

OCYF TRAUMA TEAM NEWSLETTER

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3 Realms of ACEs

Adverse childhood and community experiences (ACEs) can occur in the household, the community, or in the environment and cause toxic stress. Left unaddressed, toxic stress from ACEs harms children and families, organizations, systems and communities, and reduces the ability of individuals and entities to respond to stressful events with resiliency. Research has shown that there are many ways to reduce and heal from toxic stress and build healthy, caring communities.



A child who is preoccupied with their safety and has toxic stress experiences an increase in heart rate, blood pressure, breathing, and muscle tension and the thinking functionality of their brain is knocked “off-line”. Self-protection becomes priority. The expectation of being able to concentrate, learn and store memory while a child is experiencing this toxic stress is similar to asking someone to study, while their house is on fire.



Pediatric Health: The effects of toxic stress are detectable as early as infancy. In babies, high doses of adversity are associated with failure to thrive, growth delay, sleep disruption, and developmental delay. School-aged children may have increased risk of viral infections, pneumonia, asthma, and other atopic diseases, as well as difficulties with learning and behavior. Among adolescents with high ACEs, somatic complaints are prevalent including headache and abdominal pain, increased engagement in high-risk behaviors, teen pregnancy, teen paternity, sexually transmitted infections, mental health disorders, and substance use.

As a child becomes older, some health problems that may occur from constant engagement of trauma responses include:

- Diabetes
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Cardiovascular disease
- Stroke
- Cancer
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Substance use
- Chronic pain

TRAUMA TEAM UPDATE

The Trauma Team is proud to announce that the trauma awareness training, Raising Trauma Awareness in Child Welfare Casework Practice, is available through the [E-Learn Catalog #2348](#). This free training is an optional resource for county child welfare staff, foster and adoptive private provider staff, and foster and adoptive parents for becoming trauma-aware. A certificate will be available for download after the completion of each training. Participants may also be eligible for up to two continuing education credits. This documentation is important and should be kept in individual staff files for reference and availability during the Department’s annual inspection.

Communication about trauma aware assessments will be sent out soon!

Thanks to Building Community Resilience Collaborative and Networks and the International Transformational Resilience Coalition for inspiration and guidance. Please visit ACEsConnection.com to learn more about the science of ACEs and join the movement to prevent ACEs, heal trauma and build resilience.

