



PROFIADAU NIWEIDIOL MEWN PLENTYNDOD ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES



A short guide to understanding **Adverse Childhood Experiences** and a **Trauma and ACE (TrACE)** informed approach

What are ACEs?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences occurring during childhood that cause children to repeatedly suffer.

The experiences can directly harm a child (e.g. abuse) or can indirectly affect a child through the environments they live in (e.g. growing up in a house with domestic violence.) The resulting trauma can continue to affect people as adults, long after it has happened.



Almost half
the people in Wales have an ACE.



4+ ACEs
One in seven
people in Wales has had
more than four ACEs.

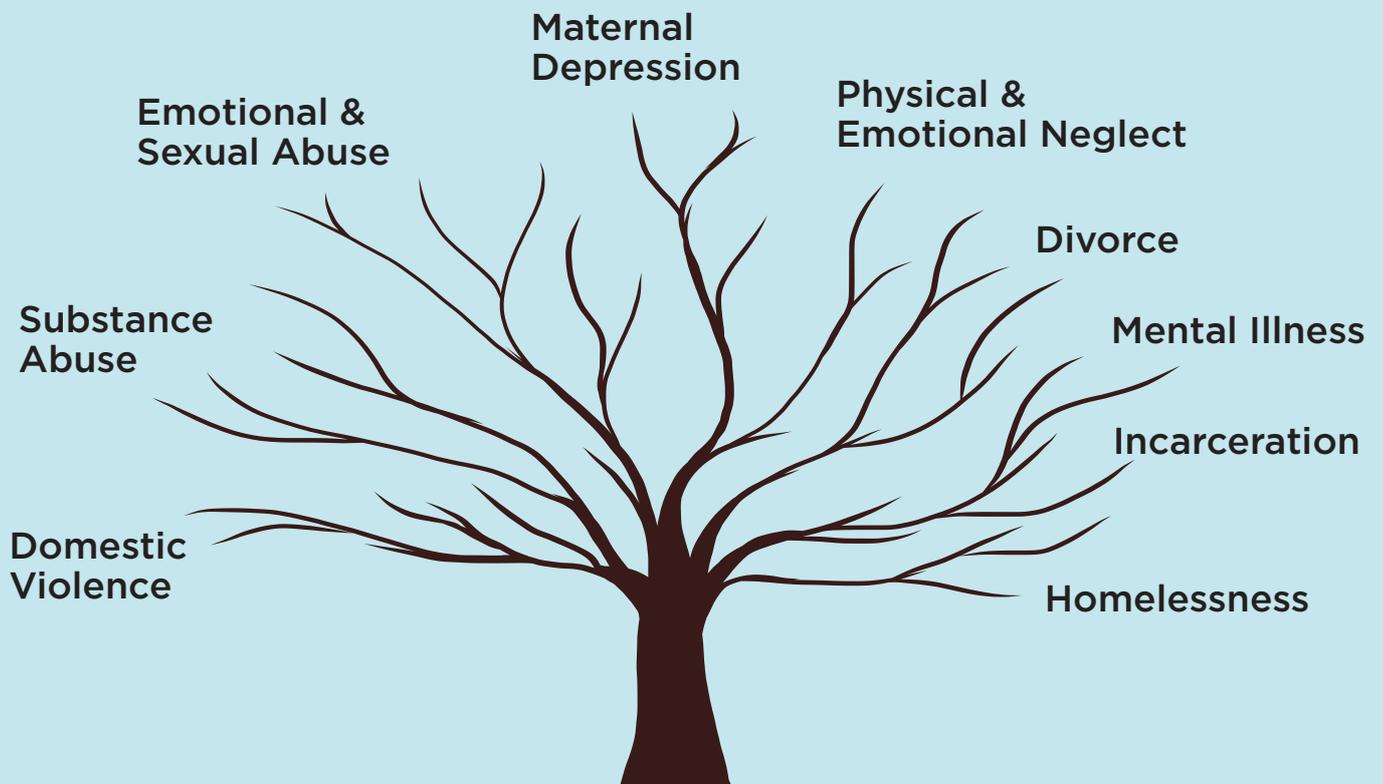


ACEs affect us all, they aren't just about children; they affect people of all ages and cross every social boundary.



There is a close relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences, what happens within a family, and the context in which these happen in Adverse Community Environments. Living in Adverse Community Environments will usually exacerbate the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on families and individuals. Those living in Adverse Community Environments are less likely to have access to things that can help overcome (resilience resources).

Adverse Childhood Experiences



Adverse Community Environments



The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is an example of a trauma that is happening to everyone, but some individuals who are already vulnerable and some groups in society are disproportionately affected.

We can do things differently

ACEs do not define anyone; it is never too late to break the cycle of adversity. Kindness and relationships are at the heart of TrACE (Trauma and ACE) informed practice. Kindness is the most powerful forms of human therapy and can have a healing effect.

Being TrACE informed is recognising that trauma experiences are a possibility for anyone we meet in our personal and professional lives. This isn't about more referrals or counting ACEs. It's about taking the time to understand what's happened to people, rather than blaming or stereotyping. It means a society and workforce that's more compassionate to people; the people who use the service, and staff and offering five core principles: **Safety, Choice, Collaboration, Empower, Trust** (see our TrACE toolkit for more information.)



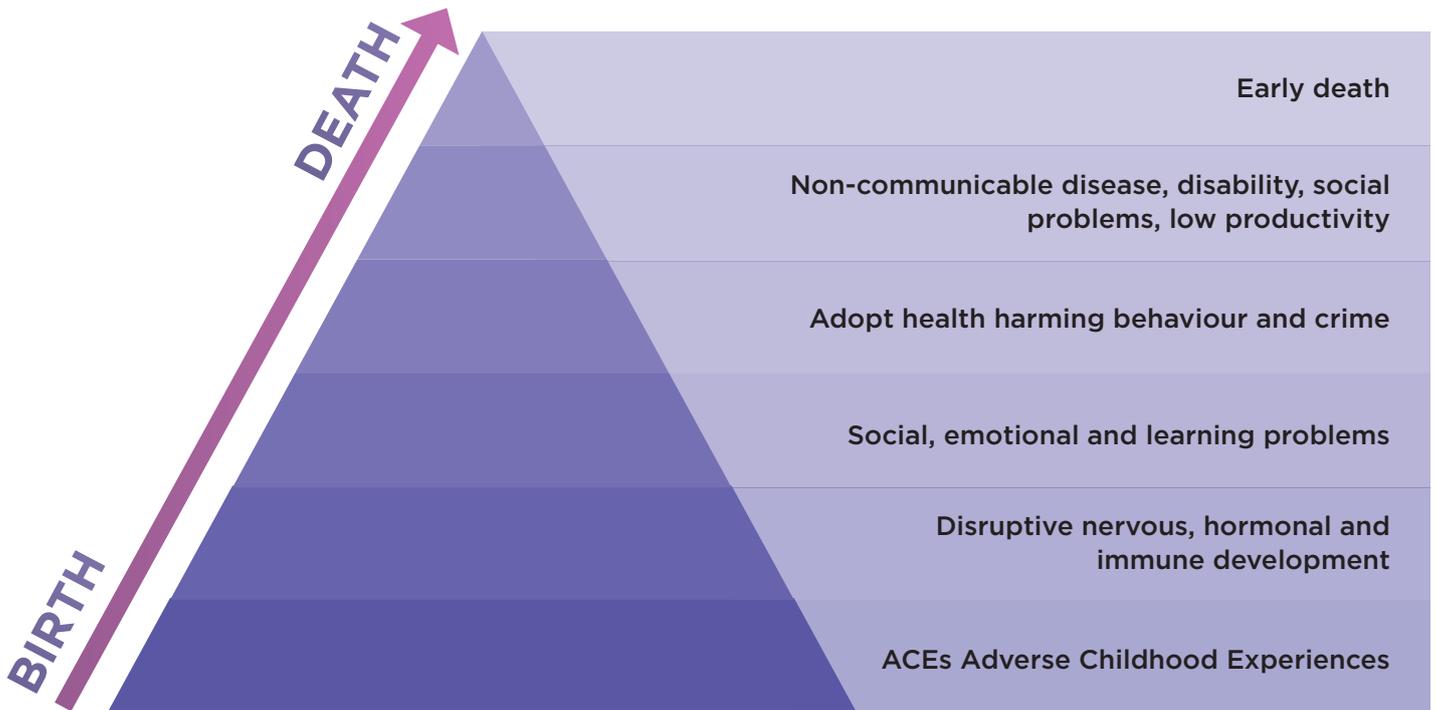
What you can do to be TrACE informed



- See the world from someone else's perspective. Showing kindness, compassion and listening can all be protective factors for those who have experienced adversity
- Taking action by being TrACE informed is everyone's business, we all have a part to play.
- We should all consider "what's happened" to a person, rather than "what's 'wrong'" with them
- Having a trusted relationship with at least one adult is essential in building resilience and can counteract the negative effects of having ACEs. You can be that adult!
- Make the link between physical and mental health. Recognise the signs and symptoms of trauma and ACEs by actively working to the ACE Support Hub's guide to TrACE aware individuals, professionals and communities, and our TrACE toolkit.

What happens if we do nothing?

ACEs across the life course



Intergenerational cycles



People can continue to be affected by trauma long after it happens.

If a child doesn't have factors that create resilience growing up, such as a trusted adult relationships, supportive friends, and being engaged in community activities such as sports when growing up, the cycle of ACEs, trauma and adversity, is more likely to continue in future generations.

If we achieve a TrACE informed society

Our vision is for Wales to be a world leader in preventing, tackling and mitigating the impact of ACEs.



- The reduction of the incidence of ACEs, trauma and re-traumatisation,
- increased focus on the facilitation of healing from past trauma,
- Supporting the use of TrACE practice, strengthening reflection on practice and self-care approaches,
- Improving the whole-system response to trauma and ACEs, which in turn facilitates a compassionate responsive society that demonstrates human rights based approach. Ultimately, a kinder, compassionate, safer and more resilient Wales.

Find out more:
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