

# Building Better Relationships

## CR Leader Training



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# Complex Developmental Trauma

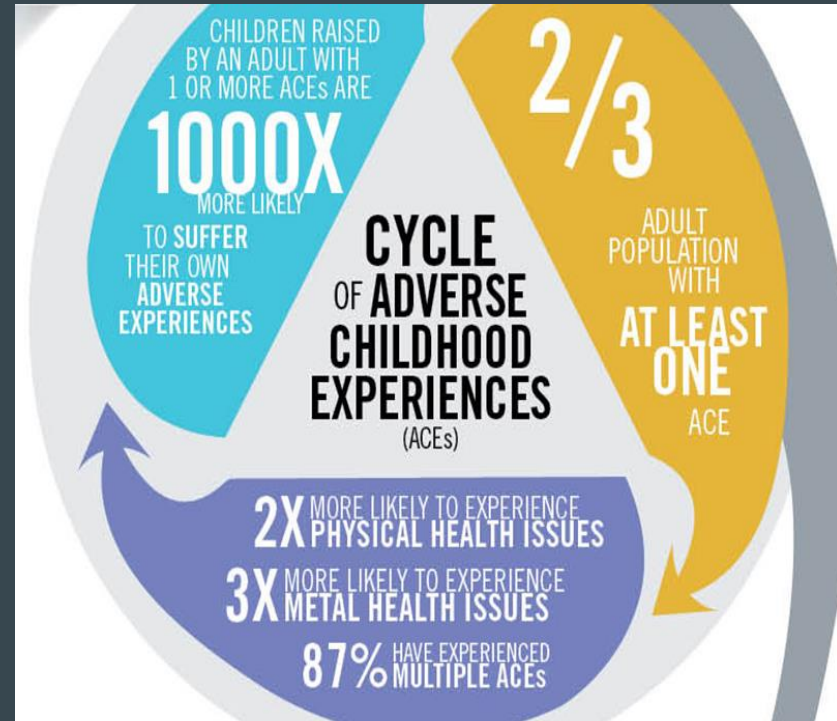
- Multiple and/or Chronic (prolonged) developmentally adverse trauma events
- Usually of an interpersonal nature
- With early life onset

# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

In an ACEs study by Kaiser Permanente and the CDC of 17,337 HMO respondents ...

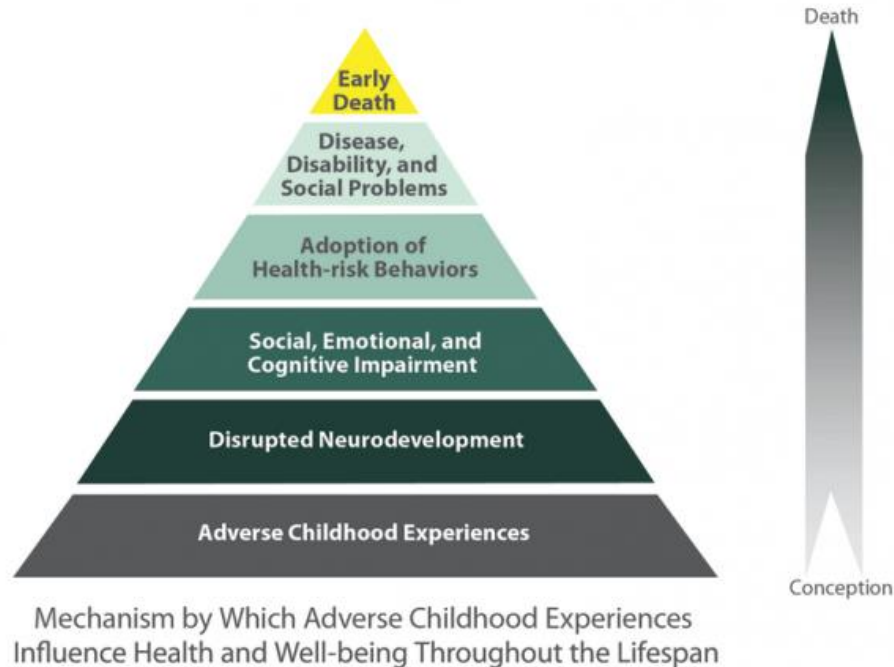
- 11% were emotionally abused
- 30% were physically abused
- 23.5% were exposed to family alcohol abuse
- 19.9% experienced sexual abuse
- 18.8% were exposed to family mental illness
- 12.5% witnessed mother being beaten
- 4.9% were exposed to family drug abuse

*-developmental trauma disorder report by  
Bessel van der Kolk, MD*

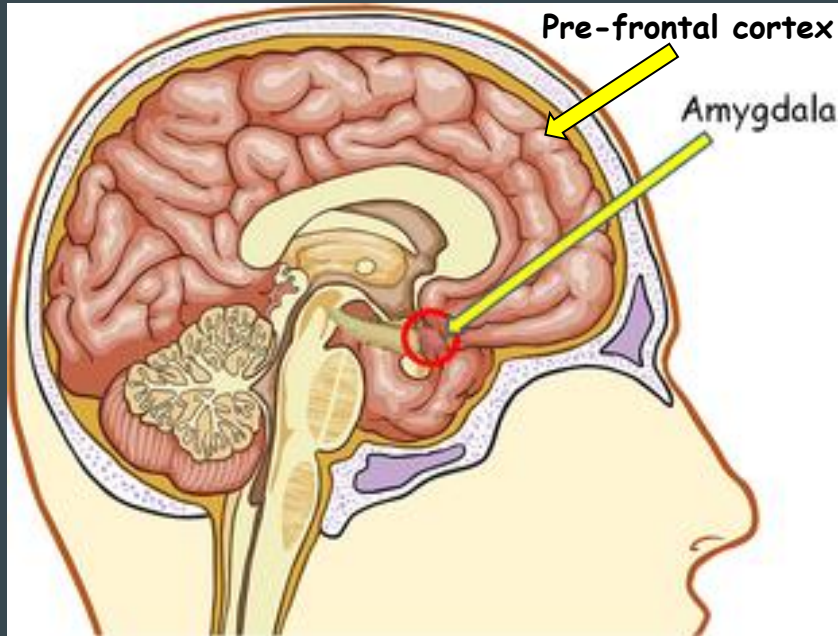


# As the # of ACEs increases, so does the risk for these conditions:

- Alcoholism and alcohol abuse
- COPD
- Depression
- Fetal death
- Health-related poor quality of life
- Illicit drug use
- Ischemic heart disease
- Liver disease
- Poor work performance
- Financial stress
- Risk for intimate partner violence
- Multiple sexual partners
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Smoking
- Suicide attempts
- Unintended pregnancies
- Early initiation of smoking
- Early initiation of sexual activity
- Adolescent pregnancy
- Risk for sexual violence
- Poor academic achievement



# Effects of Trauma on the Brain



Pre-frontal Cortex - Executive function, processes problem solving, logic, reasoning, decision making, self regulation, not fully developed until age 25

Amygdala - Stress/Anxiety activated, processes arousal, instinctual reactions related to fear, emotional responses, hormone secretion

FIGHT

FLIGHT

FREEZE

Understanding trauma gives us a new lens to view people  
(Can't vs. Won't) through

Barriers to Relationship:

- Fear
- Distrust
- Past relational injuries
- Bitterness or unforgiveness
- Using manipulation, aggression & control to meet needs
- No model for what a healthy relationship looks like
- Poor communication skills

# Disarming the Fear Response

1 John 4:18-

- 19
- Create reliable routines or rituals
  - Playfulness disarms fear
  - Tone, volume, and cadence of voice
  - Body language and facial expressions
  - Behavior matching / mirroring
  - Grounding, relaxation, breathing exercises to soothe the amygdala

# Creating an Environment for Healing through Relationship

Connection

Modeling and teaching a stable, healthy relationship

Active Listening

Empathy

Mindfulness



# Empowering Others Toward Relational Success

Give voice

Offer re-dos

Establish reachable goals

Support people in reaching goals

Celebrate others' accomplishments

Gently set and maintain healthy boundaries including expectations for others

Avoid Enabling

Speak the truth in love

# Recommended Resources

ACE Study Information - <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html>

Article by Bessel van der Kolk on Complex Trauma -  
[www.traumacenter.org/products/pdf\\_files/prerint\\_dev\\_trauma\\_disorder.pdf](http://www.traumacenter.org/products/pdf_files/prerint_dev_trauma_disorder.pdf)

The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel van der Kolk

How to be A People Helper by Gary Collins

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Article by TCU on Disarming Fear - <http://child.tcu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/The-Connected-Child-Chapter-Four.pdf>