

# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) : Overview and Impact

## What is an ACE Score?

- **ACEs:** Total number of **adverse events** experienced during childhood.
- **ACEs Assessment:** 10 questions about potentially **traumatic childhood events**. Each “yes” response equals one point, and the total “yes” responses form the ACE score.
- **Purpose:** Helps identify individuals who may be at higher risk for **toxic stress**.



- **Trauma** can occur at any age, but childhood trauma can have **greater effects** because the brain is still **developing**.
- Children exposed to violence or trauma may **struggle** to feel **safe and ready to learn**.
- Trauma can **affect** the child, classmates, teachers, and the broader school community.

## What are the 10 ACEs?

- Domestic violence
- Substance use
- Mental health condition
- Parental separation or divorce
- Incarceration
- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional neglect
- Physical neglect

## Who is most at risk?

- Girls
- Children in financially stressed households
- Children with overwhelmed or highly stressed caregivers
- Children with family members experiencing mental health challenges
- Children living with someone with a substance use disorder
- American Indian or Alaska Native youth
- Multicultural youth
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or questioning youth
- Children across diverse backgrounds and support needs