



Day 14 - Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

“Trauma is not what happens to us, but what we hold inside in the absence of an empathetic witness.” - Peter A. Levine, American clinical psychologist

Adults with a history of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) may result in poor health outcomes or even an early death. The term "[adverse childhood experiences](#)" refers to a range of negative situations a child may face or witness while growing up. These experiences include emotional, physical or sexual abuse; emotional or physical neglect; parental separation or divorce; or living in a household in which domestic violence occurs. Other difficult situations include living in a household with an alcoholic, substance abuser or with family members who suffer mental disorders, or in a household with an incarcerated family member. Childhood experiences, both positive and negative, have a tremendous impact on lifelong health, education and opportunity.

According to the Center for Child Counseling, [children of different races and ethnicities across the country do not experience the same exposure to ACEs](#). In the United States, 61% of Black children and 51% of Latinx children have experienced at least one ACE, compared to 40% of white children. In every part of the country, the lowest rate of ACEs was among Asian children. In most areas, the population most at risk was Black children.

United Way NCA leverages its relationships with local partners to reduce the impact of ACEs for students and their families through the Community Schools model. Our integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement lead to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Community Schools are in a unique position to intervene at the first sign of an adverse experience and help students cope and push through their trauma before it becomes a bigger issue later in life.

Learn how you can help reduce ACEs below.

Today's Challenge:

OPTION 1: Watch the video "[We Can Prevent ACEs](#)" to learn how everyone can help prevent ACEs through strategies that create safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for children. **(4 minutes)**

OPTION 2: [Take the ACE Quiz](#) to learn an ACE means and doesn't mean. **(5 minutes)**

OPTION 3: Learn about [United Way NCA Community Schools](#). Donate to United Way NCA to support our critical work. **(2 minutes)**