

## **Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Resilience**

### **What are ACEs?**

ACEs are childhood experiences that may prevent a child from learning or cause long-term health problems.

### **Adverse Childhood Experiences include:**

- Emotional, Physical, Sexual abuse
- Emotional and Physical neglect
- Witnessing violence at home
- Substance abuse by an adult caregiver
- Mental illness of an adult caregiver
- Separation or divorce of parents
- Incarceration of a household member

### **ACEs increase risk of:**

- Language delays
- Behavior problems
- Depression and Suicide attempts
- Tobacco, Alcohol or Drug problems
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Obesity
- And many other problems, including school failure and homelessness.

### **How do ACEs affect health?**

Frequent or prolonged exposure to ACEs may create toxic stress, which damages the developing brain and the body's ability to maintain health. ACEs can also result in unhealthy habits, like poor diet and exercise, which in turn increase risk of health problems.

The good news is, resilience can bring back health and hope!

### **What is Resilience?**

Resilience is the ability to return to being healthy and hopeful after bad things happen.

### **Resilience trumps ACEs!**

Parents, other relatives, teachers, coaches and mentors can help children by:

- Gaining an understanding of ACEs
- Seeking help if needed to address domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental illness
- Creating safe physical and emotional environments at home, in school, and in neighborhoods
- Communicating love and respect through words and actions
- Helping children identify feelings and manage emotions

### **What builds resilience?**

#### **1. Meeting basic needs and expectations**

Providing children with safe housing, nutritious food, appropriate clothing, access to health care, and a good education is important for healthy development. In addition, a

daily routine with consistent family rules is important for developing healthy habits and a sense of stability.

2. **Having resilient caregivers**

It is important for parents to take care of their own physical and mental health needs in order to be the best parents that they can be for their children. Eating well, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep, and taking time to be with adult friends are some of the key ways in which parents can take care of their own health.

3. **Establishing secure and nurturing relationships**

Children need to have secure relationships with adults. Adults can build secure relationships with children by paying attention to a child's physical and emotional needs, listening to a child's ideas and experiences, playing and showing love through hugs, kisses, affirmations, and quality time. Ideally, children have secure and nurturing relationships with their parents, but when their relationship with their parent is impaired, other adults (such as other relatives, friends of the family, teachers, coaches, counselors, and clergy) can fill the gap.

4. **Building social connections**

Even when children have healthy, loving parents, it is important for them to feel that their family is connected to a broader community. Spending time with extended family, friends and/or neighbors helps children develop social connections who become resources for them and their parents.

5. **Learning about parenting and social-emotional development**

Children do not come with instructions and parenting skills are not taught in most high school or college curricula. All caregivers can benefit from learning what children are capable of at different ages and how best to support their social-emotional development.

### How to become a resilient parent

- **Identify your circle of support.** Parenting is hard, especially when families have experienced difficult times. No one should try to do it alone. Seek support from counselors, physicians, family, friends, faith communities, and others who can help you see what you are doing well and connect you with more support when needed.
- **Self-care.** Eat healthy, exercise regularly, get enough sleep, take care of your medical needs, and give yourself some childfree time to relax such as by walking, deep breathing, talking to friends, meditating or praying.
- **Take time to think about what happened in your childhood and how it could be affecting you now.** If this is difficult or painful, consider getting support from a counselor or simply ask someone you trust for help.

### Resources

Scan QR code or visit link to access resources by area



[bit.ly/acesbcentral](https://bit.ly/acesbcentral)

## Basic Needs

Food, clothing and shelter are important for growing minds and bodies. Here are some resources for your family:

- **WIC** for pregnant women and children age 5 or younger, 1-800-472-2321 or 909-252-5170
- **SNAP** (food stamps) for low-income families, [www.fns.usda.gov/snap](http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap) or call 1-877-847-3663
- **Helping Hands Pantry** Pick up groceries 7 days a week, 8:30 – 11:30 AM on weekdays. Located at 1455 E Third St, San Bernardino, CA 92408
- **Additional Resources** including food, clothing, shelter and more call 2-1-1 or in San Bernardino visit [www.211sb.org](http://www.211sb.org) and in Riverside visit [www.connectriverside.org](http://www.connectriverside.org)

## Safety

You don't deserve to be physically hurt or emotionally controlled. Here are some resources to help make your family a place of love, not violence:

- **National Domestic Violence Hotline**, 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY) or from a safe computer [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org).
- **Option House**, shelter to help people suffering domestic abuse, 813 N D St. #3, San Bernardino (909) 381-3471
- **Bureau of Victim Services**, 316 N. Mt. View Ave., San Bernardino; or call 909-387-6540
- **Family Service Agency**, 1669 N E Street, San Bernardino; or call 909-886-6737
- **Alternatives to Domestic Violence** – for resources in Riverside 951-320-1370 or Desert 760-288-3313

## Substances & Addiction

Lots of people have problems with drugs and alcohol, and this can hurt their families. If you or someone you know would like help, consider the following:

- **SAMHSA**, referral to local treatment facilities or support groups, call 1-800-662-4357 or visit <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov>
- **Inland Empire Alcoholics Anonymous**, for info and meetings near you call 909-825-4700 (24 hours), 909-881-3230 or visit <http://www.inlandempireaa.org>
- **Southern California Narcotics Anonymous**, for info and meetings near you call 1-800-863-2962 or visit [www.todayna.org](http://www.todayna.org)
- **Inland Valley Recovery Services**, located in San Bernardino and Upland, Call office at (909) 932-1069 or crisis hotline afterhours (909) 608-2002. <http://www.inlandvalleyrecovery.org>
- **Riverside Treatment Center** 951-784-8010 or County Program 951-955-2105
- **Teen Challenge** – “Turning Point” 9-week course for families of loved one with substance problem. Includes course for teens. Contact Blayne Radford 951-683-4241
- **CA Smokers' Helpline**, 1-800-NO-BUTTS or visit [www.quit.com](http://www.quit.com)

## Mental Health & Wellness

It's hard to be a good parent when you are feeling sad, tired, anxious, or stressed out. The good news is that there is treatment. Your insurance plan may cover specific providers, or try the following resources:

- **National Alliance for Mentally Ill (NAMI)**, info and referrals at 1-800-950-6264 or [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)
- **Loma Linda Behavioral Health Institute**, 1686 Barton Road, Redlands; or call 909-558-9500
- **Victor Community Support Services**, 1908 Business Center Drive, San Bernardino; or call 909-890-5930
- **Christian Counseling Service**, 101 E Redlands Blvd, Ste 215, Redlands; or call 909-793-1078
- **Phoenix Community Counseling Center**, 820 E Gilbert St, San Bernardino; or call 909-387-7200
- **SACHS Behavioral Health Services** Offers psychotherapy (age 18+) and psychiatric services. Call 909-382-7135
- **Riverside University Health Services Behavioral Health** Children's services admin 951-358-4520, Desert 760-863-8455 & Mid-County 951-443-2200.
- **Individual therapists**, to look up a therapist near you go to <http://therapists.psychologytoday.com>

## Relationships- Parenting

Being a parent isn't always easy, nor is it always obvious how to teach kids to behave. Here are some resources to help:

- **National Parent Helpline** at 855-427-2736 or visit [www.nationalparenthelpline.org](http://www.nationalparenthelpline.org)
- **Triple P Positive Parenting**, online info and resources at 803-451-2278 or visit [www.triplep-parenting.net](http://www.triplep-parenting.net)
- **Nurturing Parenting Classes** for parents ages 13-24 of children ages 0-5, Walden Family Services, 255 North D St, San Bernardino; or call 909-264-6742
- **Incredible Years Parenting Programs** for parents of children ages 0-12, Victor Community Support Services, 1908 Business Center Dr, Ste 220, San Bernardino; or call 909-890-5930
- **Parenting Classes** in English and Spanish, Christian Counseling Center, 101 E Redlands Blvd, Ste 215, Redlands; or call 909-793-1078
- **Riverside Parent-to-Parent Telephone Support Line** call 951-358-5862 or toll free 888-358-3622.

## Parenting- Solo

Being a parent is harder when you don't have the reliable help of a second adult. Here are some resources to help:

- **Parents without Partners**, online info and resources at [www.parentswithoutpartners.org](http://www.parentswithoutpartners.org)
- **Legal Services**, Legal Aid Society of San Bernardino: (909) 889-4811, or Inland County Legal Services: 909-884-8615
- **Co-Parenting Classes**, online at [www.onlineparentingprograms.com](http://www.onlineparentingprograms.com)
- **National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated**, online info and resources at <http://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu>
- **Sesame Street's toolkit Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration**, available at [www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/incarceration](http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/incarceration)
- **Kindship/Youth Warm Line** for grandparents as caregivers at 800-303-0001