

POSITIVE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

In Tennessee

Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships in childhood create a strong foundation of health, resilience, and well-being across the lifespan



Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) are experiences during childhood that promote safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments.

PCEs can help children develop a sense of belonging, connectedness, and build resilience.

These experiences can include:

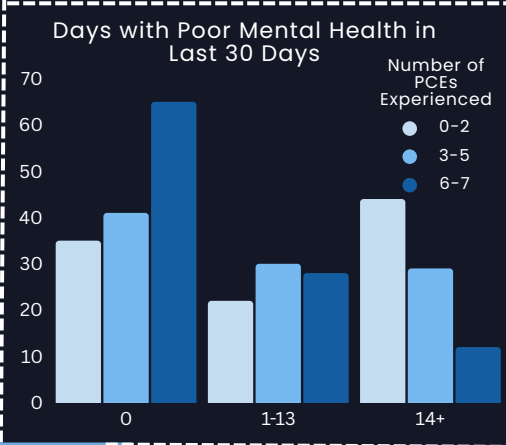
- Close relationships with any parent or safe, stable adult
- Feeling safe at home, at school, and in the community
- Having chances to learn and belong in a community

PCEs can prevent and mitigate **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**, stressful or traumatic experiences during childhood that disrupt healthy development

These include abuse, neglect, family dysfunction, community violence, racism, and bullying



63% of Tennesseans have experienced at least one ACE & **29%** have experienced at least 3 ACEs ¹



PCEs are strongly associated with better mental health and lower prevalence of depression

44% of adults with 0-2 PCEs spent 2 or more weeks of the last month dealing with poor mental health compared to just 12% of those with 6-7 PCEs ¹

POLICIES & PROGRAMS

- **Handle with Care** programs alert schools when a child has experienced a police-reported incident so they may receive trauma-sensitive support
- **Evidence Based Home Visiting** programs provide support for new parents and promote early learning
- **Women, Infants and Children (WIC)** provides nutrition, breastfeeding, and other services for infants and mothers of young children

PLANNING FOR COLLABORATIVE ACTION

- **Teach kids relationship and self-regulation skills** in school and community programs
- **Support mentorship, after-school, and cultural programs** for kids of all ages
- **Improve family economic support** by helping parents sign up for SNAP, WIC, or tax credits
- **Support early childhood programs** like high quality childcare and evidence-based home visiting
- **Shift public mindsets about PCEs** with public education campaigns to increase awareness and incite action for healthy child development
- Get involved with the **Resilient Tennessee Collaborative**

BARRIERS TO CHANGE

- Lack of access to childcare
- Unstable housing or homelessness
- Shortage in the mental health workforce
- Financial insecurity
- Intergenerational trauma



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¹Tennessee Department of Health