



Prevalence of Individual Adverse Childhood Experiences

Collected between 1995 and 1997, the prevalences (%) presented below are estimated from the entire ACE Study sample (n=17,337). Individual research papers that use only Wave 1 data or Wave 2 data will contain slightly but not significantly different prevalence estimates for individual ACE.

ACE Category*		Women (N = 9,367)	Men (N = 7,970)	Total (N = 17,337)
Abuse				
	Emotional Abuse	13.1	7.6	10.6
	Physical Abuse	27.0	29.9	28.3
	Sexual Abuse	24.7	16.0	20.7
Neglect				
	Emotional Neglect¹	16.7	12.4	14.8
	Physical Neglect¹	9.2	10.7	9.9
Household Dysfunction				
	Mother Treated Violently	13.7	11.5	12.7
	Household Substance Abuse	29.5	23.8	26.9
	Household Mental Illness	23.3	14.8	19.4
	Parental Separation or Divorce	24.5	21.8	23.3
	Incarcerated Household Member	5.2	4.1	4.7

¹Collected during the second survey wave only (N=8,667).

Number of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE Score)	Women	Men	Total
0	34.5	38.0	36.1
1	24.5	27.9	26.0
2	15.5	16.4	15.9
3	10.3	8.6	9.5
4 or more	15.2	9.2	12.5

* Some ACE categories were defined using items adapted from other questionnaires. These were the Conflict Tactics Scale^a (physical abuse, witnessing interparental violence, and emotional abuse), the Child Trauma Questionnaire^b (emotional and physical neglect) and questions from Wyatt^c (sexual abuse).

^a Straus MA., & Gelles RJ. *Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence in 8,145 Families*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press; 1990.

^b Bernstein DP, Fink L, Handelsman L, Foote J, Lovejoy M, Wenzel K, Sapareto E, & Ruggiero J. Initial Reliability and Validity of a New Retrospective Measure of Child Abuse and Neglect. *American Journal of Psychiatry* 1994;151:1132–1136.

^c Wyatt, GE. The Sexual Abuse of Afro-American and White-American Women in Childhood. *Child Abuse & Neglect* 1985;9:507–519.

Adverse Childhood Experiences Definitions

The following categories all occurred in the participant's first 18 years of life.

Abuse

Emotional Abuse:

Often or very often a parent or other adult in the household swore at you, insulted you, or put you down and/or sometimes, often or very often acted in a way that made you think that you might be physically hurt.

Physical Abuse:

Sometimes, often, or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at you and/or ever hit so hard that you had marks or were injured.

Sexual Abuse:

An adult or person at least 5 years older ever touched or fondled you in a sexual way, and/or had you touch their body in a sexual way, and/or attempted oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you and/or actually had oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you.

Neglect

Emotional Neglect¹

Respondents were asked whether their family made them feel special, loved, and if their family was a source of strength, support, and protection. Emotional neglect was defined using scale scores that represent moderate to extreme exposure on the Emotional Neglect subscale of the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) short form.

Physical Neglect¹

Respondents were asked whether there was enough to eat, if their parents drinking interfered with their care, if they ever wore dirty clothes, and if there was someone to take them to the doctor. Physical neglect was defined using scale scores that represent moderate to extreme exposure on the Physical Neglect subscale of the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) short form constituted physical neglect.

Household Dysfunction

Mother Treated Violently:

Your mother or stepmother was sometimes, often, or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her and/or sometimes often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard, and/or ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes and/or ever threatened or hurt by a knife or gun.

Household Substance Abuse:

Lived with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic and/or lived with anyone who used street drugs.

Household Mental Illness:

A household member was depressed or mentally ill and/or a household member attempted suicide.

Parental Separation or Divorce:

Parents were ever separated or divorced.

Incarcerated Household Member:

A household member went to prison.

¹Collected during the second survey wave only (N=8,667).

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Page Located on the Web at <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/ace/prevalence.htm>

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