

The Impact of ACEs and the Primary Care Provider's Role

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are traumatic encounters and experiences occurring during childhood (ages 0 to 17)

TYPES OF ACEs

- Physical/verbal/sexual abuse
- Physical/emotional neglect
- Experiencing parental separation
- Witnessing abuse of parent
- Witnessing family member with mental illness

- Substance abuse within the family
- Incarcerated family member

ACE QUESTIONNAIRE

The ACE questionnaire is a validated screening tool that primary care providers can use to assess for various adversities, such as child abuse, household dysfunction, and neglect.

Access the questionnaire through the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html>

IMPACT ON MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

Higher incidence of chronic disease in adulthood:

- Depression
- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular disease
- Cancer

Substance use disorder

- Negative experiences hinders normal child development

- Negative impact on school performance

- Reckless behavior

High risk of suicide
Premature death



TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE



Prioritizing trauma-informed care is essential for addressing the lasting impact of ACEs on patients' well-being

Primary care providers play a key role in identifying and resolving these issues, enhancing overall well-being and quality of life



STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED ACEs

Provide Timely, Evidence-Based Care

Prompt care mitigates risk of chronic diseases and severe complications by

swiftly addressing issues before they escalate

Build Compassion, Rapport, and Empathy

Building a compassionate, empathetic connection is crucial for children

and youth who may struggle to confide in unfamiliar individuals

Provide Relevant Support Resources

Helping patients and families access support for challenges can facilitate

the patient's focus on growth, development, and healing



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STRATEGIES FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

As the first contact for many children and youths, providers must routinely screen for abuse, neglect, and trauma using tools like the ACE questionnaire to identify risks and prevent further harm. Optimizing assistance and care is essential for promoting their overall well-being