



Adverse Childhood Experiences

Oregon Office on Disability and Health

What is an adverse childhood experience?

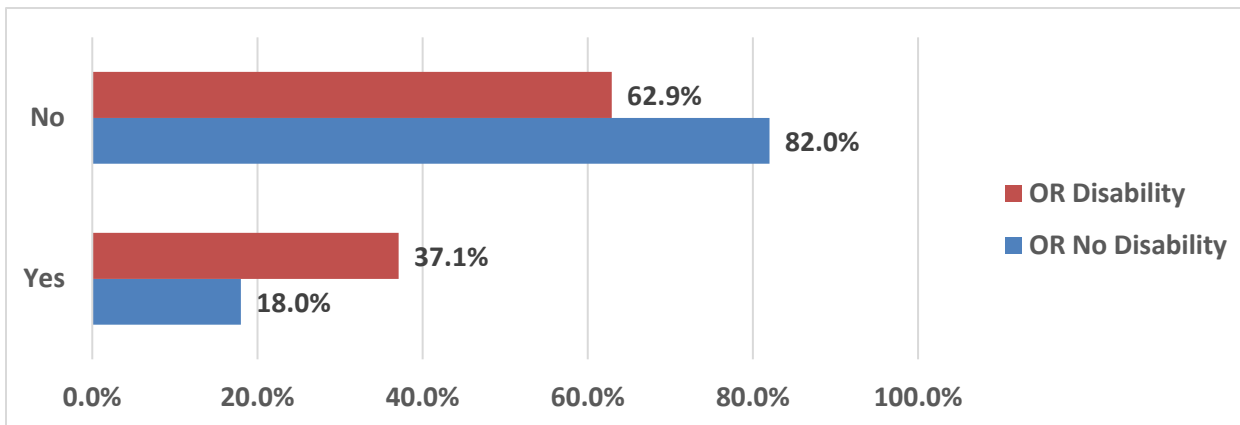
According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an adverse childhood experience is any act or series of acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that results in harm, potential for harm or threat of harm to a child¹. The importance of monitoring adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is that they are influential in the mental health development of an individual. ACEs are common and have been related with negative health outcomes across the life course.

Common adverse childhood experiences²

Abuse	Household Challenges	Neglect
11% Emotional	13% Mother treated violently	15% Emotional
28% Physical	27% Substance abuse	10% Physical
21% Sexual	19% Mental illness	
	23% Separation/divorce	
	5% Incarcerated family member	

The following data from the 2014 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) show what percent of adults in Oregon reported adverse childhood experiences³. The chart compares people with and without disabilities. The BRFSS is a telephone base survey that is conducted annually in each state in the US, it collects information regarding demographic information, behavioral risk factors, and chronic health conditions among survey respondents.

Figure 1: Adverse Childhood Experiences, BRFSS 2014



We found that Oregon adults with disabilities are more likely to have had an adverse childhood experiences when compared to Oregon adults without disabilities. In Oregon:

- 37.1% of adults with disabilities had adverse childhood experiences, whereas only 18.0% of adults without disabilities had adverse childhood experiences.

- 82.0% of adults without disabilities did not have adverse childhood experiences, whereas 62.9% of adults with disabilities did not have adverse childhood experiences.

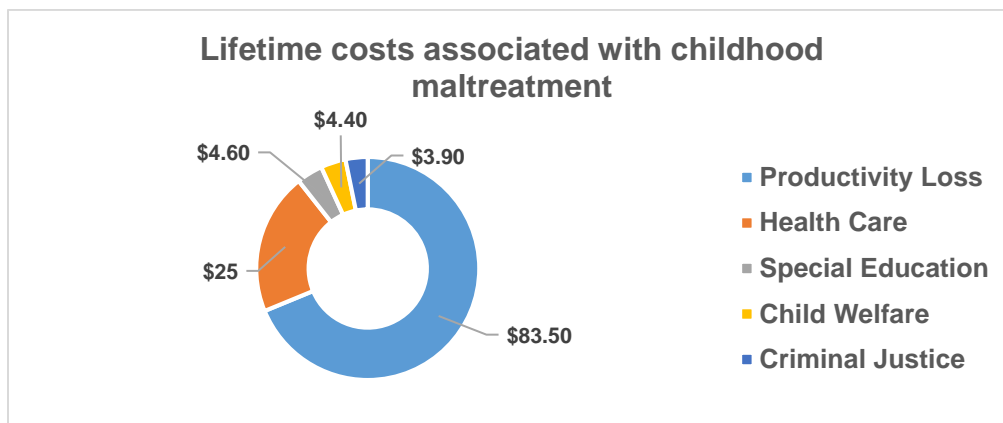
How do adverse childhood experiences affect health?³

As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk of possible negative health outcomes, including but not limited to:

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Asthma | • Lowered education attainment | • Suicide attempts |
| • Mental distress | • Coronary heart disease | • Obesity |
| • Depression | • Stroke | • Missed work |
| • Smoking | • Diabetes | • Lowered life expectancy |
| • Disability | | • Substance abuse |
| • Unemployment | | |

How do adverse childhood experiences affect the economy and society?Error! Bookmark not defined.

The following graphs illustrates the associated cost of childhood experience to our economy and society. The CDC estimated this number to be \$124 billion dollars⁴.



What can be done about ACEs?Error! Bookmark not defined.

- Parenting training programs
- Intimate partner violence prevention
- Social support for parents
- Mental illness and substance abuse treatment
- High quality child care
- Sufficient income support for lower income families
- Home visits to pregnant women and families with newborns

Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments can have a positive impact and prevent ACEs before they happen and can assist development of skills to help children reach their full potential.

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1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). About Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System ACE Data. http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/ace_brfss.html
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [appropriate].
4. Veto Violence. (n.d). Adverse Childhood Experiences looking at how ACEs affect our lives & society. http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/phl/resource_center_infographic.html

