



Adverse Childhood Experiences: The Lingering Effects

Abuse during the first 18 years of a child's life can continue to affect him or her as an adult. The ongoing **Adverse Childhood Experiences [ACE]** Study documented the link between abuse, neglect and exposure to trauma and the impact on health and well-being many years later.

An adverse childhood experience for a growing child includes any of these household conditions: being neglected or repeatedly abused physically, emotionally or sexually; living with one or no parents; and, having a mother treated violently. Other conditions include living with an alcohol or drug abuser, a depressed or suicidal person or having an incarcerated household member.

The more ACEs a child has, the greater the likelihood for long-term health, social and economic problems such as disease, disability, learning disorders and even early death.

Children abused or neglected may face a greater risk as adults of:

- ✓ **Alcoholism**
- ✓ **Drug Use**
- ✓ **Early pregnancy**
- ✓ **Sexually-transmitted diseases**
- ✓ **Smoking**
- ✓ **Suicide**
- ✓ **Pregnancy at a young age**
- ✓ **Liver disease**
- ✓ **Domestic abuse**
- ✓ **Depression**

Interested parents can get a better understanding of the impact of childhood trauma by answering questions to determine their own ACE score at www.cestudy.org/home.

Remember, while early exposure to abusive treatment can lead to negative health and social problems, such outcomes are not guaranteed. ***Parents can break the cycle of abuse by providing safe, stable and nurturing relationships.***

