

Engaging the Community to Build Back Stronger: Lessons from the Actions 4 ACEs Campaign

Today's Panelists



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Partner
Porter Novelli



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Program Officer
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NJ State Teacher of the Year 2020-2021



Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

About ACEs

- ACEs, or adverse childhood experiences, are stressful or traumatic events that occur before the age of 18
- They include experiences such as divorce, witnessing violence or physical, emotional and sexual abuse
- Adverse community events such as poverty, poor housing quality, and systemic racism can further compound the effects of ACEs
- A landmark study found the higher the number of ACEs, the more likely one can experience negative health effects like heart disease, diabetes, stroke, depression, anxiety, and asthma

The Pair of ACEs: Adverse Childhood Experiences and Adverse Community Environments

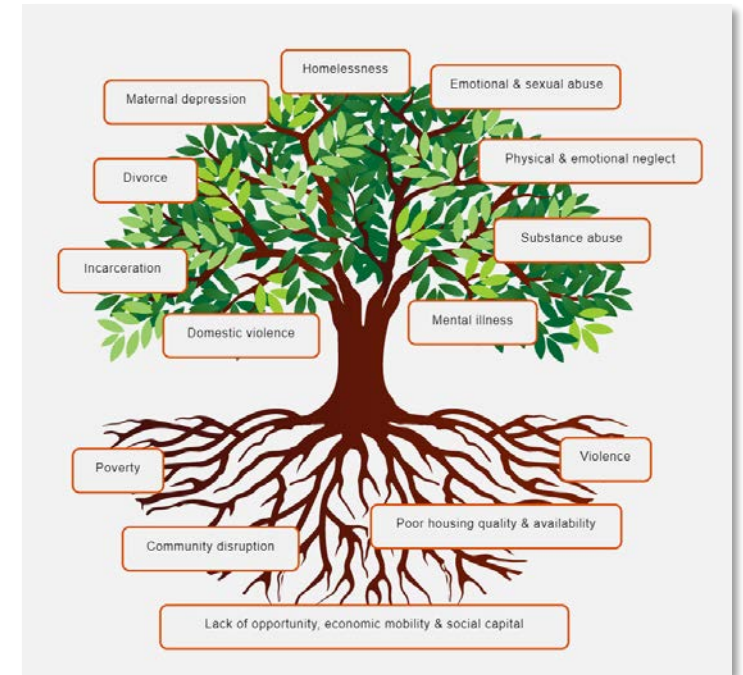


Image Adapted from Ellis., W.R and Dietz, W.H

The Burden of ACEs

- The economic cost of ACEs in North America is estimated to be over \$700 billion annually¹
- Nationally, 2 out of 3 children have experienced at least one ACE²
- 61% of adults surveyed across 25 states reported that they had at least one type of adverse childhood trauma³
- At least 5 of the 10 top leading causes of death are associated with ACEs⁴
- Preventing ACEs could reduce the number of adults with depression by as much as 44%⁴

¹ Bellis, M.A., Hughes, K., Ford, K., Ramos Rodriguez, G., Sethi, D., and Passmore, J. (2019). Life Course Health Consequences and Associated Annual Costs of Adverse Childhood Experiences across Europe and North America: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *Lancet Public Health* 4(10), e517-e528. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31492648/>

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2021, June 10). *Understanding Child Trauma*. <https://www.samhsa.gov/child-trauma/understanding-child-trauma>

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, June 10). Violence Prevention Fast Facts: What are adverse childhood experiences? <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html>

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Preventing Early Trauma to Improve Adult Health. *Vital Signs*, November 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/pdf/vs-1105-aces-H.pdf>

The Science of ACEs



ACEs can change our brains and bodies

- ACEs can alter children's brains and bodies in ways that can cause behavioral problems, learning difficulties and physical health issues



Early adversity can have a lifelong impact

- When faced with early adversity and trauma, children are at a higher risk of developing chronic illness as an adult or experiencing an earlier death
- As adults, children impacted by ACEs can have an increased risk of developing chronic diseases, such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease



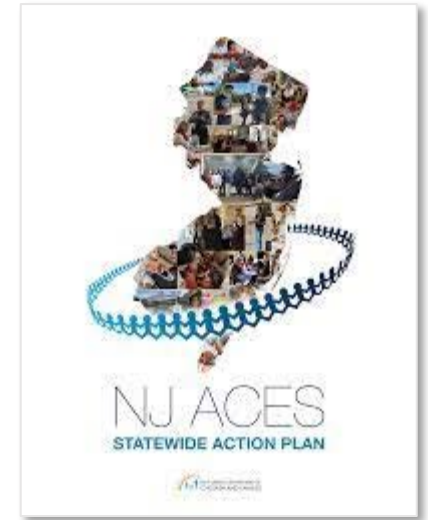
Caring and competent adults can help children heal from the impact of ACEs

- Building positive relationships with caring and competent adults can help a child heal from the impact of ACEs, build a sense of belonging, and increase connections to community, culture and spirituality

Addressing ACEs in New Jersey

• Key Statewide Activities to Date

- The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) released the **NJ ACEs Statewide Action Plan** in February 2021 detailing a path toward making New Jersey a trauma-informed/healing centered state
- The NJ ACEs Collaborative created the **NJ Resiliency Coalition Community** as an active virtual learning center that convenes people living and working in the state around solutions for preventing ACEs
- The NJ Office of the Attorney General issued a statewide **Handle With Care (HWC)** program directive, promoting partnerships between schools and law enforcement to help children facing trauma
- Launch of **Actions 4 ACEs** campaign (June 2021)



A photograph of two young women in a hallway, overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The woman on the left is wearing a denim shirt and a headband, holding a folder. The woman on the right is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored top. They are both smiling and looking at each other.

Actions 4 ACEs Campaign Overview

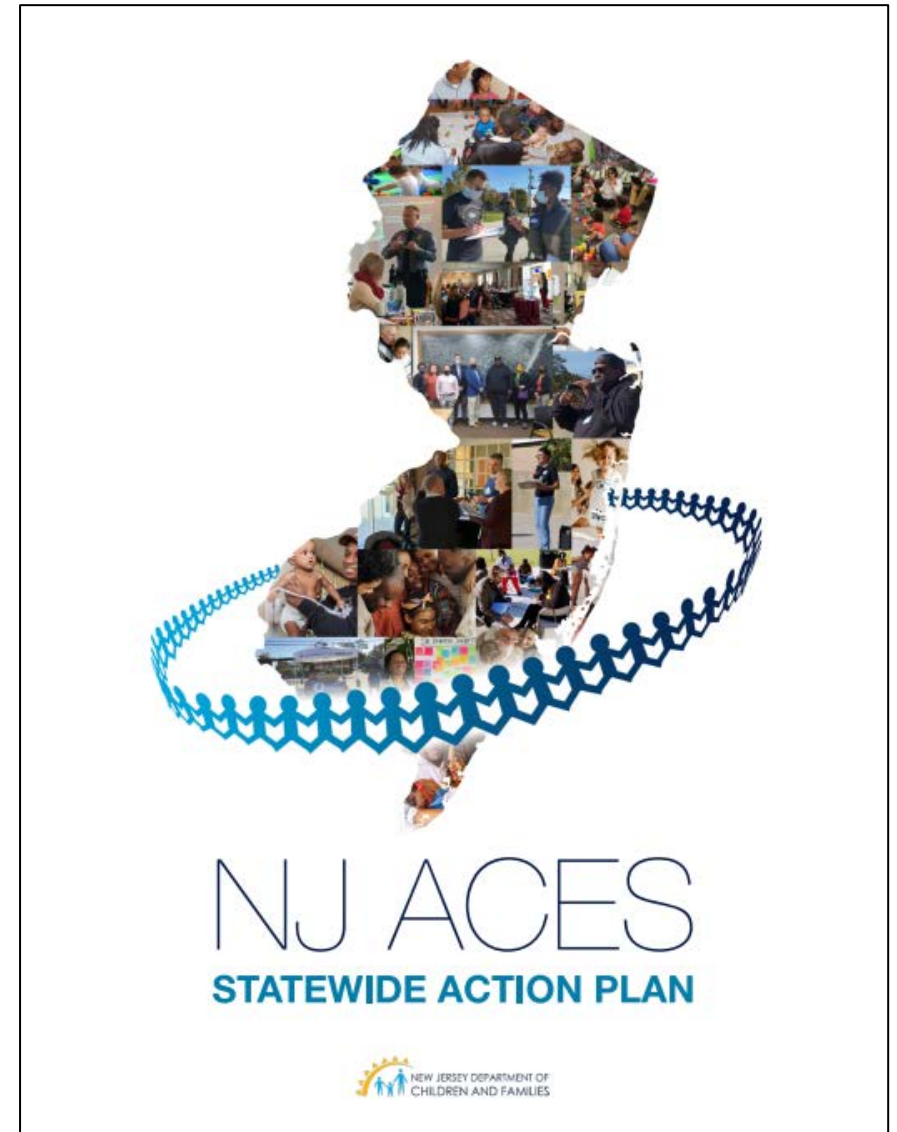
Campaign Goal

The Actions 4 ACEs campaign aims to increase public awareness of ACEs and encourage adoption of behaviors that can mitigate the impact ACEs can have on children, families and communities

Campaign Vision

To make New Jersey a trauma-informed, healing-centered state – a place where children and families can thrive regardless of where they are or where they live

Actions4ACEs



NJ ACEs
COLLABORATIVE

Community Advisory Board



Shakira Abdul-Ali
*Organization Development
Consultant, Facilitator, Trainer, Coach*



Zaire Ali
*CEO
The Urban Health Collaborative*



Rob Czepiel
*Chief Executive Officer
Resilient Minds on the Front Lines*



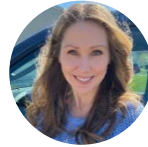
Alisha De Lorenzo
*Interim Deputy Director, Garden State Equality
Founder/CEO Living YES, LLC*



Mark Dinglasan
*Executive Director
CUMAC*



Dave Ellis
*Executive Director
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NJ Teacher of the Year 2021*



Lewis Spears
*Founder of Kismet of Kings,
Author*



Altarik White
*Educator, Newark Public Schools
Founder, Leaders 4 Life*



Atiya Weiss
*Executive Director
The Burke Foundation*

Partner Voices & Engagement



THE **BURKE**
FOUNDATION

TURRELL
FUND

The Nicholson  Foundation
Changing Systems, Changing Lives



NJ  Association of
School Administrators
Education &
Research Foundation



Audience Research

Educators and law enforcement could define ACEs but wanted more information about how to respond to children dealing with ACEs



Majority (73%) could define ACEs with the right keywords (e.g., abuse, trauma)



Majority (98%) felt ACEs were relevant to their day-to-day job



Only 59% knew how to find resources for addressing ACEs



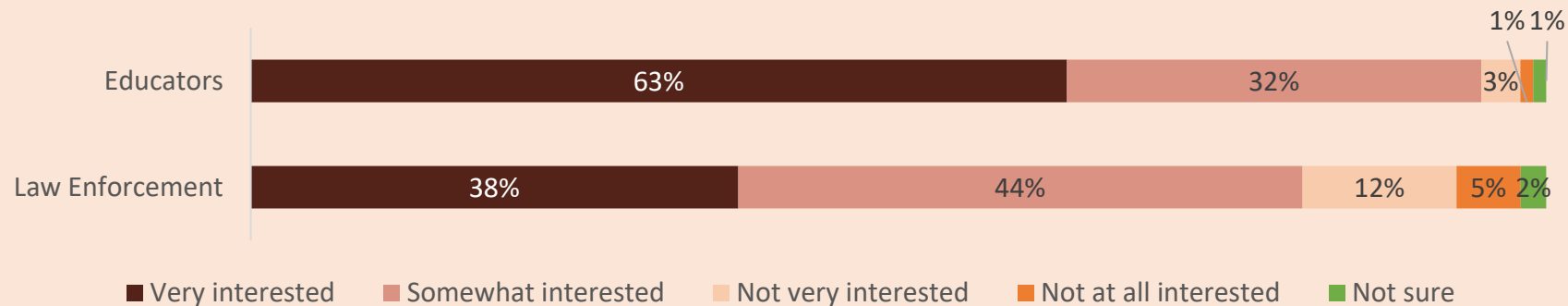
Fewer than 1 in 5 felt “very equipped” to address ACEs with most feeling only “somewhat equipped”

Audience Research

ACEs training highly desired by educators and law enforcement



How interested are you in participating in adverse childhood experiences training in the future?



Website

Helping New Jersey Children **Heal From Trauma**

Actions 4 ACEs is a statewide initiative to build awareness about adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and the role adults can play in reducing the impact of trauma and helping children heal.

ABOUT ACTIONS 4 ACEs



2 out of 3
children, nationally, have had at
least one ACE.¹



Children
with 3+ ACEs
are less likely to graduate high
school.²



Children who experience 4+
ACEs are
4x more likely
to become juvenile offenders.³

Posters

Share a **GAME**

2 out of 3 Children Have Experienced Trauma
3 Out of 3 Adults Can Help



Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can affect children through adulthood. Connections with caring and competent adults can make a difference.

Learn more at [Actions4ACEs.com](https://www.Actions4ACEs.com)



NJ ACES
COLLABORATIVE

Share a **CONVERSATION**

2 out of 3 Children Have Experienced Trauma
3 Out of 3 Adults Can Help




Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can affect children through adulthood. Connections with caring and competent adults can make a difference.

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Social Posts




2 out of 3 children have experienced trauma.
3 out of 3 adults can help.

#Actions4ACEs NJ ACES COLLABORATIVE



Giving a little extra care to those who need it most.

#Actions4ACEs NJ ACES COLLABORATIVE



2 out of 3 children have experienced trauma.
3 out of 3 adults can help.

#Actions4ACEs NJ ACES COLLABORATIVE



2 out of 3 children have experienced trauma.
3 out of 3 adults can help.

[Learn More](#)

Actions4ACEs

New Content Preview: What are your Actions 4 ACEs?



"At the root of this work is relationships.

It's about how we engage with each other in a way that allows us to see our shared humanity and bring compassion into the conversation."

– Dave Ellis, Executive Director, NJ Office of Resilience

#Actions4ACEs



A Mindset Shift to Support Children Who Have Experienced ACEs



TRADITIONAL

"What is wrong with you?"

TRAUMA-INFORMED

"What happened to you?"

RESILIENCY-INFORMED

"What are your strengths?"

#Actions4ACEs

A photograph of a group of people in a meeting, overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The text "Panel Discussion" is centered in white. The people are engaged in conversation, with some looking towards each other and others looking down.

Panel Discussion

Thank You

Actions4ACEs

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