

The Implications of Child Sexual Abuse Across the Lifespan

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Incidence and Prevalence

- National Sexual Violence Resource Center

- 1 in 3-4 women
- 1 in 5-6 men
- Before age 18
- 6.1% in any given year: Finkelhor 2009

44% of women patients in primary care have lifetime experiences

11% of sexual assault victims are male

Sexual Abuse Definition

- A person sexually abuses a child when he or she exposes the child to sexual acts or behavior.: Finkelhor, Hammer & Sedlak 2008
- Examples: Exhibitionism, Sexual Contact, Voyeurism, Exploitation, Involvement of child pornography, Stalking, Grooming, includes online activity

Grooming

- 4 “T” s”: Trusting, Treating, Teaching, Threats
- Often uses technology
- Repercussions long term on ability to trust and form healthy intimate relationships
- Secondary wounding: not being believed, minimized, blamed

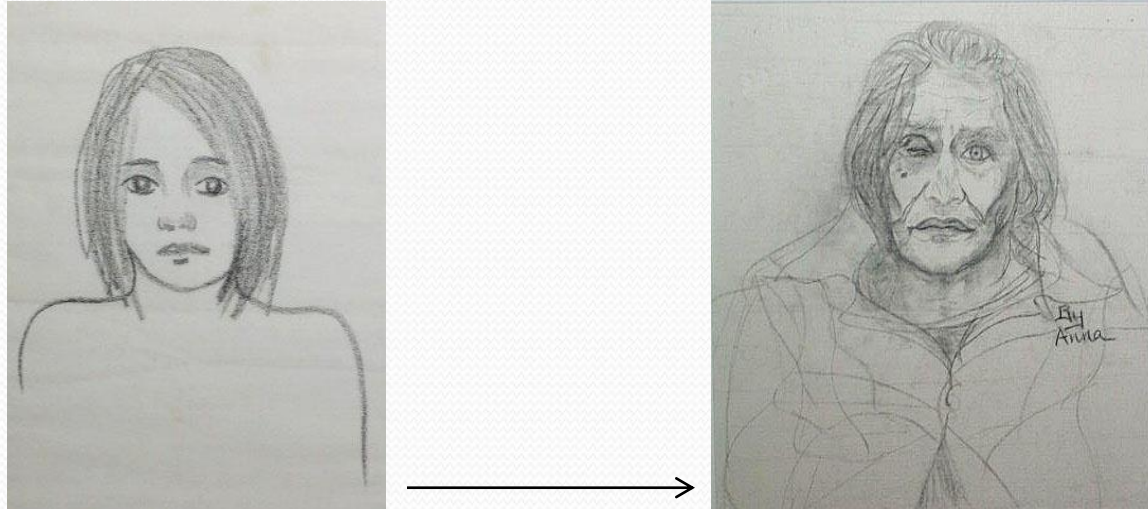
Societal Burden

- Poorly recognized and stigmatized
- Often undisclosed
- 85% victims surveyed favor physician screening
- 20% of dating relationships have physical and/or sexual violence
- Victim blaming still prevalent
- Significant co-morbid issues

Societal Burden

- Usually, child sexual abuse is committed by someone the child knows and trusts, who has easy and frequent access to the child.
 - 93 percent of victims know their perpetrator
 - 34 percent of the time it is a family member (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs)
 - 59 percent of the time perpetrators are acquaintances such as neighbors, friends of the family, teachers or others known to the victim and their family.

ACE Study Findings



- Childhood experiences are **powerful** determinants of who we become as adults

Who is a victim?

- Anyone, anywhere – breaks through economic, gender, geographic, cultural barriers
- May be single or repeated episodes
- May be recent or more remote
- Can occur in marital relationships

Per CDC

The total lifetime cost of child maltreatment is \$124 billion each year.

More than 3 million referrals of child maltreatment are received by state and local agencies each year—that's nearly 6 referrals every minute.

Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACE)

- Over 17,000 people enrolled via a California HMO, 1995-97
- 20 years of ongoing evaluation
- 80% white including Hispanic, average age 57
- 74% attended college (44% graduated)
- 49.5% male

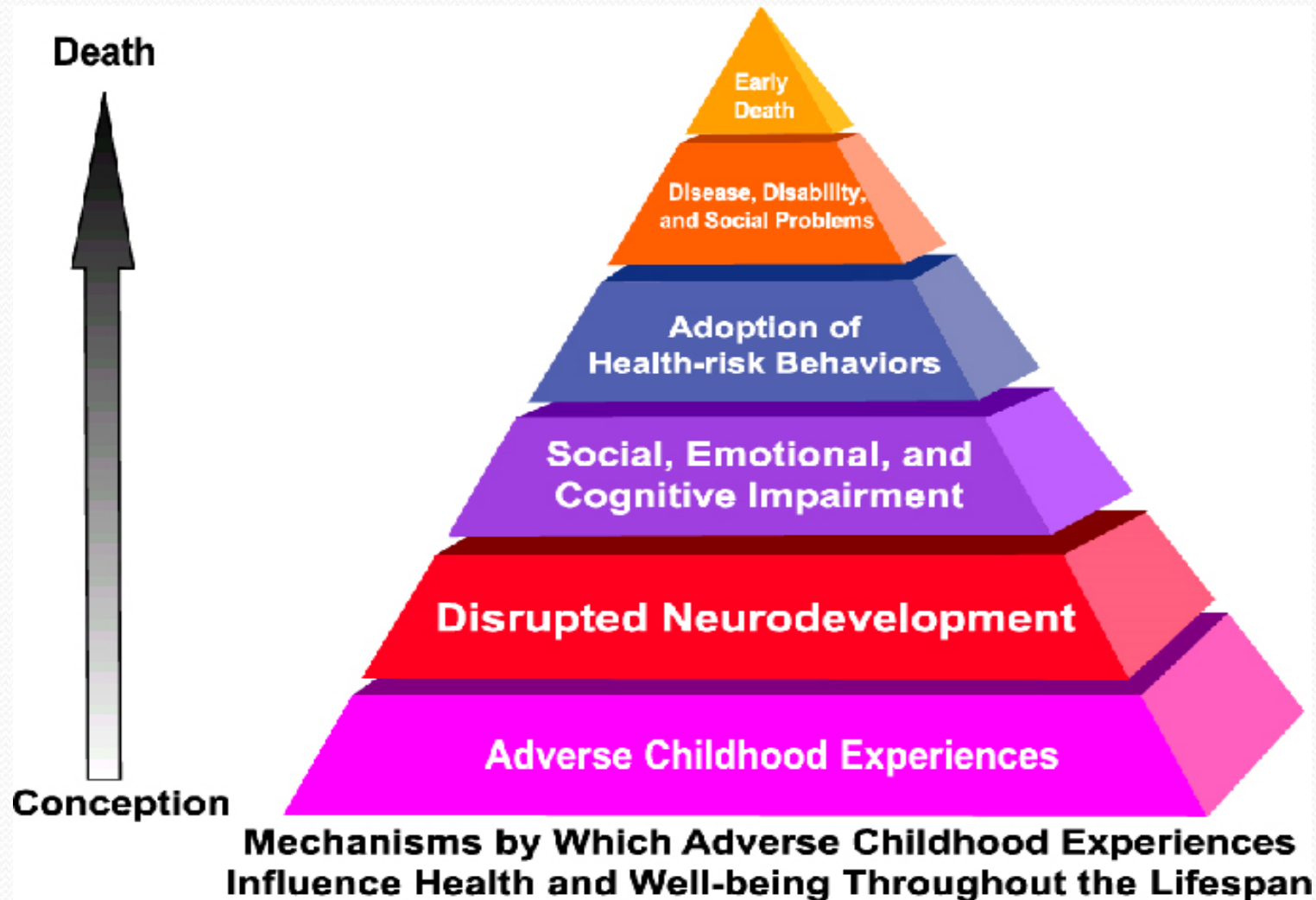
ACE Study : 8 identified categories

- Recurrent and severe physical abuse : 11%
- Recurrent and severe emotional abuse: 11%
- Contact sexual abuse: 22%
- Family with substance abuse: 26%

ACE Study : 8 identified categories

- Member with chronic mental illness or institutionalized: 9%
- Member imprisoned: 3%
- Both biological parents not being present: 22%
- Mother treated violently 13%

Mechanisms by Which ACEs Influence Health and Well-Being Throughout the Lifespan



ACE Study Results

- Surprisingly common, concealed and unrecognized
- Profound effect even 50 years later when psychosocial burden is transformed into organic disease, mental illness and death
- **MAIN DETERMINANT** of health and social well-being of the nation: Felitti

Ongoing associations 1

- Alcoholism and alcohol abuse
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Depression
- Fetal death
- Health-related quality of life
- Illicit drug use
- Ischemic heart disease (IHD)
- Liver disease

Ongoing associations 2

- Risk for intimate partner violence
- Multiple sexual partners
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Smoking
- Suicide attempts
- Unintended pregnancies
- Early initiation of smoking
- Early initiation of sexual activity
- Adolescent pregnancy

Adverse Childhood Experiences Common

- >1 in 4 grew up with substance abuse, and 2/3rds had at least 1 type of ACE
- 1: 6 had an ACE Score of 4 or higher
- 25% of women and 17% of men reported sexual abuse

Adverse Childhood Experiences Common

- Women 50% more likely than men to have an ACE score of 5 or more
- Women had higher scores in all types of ACEs **except** physical abuse and physical neglect where men scored higher



Survivor Issues

Low self-esteem/Guilt

Depression/Anxiety

Substance Abuse

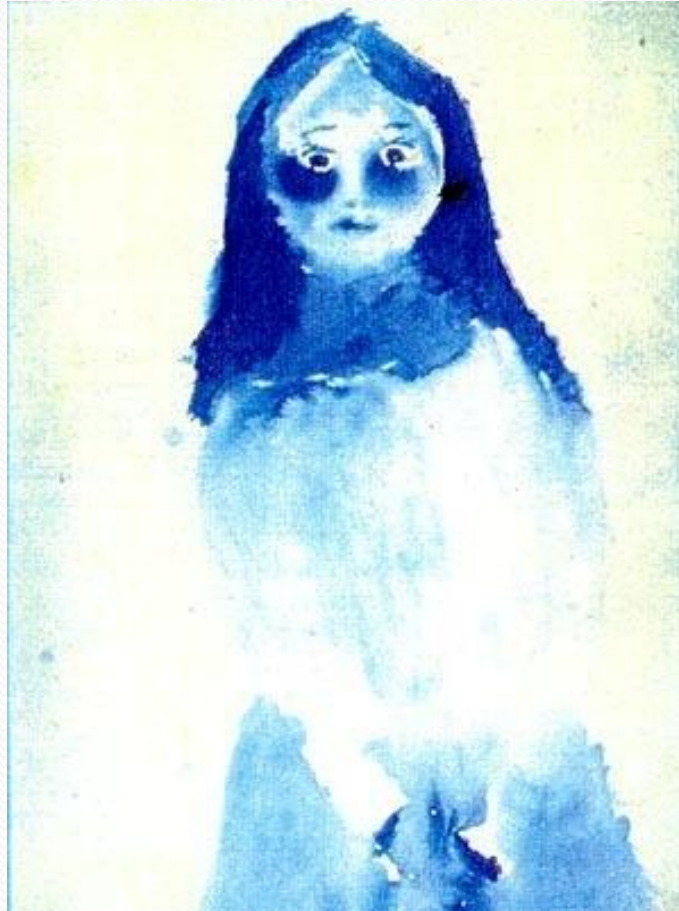
High risk sexual behaviors, STD' s, teen pregnancy

Chronic Pain Syndromes

Eating Disorders/Morbid Obesity

Difficult Interpersonal Relationships

**Sense of helplessness, paralysis, captivity,
inadequacy, powerlessness, danger, fear**



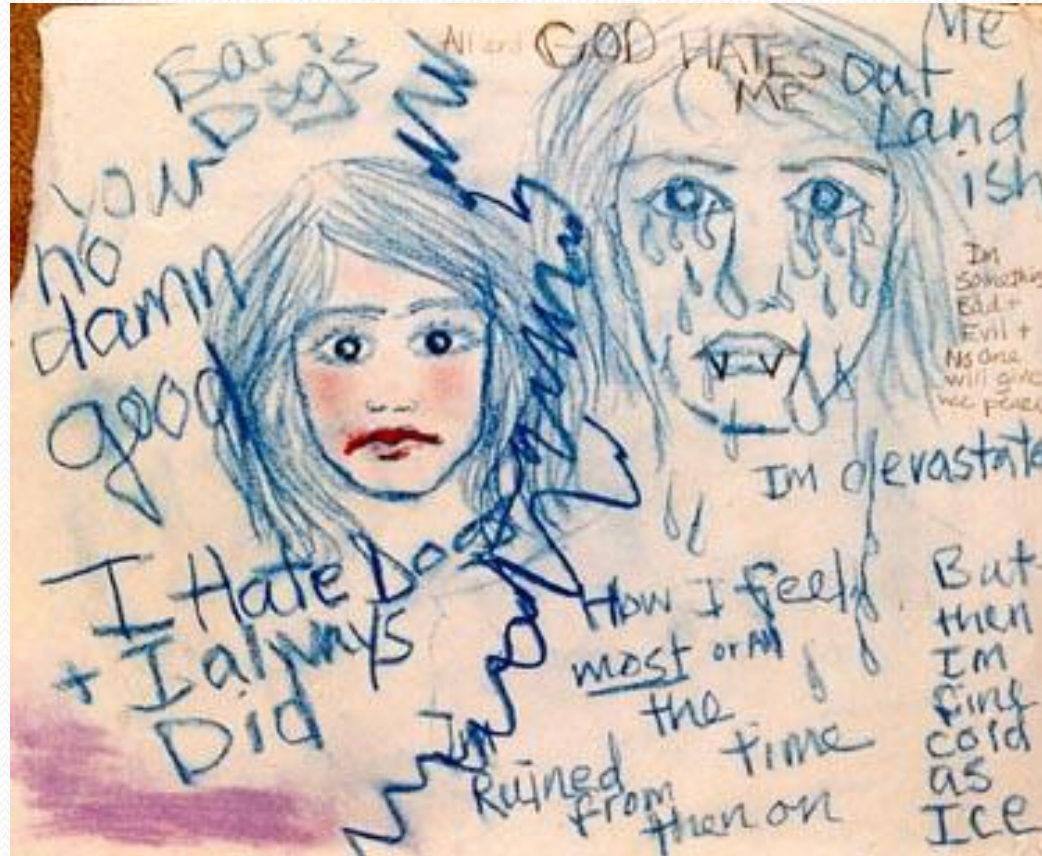
Continues over the lifespan

sense of Shame, Guilt, Self-Blame, Being Bad



Continues over the lifespan

**Sense of defilement, contamination, spoiled, degraded,
debased, despicable, evil**



Continues over the lifespan

**Sense of complete difference from others, deviance,
utter aloneness, isolation, non-human, specialness,
unseen, unheard, belief no other person can ever
understand**



Continues over the lifespan

Maintain High Suspicion

- Eating Disorders
- Morbid Obesity
- Substance Abuse
- Teenage Pregnancy
- Mental health disorders
- Chronic Pain
- Multiple somatic complaints
- Change in level of functioning: school, work, sleep, weight

Smoking

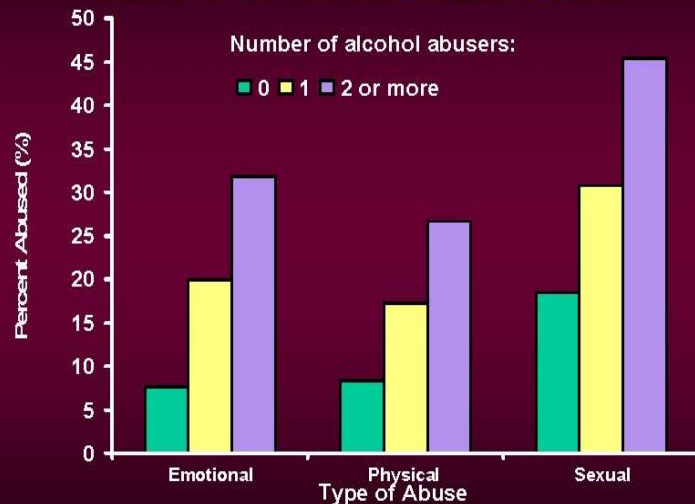
- 250% increase in current smoking for ACE Score 6 child
- Increase in chronic lung disease

Alcoholism: self-acknowledged

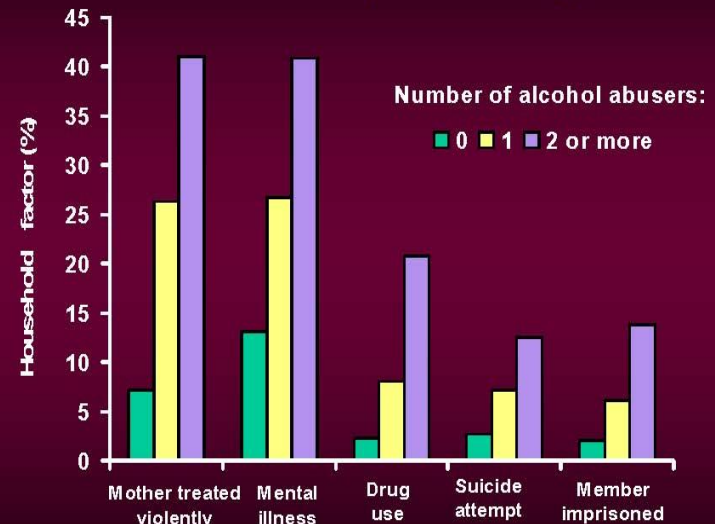
- 500% increase
- 2% occurrence in ACE score 0 vs. 16% in ACE score 4 or more

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are Highly Interrelated

Alcohol Abuse in the Home and the Risk of Childhood Abuse



Alcohol Abuse in the Home and the Risk of Other Household Exposures During Childhood

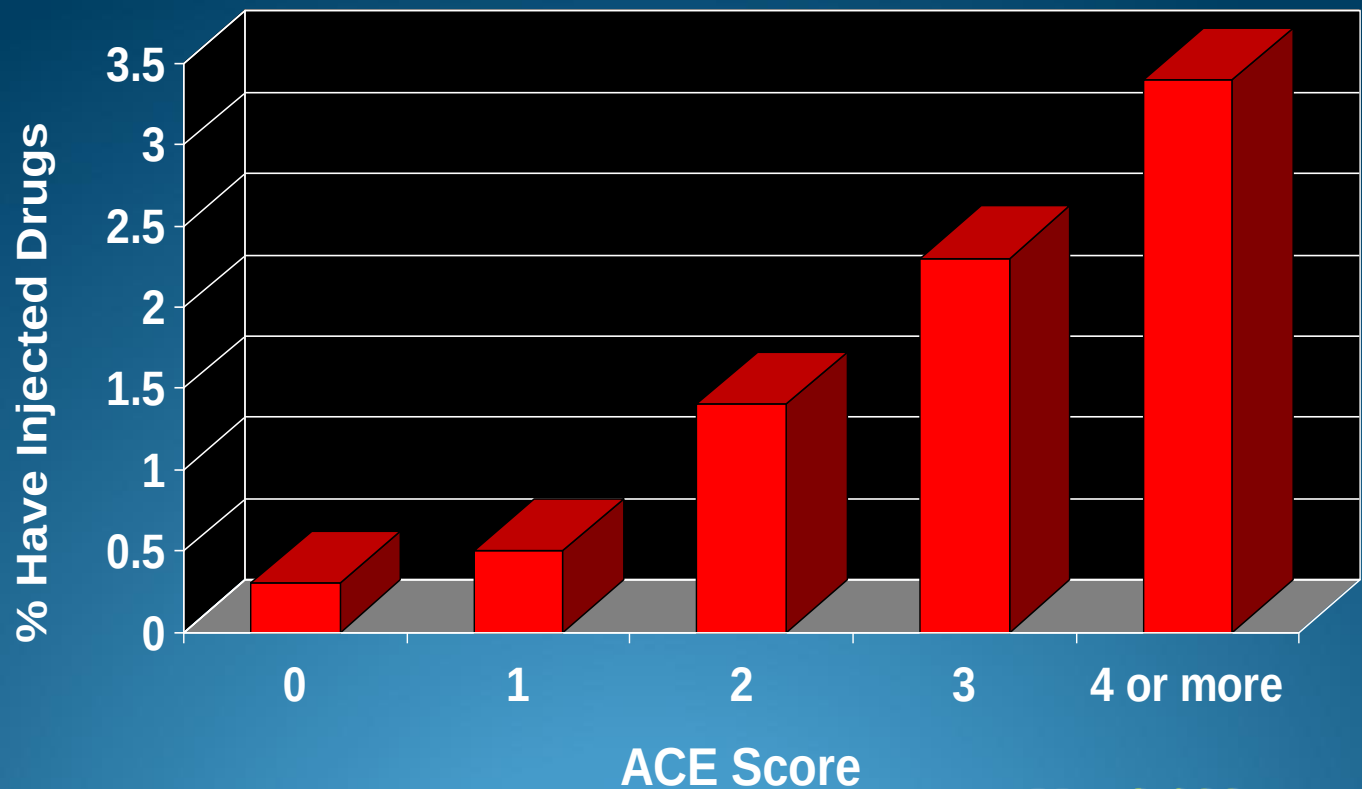


Slides from Health and Social Impact of Growing UP With Alcohol Abuse and Related ACEs. R Anda

IV drug use

- 4600% increase in ACE score 6
- Methamphetamine and heroin

ACE Score and Intravenous Drug Use



N = 8,022 **p < 0.001**

Chronic disease

- Autoimmune disease
- COPD
- Frequent Headaches
- Health Related Quality of Life
- Ischemic Heart Disease
- Liver disease
- Lung Cancer

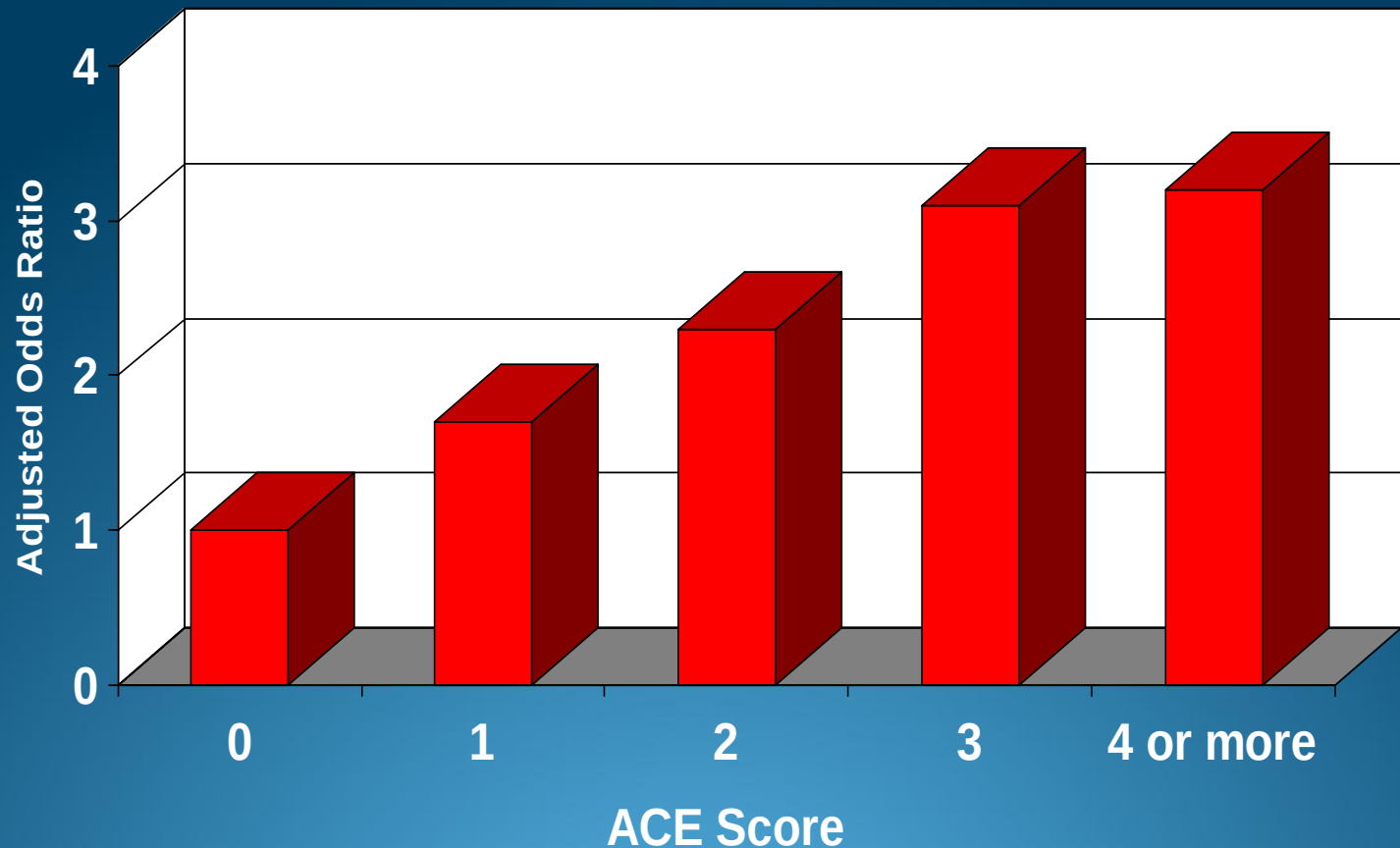
Likelihood of heart disease was increased in all categories of ACE Score, *independent of all risk factors*:

- Emotional abuse 1.7X
- Physical abuse 1.5X
- Sexual abuse 1.4X
- Domestic violence 1.4X
- Substance abuse 1.3X
- Mental illness 1.4X
- Household criminal 1.7X
- Emotional neglect 1.3X
- Physical neglect 1.4X

Other issues

- Obesity
- Work Absenteeism
- Teen Pregnancy: 16% at score 0 to 53% at score 6
- Increased fetal death after first pregnancy (not teen pregnancy related)
- Fetal Alcohol syndrome

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Likelihood of > 50 Sexual Partners



Impacts of Childhood Trauma

- Neurobiological Impacts

- * Disrupted development
- * Anger-rage
- * Hallucinations
- * Depression/other mental health challenges
- * Panic reactions
- * Anxiety
- * Somatic problems
- * Impaired memory
- * Flashbacks
- * Dissociation

Higher ACE Score Results in Significantly Poorer Life Expectancy

- On average, adults with a high ACE score had double the risk for early death compared with adults who had not endured ACEs.
- On average, children exposed to 6 or more ACEs died at age 60, whereas children without ACEs died at age 79.



S.A.V.E. Screening Tool

- **Screen:** Ask only when alone
 - Make direct eye contact
 - Active listening to response
- **Ask:** in a non-judgmental way, avoid technical or medical jargon, open-ended questioning

S.A.V.E. Screening Tool

- **Validate:** Thank you for telling me, I know that was hard
 - Document response
- **Evaluate, Educate, Refer:** Sexual assault agency e.g. Survivors, Psychologists with special knowledge of sexual assault client needs & issues
 - Co-morbid issues referrals

What is “Re-traumatization”?

A situation, attitude, interaction, or environment that replicates the events or dynamics of the original trauma and triggers the overwhelming feelings and reactions associated with them



Impact on Patients

- Decrease or loss of trust
- Higher rates of self-injury
- Significantly less willing to engage in treatment
- Intrusive memories, nightmares and flashbacks
- Re-experiencing of symptoms and emotions from previous trauma – when extreme may take on delusional intensity



Ongoing support

- May have issues with labor and delivery/loss of control/reliving assaults
- GYN/rectal/dental exams can be traumatic and result in delay or avoidance of care
- Allow patient to control tempo of exams as much as possible, only do exams that are absolutely needed
- Ask their preferences for friend/chaperone
- Recognize emotional and physical discomfort as clue to previous victimization

Disabled Patients

High risk for longer duration

4-10 fold increase

Fewer escape options

Caregivers and/or medical attendees may be perpetrators

92% of disabled women report this as a high priority

Companion must be excused during screen

Disability symptoms seem to worsen

Male patients

- Even less commonly reported than female cases
- Greater stigma, less apt to seek help
- More likely multiple assaults by multiple assailants
- Greater likelihood of physical injury
- Male fears of being considered homosexual, confusion around physiologic responses

Peds patients

- Mandatory Reporter!
- Assessment unique to child's development
- Child needs to be “believed” and understand that they are not at fault-VALIDATE
- Interview critical to all aspects of care and legal case: comprehensive team approach
- Be honest with child, assure safety

Pediatric Cases

- Perineal bruising/chafing
- Bite marks to anogenital region, back
- Anal trauma: various ages of injury
- Labial tears, palatal petechiae
- STD' s, UTI' s, enuresis/encopresis, abnormal vaginal discharge
- NORMAL exam most common

Resiliency

- People respond differently
 - Survive and thrive (PTG)
 - Recover on their own
 - Persistent symptoms
 - Effects are indirect or delayed
- Characteristics
 - Common, not rare
 - Co-exists with symptoms
- Protective Factors
 - Social connections and support
 - Meaning
 - Resiliency skills
 - Trauma-Informed Knowledge



adapted from AKBlanch

Family Strengths and Resiliency

- Family closeness
- Family support
- Family loyalty
- Family protection
- Family importance
- Family love
- Responsiveness to health care needs

Hillis S, Anda R, Dube S, Felitti V, Marchbanks P, Macaluso M, Marks J. *The Protective strengths in Childhood against Adolescent Pregnancy and its Long-Term psychosocial*

Presentation Artwork

- All artwork in this presentation was **created by Anna Caroline Jennings**. Although she had no formal training, her work is stark, sophisticated and haunting. It has been exhibited at conferences across the country.
- Through her paintings and drawings she vividly and poignantly expresses her abuse at the hands of perpetrators and within the mental health system.
- Her work and story are displayed on the website: www.TheAnnaInstitute.com

Resources

- www.nsvrc.org
- www.acog.org
- www.acep.org
- www.ama-assn.org
- www.theannainstitute.org

Resources

- www.cdc.gov
- www.pcadv.org
- www.ojp.usdoj.gov
- www.aging.state.pa.us
- District attorney's Office
- Local sexual assault agency

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