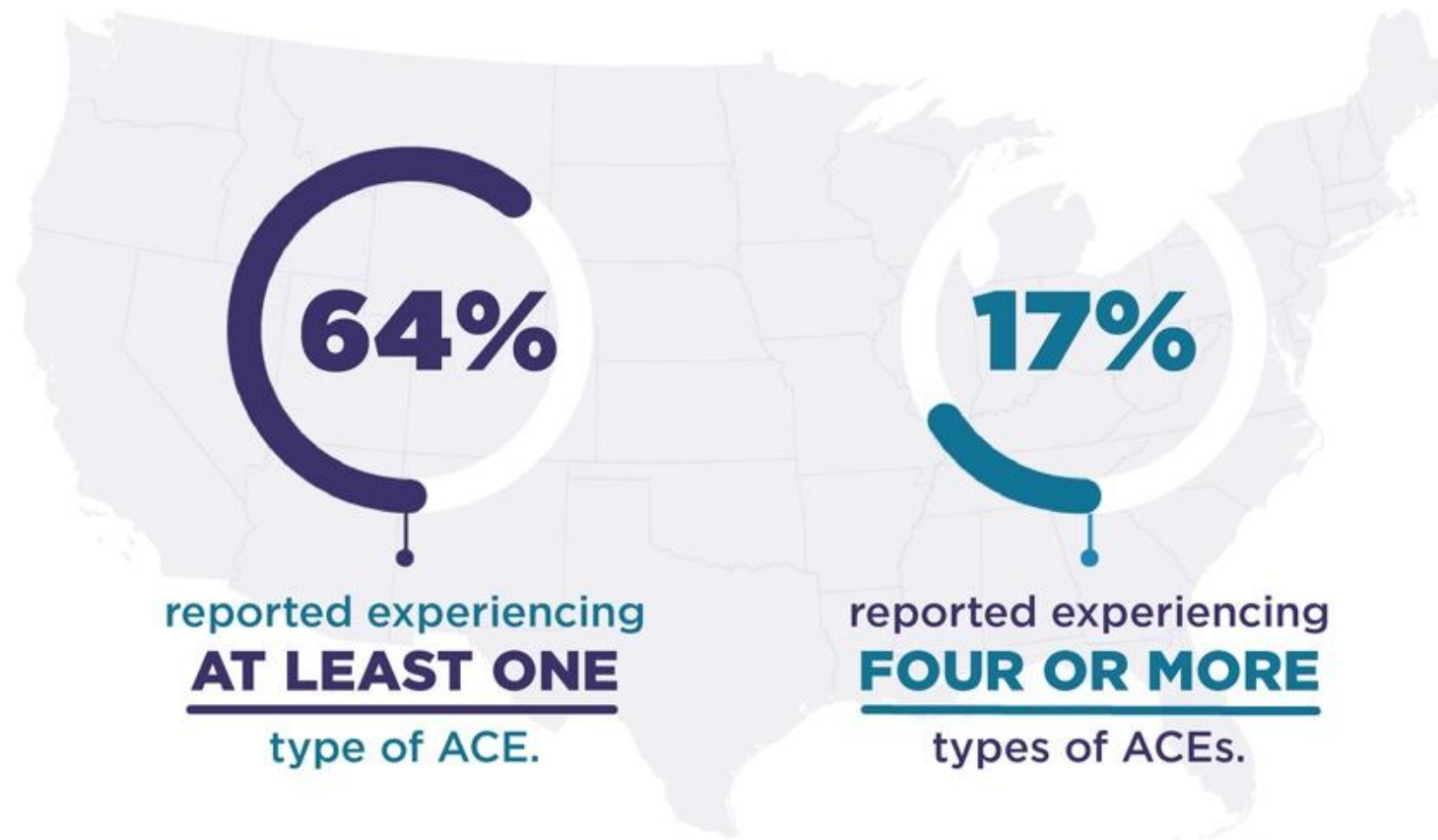


- Bullying
- Community violence
- Natural disasters
- Refugee or wartime experiences
- Witnessing or experiencing acts of terrorism

* The child lives with a parent, caregiver, or other adult who experiences one or more of these challenges.

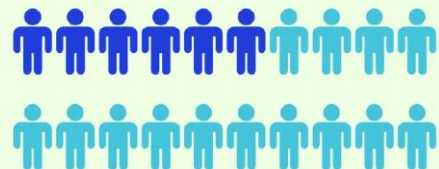
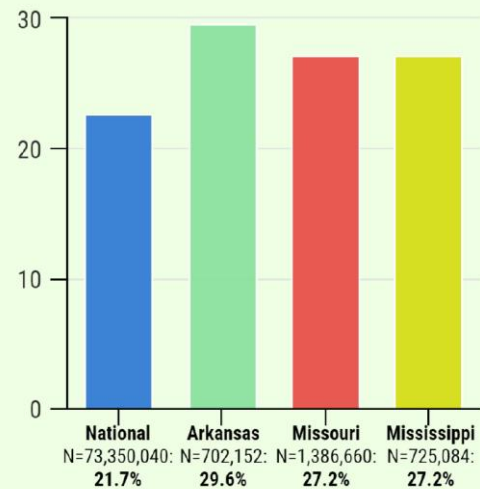
Many People Report ACEs

According to data collected from **adults across all 50 states and the District of Columbia** between 2011 and 2020:



Arkansas Compared with Other States

Children & Youth with 2+ Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



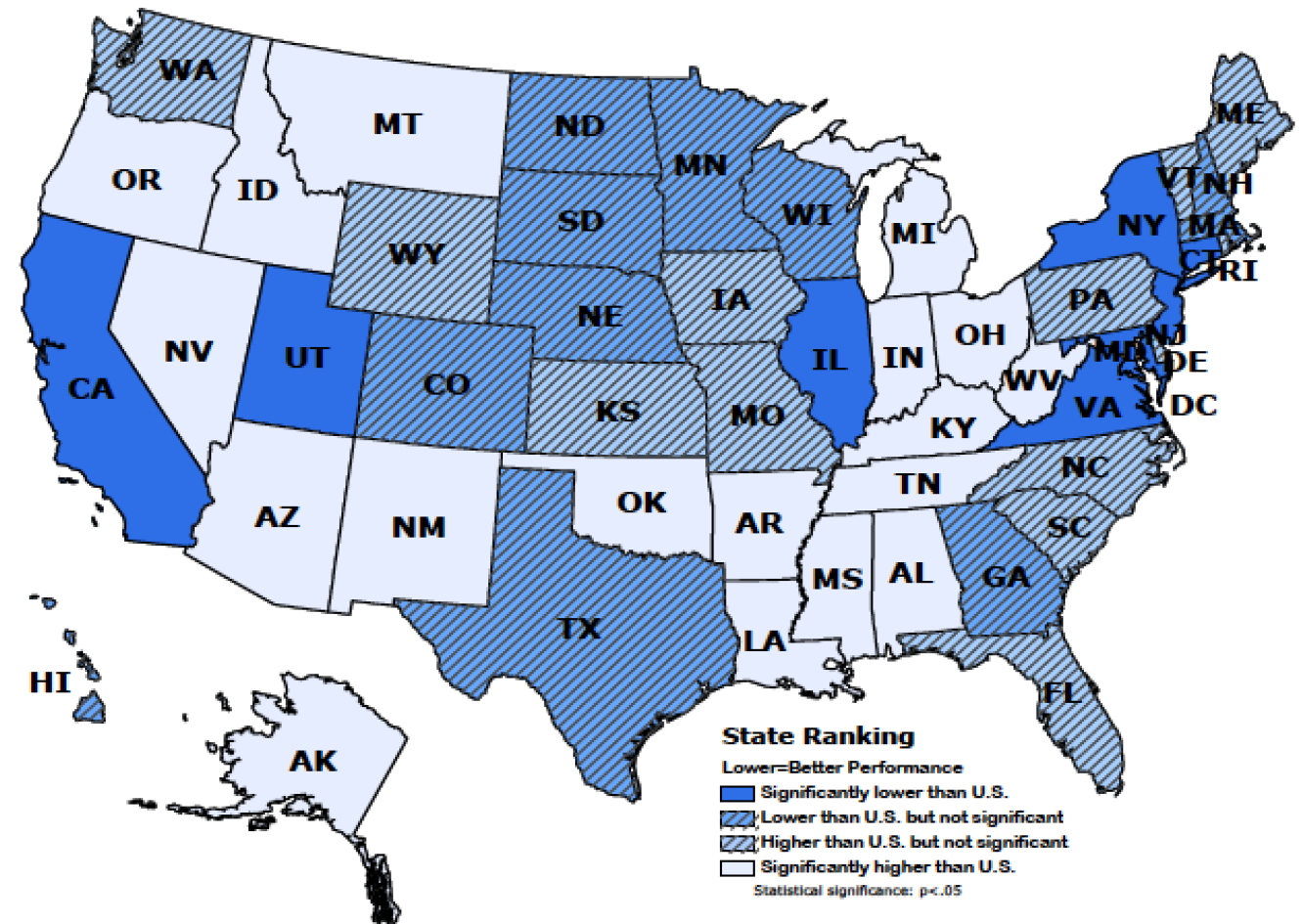
About one in three children in Arkansas have 2 or more ACEs (n≈207,800)

Table 1. State and National Level Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences Items Among Children, Age 0-17 yrs. 2016 NSCH

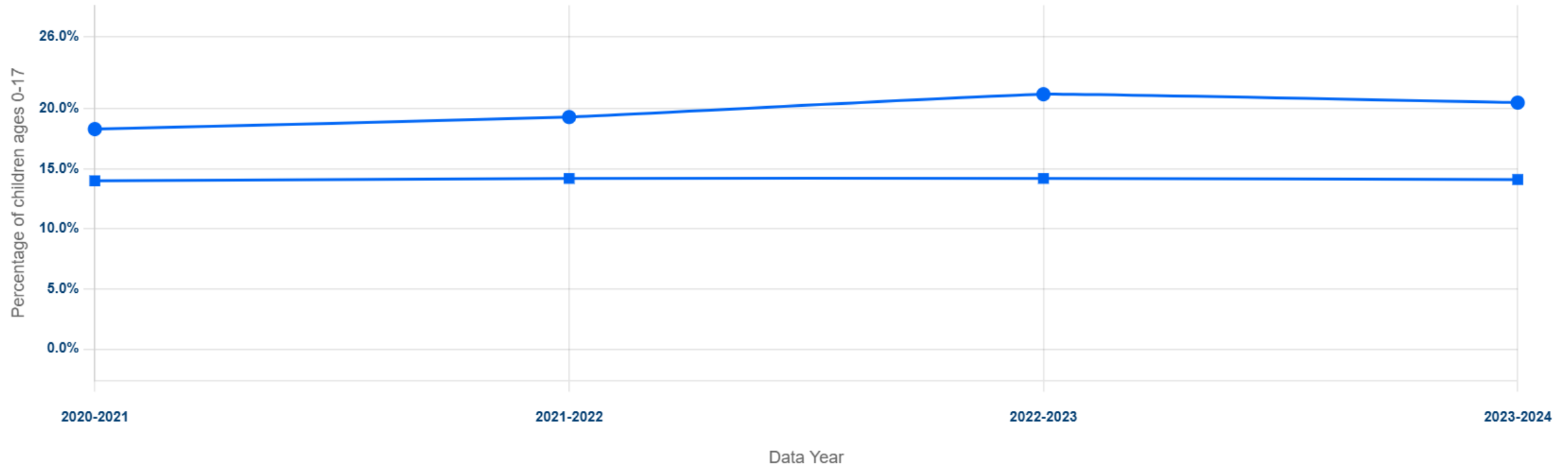
Adverse Child or Family Experiences (ACEs) Items	Arkansas	Missouri	Mississippi	National
Parent served time in jail	16.0%	8.6%	10.7%	8.2%
Treated or judged unfairly due to race/ethnicity	3.7%	3.6%	4.0%	3.7%
Extreme economic hardship	31.5%	25.8%	28.8%	25.5%
Has been a victim/witness of neighborhood violence	5.0%	4.2%	2.1%	3.9%
Witnessed domestic violence in the home	9.7%	6.8%	10.7%	5.7%
Has lived with someone who was mentally ill/suicidal	10.2%	12.4%	8.7%	7.8%
Family disorder leading to divorce/separation	33.3%	28.0%	32.2%	25.0%
Death of parent	5.9%	4.7%	4.7%	3.3%
Has lived with someone who had an alcohol/drug problem	11.6%	10.3%	11.7%	9.0%
Child had >1 ACEs (1/more of above items)	55.9%	47.8%	53.4%	46.3%

Nationwide Data About ACEs

Figure 3. Exploring Disparities between States:
State Ranking Map of the Proportion of Children with ≥ 2
ACEs



Current Arkansas ACEs Trends



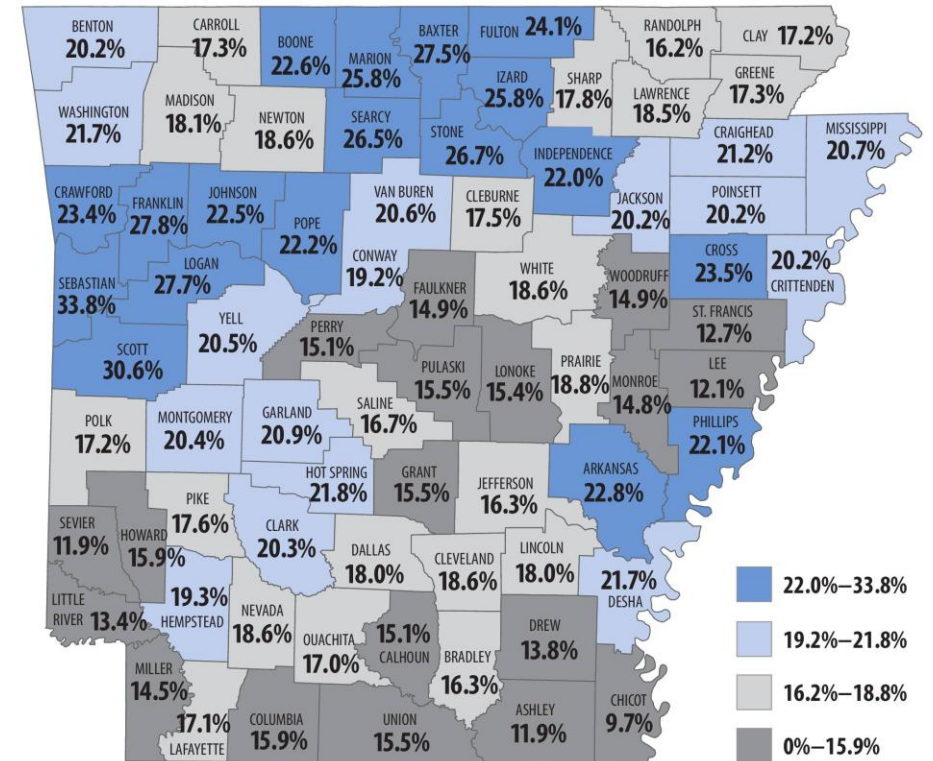
● Arkansas
■ United States

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, National Survey of Children's Health

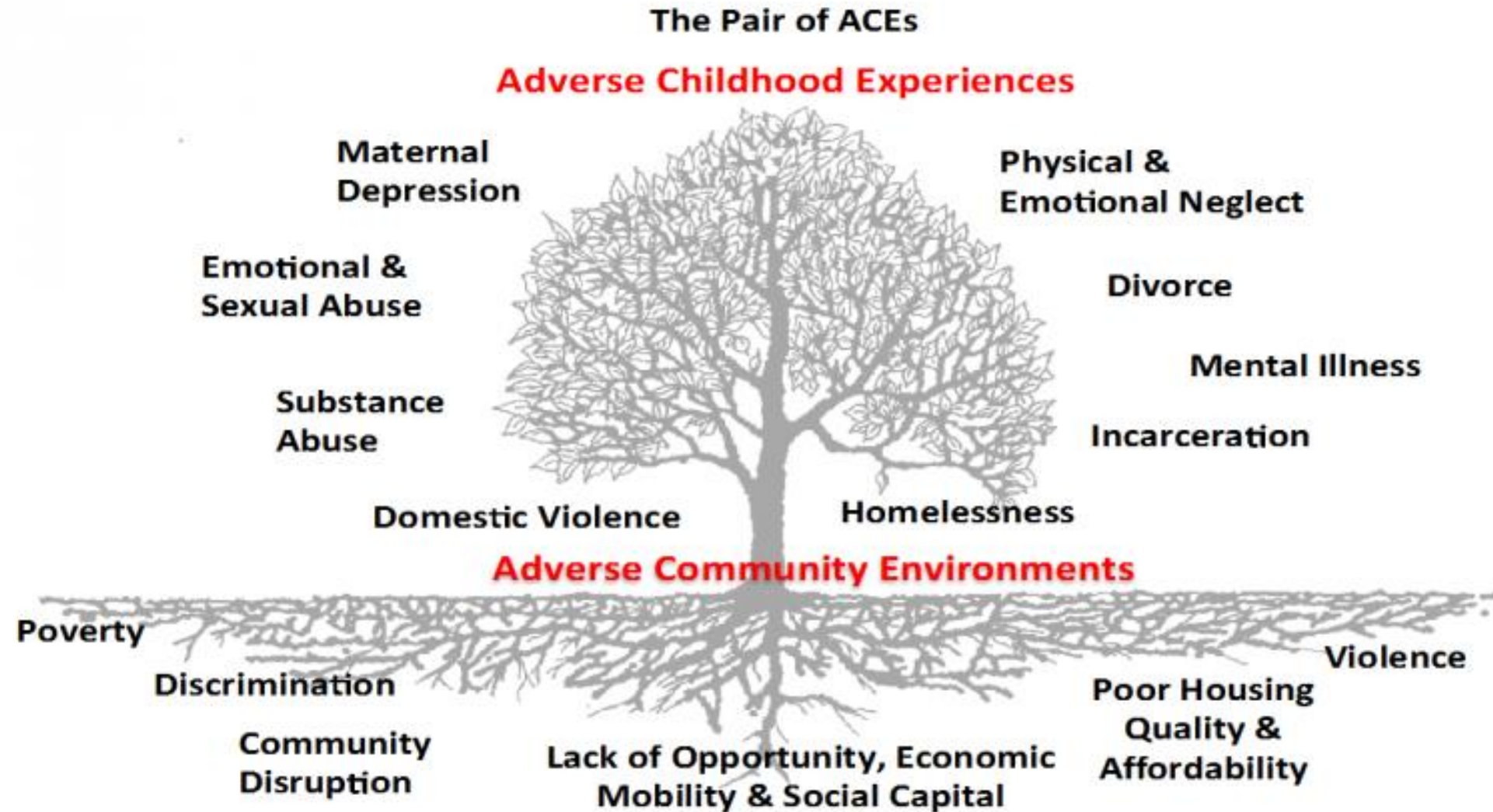
Arkansas ACEs Data

ARKANSAS BRFSS 2016 COUNTY ESTIMATES

Adults who experienced 4 or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

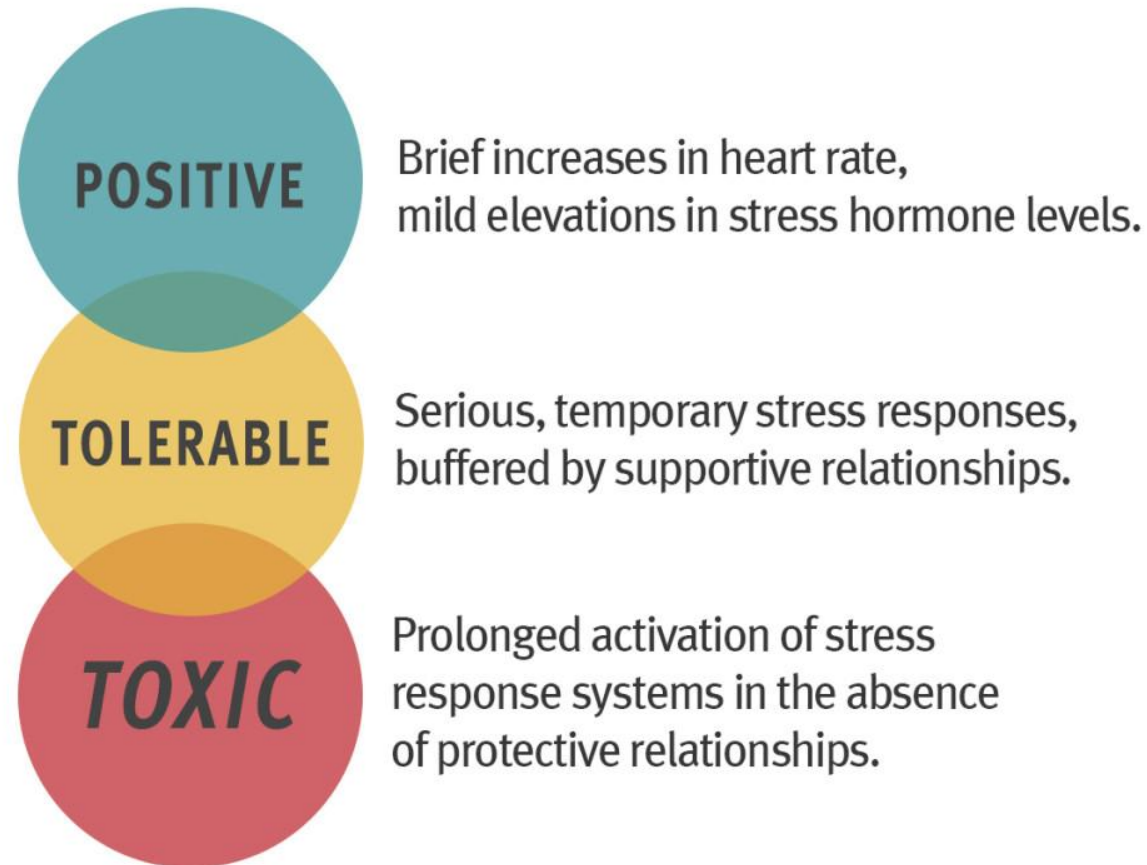


*State percentages calculated using county totals and may differ slightly from state-level BRFSS estimates.



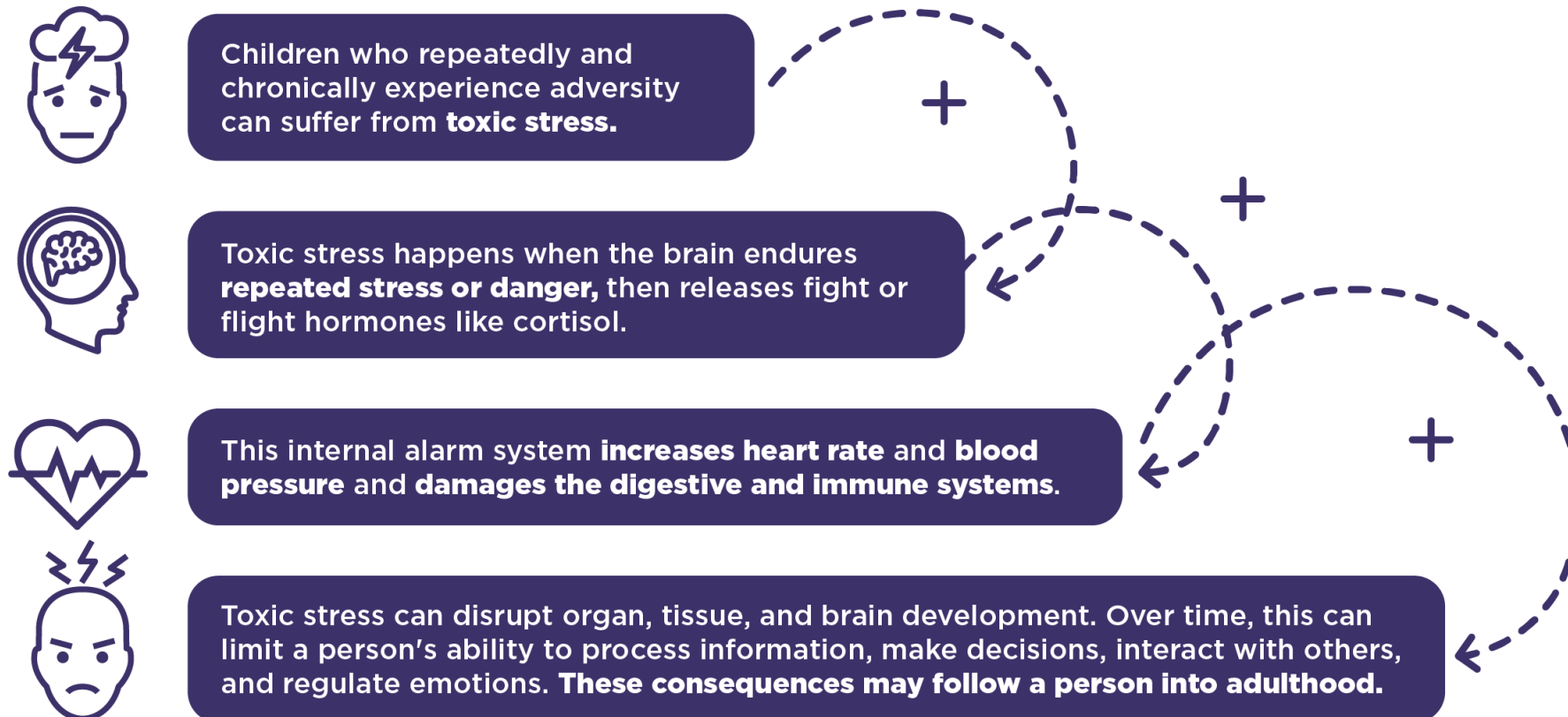
Ellis W. & Dietz W. BCR Framework. *Academic Peds* (2017).

Toxic Stress



ACEs Can Accumulate and Their Effects Last Beyond Childhood

The effects of ACEs can add up over time and affect a person throughout their life.



ACEs Can Increase Risk for Disease, Early Death, and Poor Social Outcomes

Research shows that **experiencing a higher number of ACEs** is associated with **many of the leading causes of death** like heart disease and cancer.



CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS

- Coronary heart disease
- Stroke
- Asthma
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Cancer
- Kidney disease
- Diabetes
- Obesity



MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

- Depression
- Substance use disorder including alcohol, opioids, and tobacco



HEALTH RISK BEHAVIORS

- Smoking
- Excessive alcohol use
- Substance misuse
- Physical inactivity
- Risky sexual behavior
- Suicidal thoughts and behavior

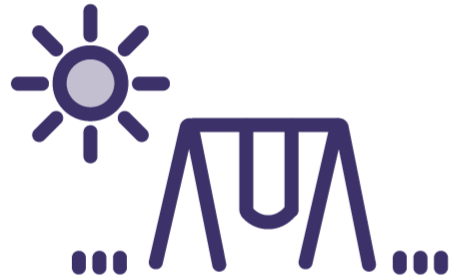


SOCIAL OUTCOMES

- Lack of health insurance
- Unemployment
- Less than high school diploma or equivalent education

ACEs Can Echo Across Generations

The consequences of ACEs can **be passed down from one generation to the next** if children don't have protective buffers like...



positive
childhood
experiences

OR



a caring
adult in
their lives.

Also, when families experience **historical and systemic racism** or living in **poverty for generations**, the effects of ACEs **can add up over time.**

ACEs May Cause Problems at School



Academic



Social



Behavioral



We Can Prevent Childhood Adversity

**The Science of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
Shows We Can Improve People's Lives and Help Them Thrive**

We can Create Positive Childhood Experiences



Strengthen families' financial stability

- Paid time off
- Child tax credits
- Flexible and consistent work schedules



Promote social norms that protect against violence

- Positive parenting practices
- Prevention efforts involving men and boys



Help kids have a good start

- Early learning programs
- Affordable preschool and childcare programs



Teach healthy relationship skills

- Conflict resolution
- Negative feeling management
- Pressure from peers
- Healthy non-violent dating relationships



Connect youth with activities and caring adults

- School or community mentoring programs
- After-school activities



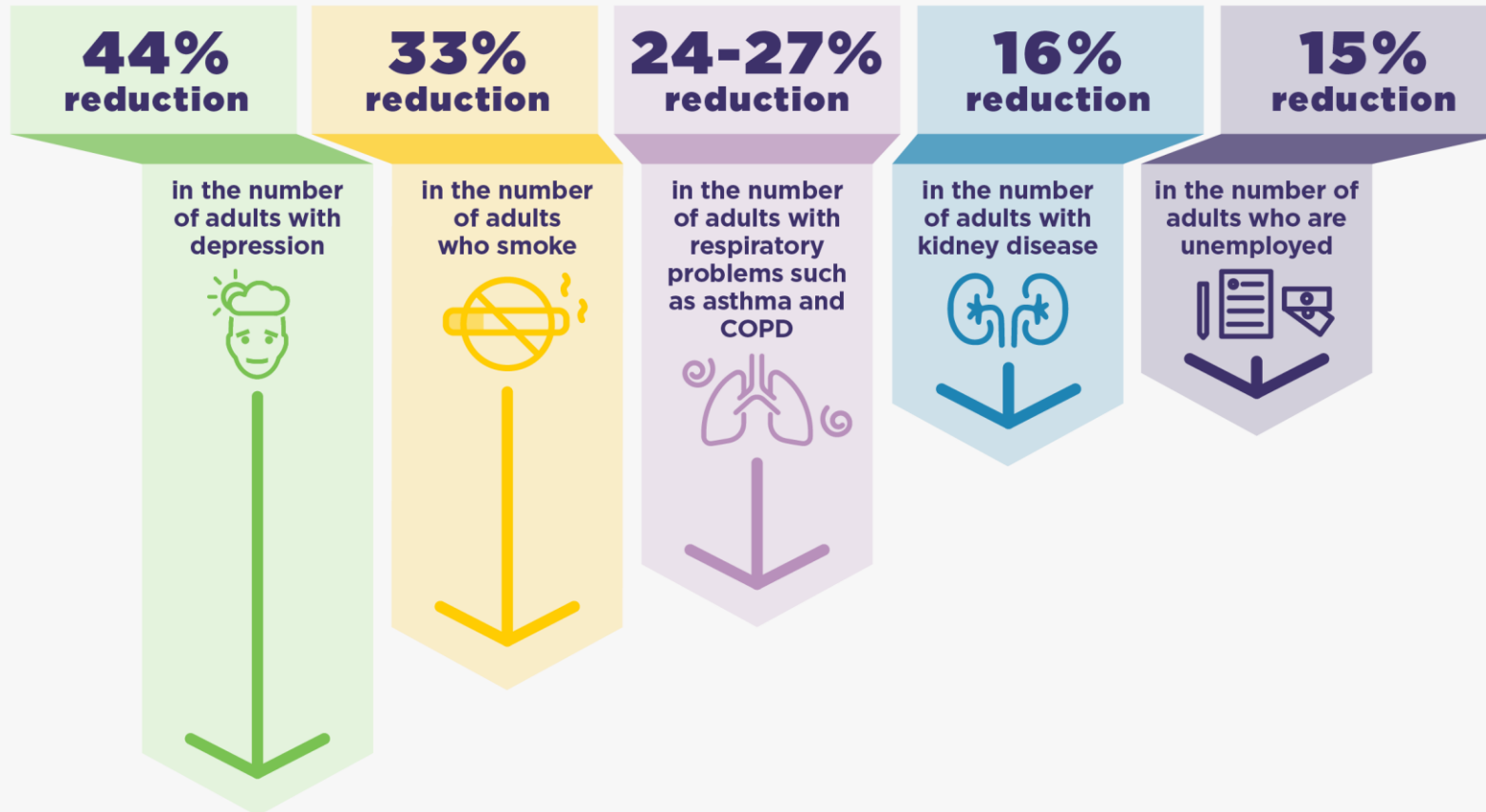
Intervene to lessen immediate and long-term harms

- ACEs education
- Therapy
- Family-centered treatment for substance abuse

Healthy Childhoods Have Benefits Throughout Life

What could happen if we **prevent ACEs**?

Fewer cases of depression, heart disease, and obesity.

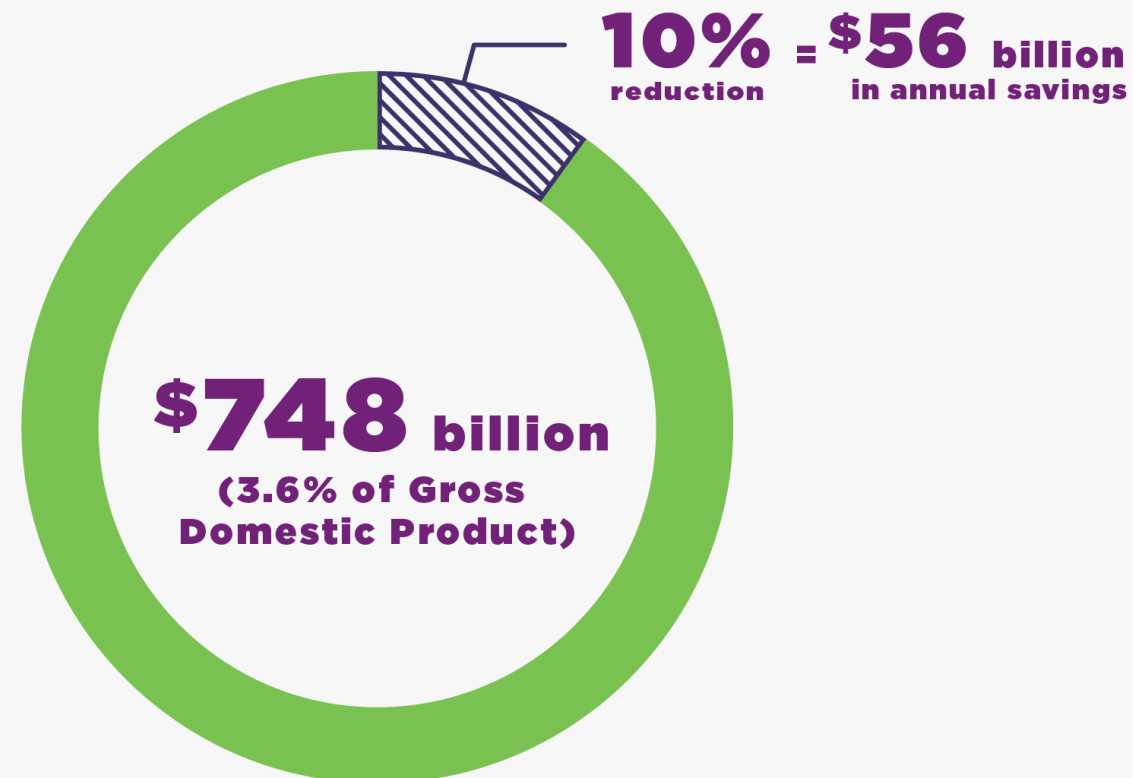


Positive Childhood Experiences Improve the Economy

The primary prevention of ACEs — **stopping ACEs before they start** — would benefit the economy and relieve pressures on healthcare systems.

ACEs-related illness accounts for an estimated **\$748 billion** in financial costs in North America each year.

A **10% reduction in ACEs** could equate to an annual savings of **\$56 billion**.



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Healthy childhoods start now.

Working together, we can help create neighborhoods, communities, and a world in which every child can thrive.

Learn how you can help!



<https://www.afmc.org/paces-coalition>

