

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Understanding and Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

According to the CDC, Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs are stressful events that can happen during childhood. Some common examples of these experiences include physical abuse or neglect, emotional abuse or neglect, witnessing violence in the home or community, having a family member with a mental illness or substance abuse problem, parental separation or divorce, and a household member's incarceration.

Research shows that experiencing multiple ACEs has lasting negative effects on physical and mental health. Studies have even found that individuals with six or more ACEs died nearly 20 years earlier on average than individuals without ACEs.

The good news is that ACEs are preventable. Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments can positively impact children who have ACEs and help ease the negative harmful impact of those experiences. Anyone can be a part of preventing ACEs by simply connecting with others. Here are some suggestions of things you can do from [connectionsourcematter.org](https://www.connectionsourcematter.org):

- Put down your smartphone and spend 15 minutes of non-electronic time with a child
- Share a meal or cup of coffee with friends
- Contact a friend to ask how they are doing
- Offer an encouraging smile to a parent whose child is throwing a tantrum at the store
- Play a rule-based game with a young child
- Introduce yourself to someone you've seen before in your neighborhood but never said hi to
- Connect with a young parent and make a plan to do something (shopping, take a walk, lunch)

More information on preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences see cdc.gov/aces/prevention or contact Michelle Broxterman, mbroxterman@ksu.edu, (620)724-8233

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