



Adverse Childhood Experiences

An exploration of Effective
interventions and strategies
for Primary Schools in Wales

Trigger Warning!

In this presentation there will be a discussion of Themes of Abuse and adversity in childhood, including, but not limited to; sexual, physical, emotional abuse and/or neglect. domestic violence, attachment, trauma, mental health, substance abuse, health issues, suicide and self-harm.



Background and History

- In 1995, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Kaiser Permanente health care investigated the relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences, household dysfunction and its risk to health and long term outcomes in adulthood.
- Felitti et al (1998) contributed to the study exploring seven areas of childhood adversity; Psychological, physical, sexual abuse, Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse, Ill mental Health and suicidality, imprisonment.
- Results showed that more than half reported at least one ACE,
- Graded relationship where the higher the number of ACES, the more significant the risk and severity of Health risks in Adulthood, with 4 or more across multiple forms of ACE increasing the risk of premature death.

Aims and Objectives

- Explore the most current research of ACES for additional findings, relevant data and gaps requiring further investigation
- To identify the most recent research and approaches for addressing practical and effective interventions and strategies that are to be made available in primary schools in Wales for children with ACES.
- Investigate the efficacy and outcomes of suggested approaches and interventions
- Explore the implementation strategies and training of such processes
- Examine the realistic availability of suggested support and interventions for all primary aged children in Wales.
- Explore a timescale for the availability of such support for children in Wales.

Facts and Figures

- 50% of children's ACEs are acquired by the age of 3. 50 in 100 people in Wales have experienced one ACE, 14 of that have experienced 4 or more.
- If left untreated, children with a high ACE score are expected to face a 20-year decrease in life expectancy
- Children who experience four or more ACEs are 7.4 times more likely to suffer from alcoholism and 12.2 times as likely to attempt suicide
- Children who experience two or more ACEs are nearly 3 times more likely to struggle at school or achieve lower than peers
- Juvenile offenders are 4 times more likely to have experienced four or more ACEs

Dr Nadine Burke Harris - [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACES\) – The Burke Foundation](#)

[ACE Aware — ACE Aware Wales](#)

Health Risk of Children with 4 + ACES

Heart Disease	2.9 times more likely
Cancer	1.6 times more likely
COPD (lung disease)	Almost 4 times more likely
Depression	4.6 times more likely
Suicide	12.2 times more likely
Smoking	2 times more likely
Alcoholism	7 times more likely
Heroin / crack use	9.7 times more likely

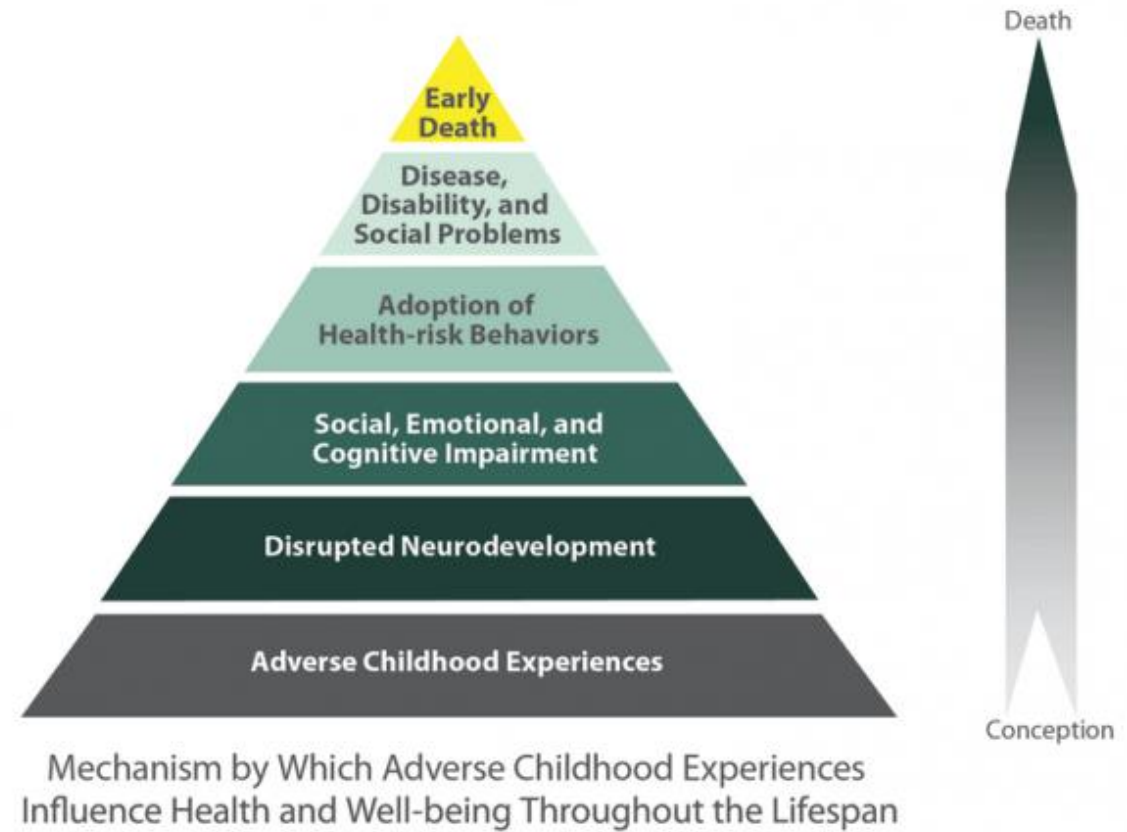
[The Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACE\) study — Connected for Life](#)

Key Points

- 1 in 10, 5 – 16 year olds have a diagnosable mental health condition
- 1 in 3 are living in poverty
- White (2017) found a lack of research on health and well-being interventions in schools in the UK and Ireland and the impact this had on improving achievement
- In 2018, The Welsh Government made a statement to work in conjunction with Public Health Wales, Barnados Cymru, NSPCC and Cymru Well Wales on delivering training for teachers to support children with family bereavement, breakdown, varying forms of abuse, and substance abuse.

ACES through life

- Image from [CDC \(2016\)](#)



Recent Developments

- ACES are now recognised as an important public health concern in Wales and internationally (Welsh Government, 2017a; World Health Organization [WHO], 2014).
- A follow-up report to the 2018 House of Commons science and technology committee inquiry on evidence-based early intervention reflects a strong consensus that ACEs are harmful and associated with a range of negative adult outcomes, but also noted scepticism about the strength of this relationship and the extent to which current practice responses, including routine ACE screening, are effective or appropriate.
- There is strong and significant evidence of the relationship between ACES and long term health risk factors and social outcomes in to adulthood
- Pressure is increasing for Policy makers and public services to determine strategies on prevention and intervention to support children with Adverse Experiences and Trauma

Project Proposal

- A current and intensive literature review on the most recent research on Adverse Childhood Experiences, exploring the available data and evidence reflecting the need for action, and investigating the efficacy and implementation of proposed interventions and approaches to support primary aged children in Wales.

Proposed plan of work

Action	Timescale
Explore current research/ Literature Review	Sept 2021
Data Collection	Nov 2021
Identify current Interventions and strategies in Schools (Online Resources)	Oct 2021
Evaluate efficacy and outcomes (Data Analysis/Review)	Dec 2021
Assess implementation and accessibility/availability in Schools	Nov 2021
Identify Training needs/Barriers	Oct 2021
Ethical Considerations	Jan 2022
Finalise Research Question	Feb 2022
Dissertation Conclusion	Feb 2022
Dissertation Submission	March 2022

So, what is happening in Wales?

- According to Public Health Wales, an ACE support hub is available to raise awareness, share ideas, learning, and lead a way forward of working together by;
- Driving change
- Sharing Evidence
- Spreading information and knowledge
- Gaining knowledge from individual experiences
- With a website dedicated to ACES, Wales appear to be in the frontline of working towards addressing a way forward for ACES.

Get ACE Aware

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic events, particularly those in early childhood that significantly affect the health and wellbeing of people in Wales, the rest of the UK and the world.

We can break the cycle of ACEs at any stage: it's never too late.

Preventing ACEs in a single generation or reducing their impacts can benefit not only those children but also future generations in Wales.

Methodology

- As a Literature review based research project, the primary aim is to investigate currently available, and proposed ACE based interventions and their efficacy in Primary Schools in Wales. This data will be gathered in a Qualitative approach, via previously conducted research such as semi-structured interviews, observations/case studies, Library and Online based journals/studies, whilst also referring to Quantitative methods in the form of population based surveys and prevalence in Wales. Data will be collaborated on the basis of need, prevalence and implementation across Primary schools in Wales.

Ethics

Throughout all research there will be reference to the BACP ethical framework for the helping professions

As the content of this proposal concerns children, there will also be reference to the Children and young people (CYP) competences and curricula.

Challenges

- Key questions are being asked about the biological, social, and causal factors involved in ACES
- Questions are still being asked about the methodology and 'strength' of the evidence linking ACES to 'negative' adult outcomes
- Challenges are being made about the efficacy of routine ACE screening and 'Trauma-informed' care, current interventions and evidence of preventing/reducing ACES.
- These are important discussions in the development of effective interventions and support for children with ACES.

In Review

ACES are recognised as an important public health concern in Wales and internationally (Welsh Government, 2017a; World Health Organization [WHO], 2014) (Bethell et al., 2017; Pachter et al., 2017).

Many evidence-based interventions are aimed at specific types of adversity (e.g. physical and/or sexual abuse), (Hughes et al., 2017)

Interventions are recognising the need for support in parenting; building relationships and early identification of adversity in relation to ACEs

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