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**The early years of life matter to  
lifelong health and prosperity.  
Investing in the early childhood years  
supports children's mental and  
physical health throughout their life,  
their ability to achieve in school and  
work settings, and their ability to  
become responsible citizens in  
adulthood.**

## **Child Social, Emotional, and Mental Health**

Children's social and emotional health affects their overall development and learning. Research shows that children who are mentally healthy tend to be happier, show greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, and show higher academic performance than less mentally healthy peers. Thus, children's social and emotional health is just as important as their physical health and affects their ability to develop and lead a fulfilling life. Within the context of one's family, community and cultural background, social and emotional health is the child's developing capacity to:

- Form safe relationships
- Experience and control emotions and,
- Explore and learn

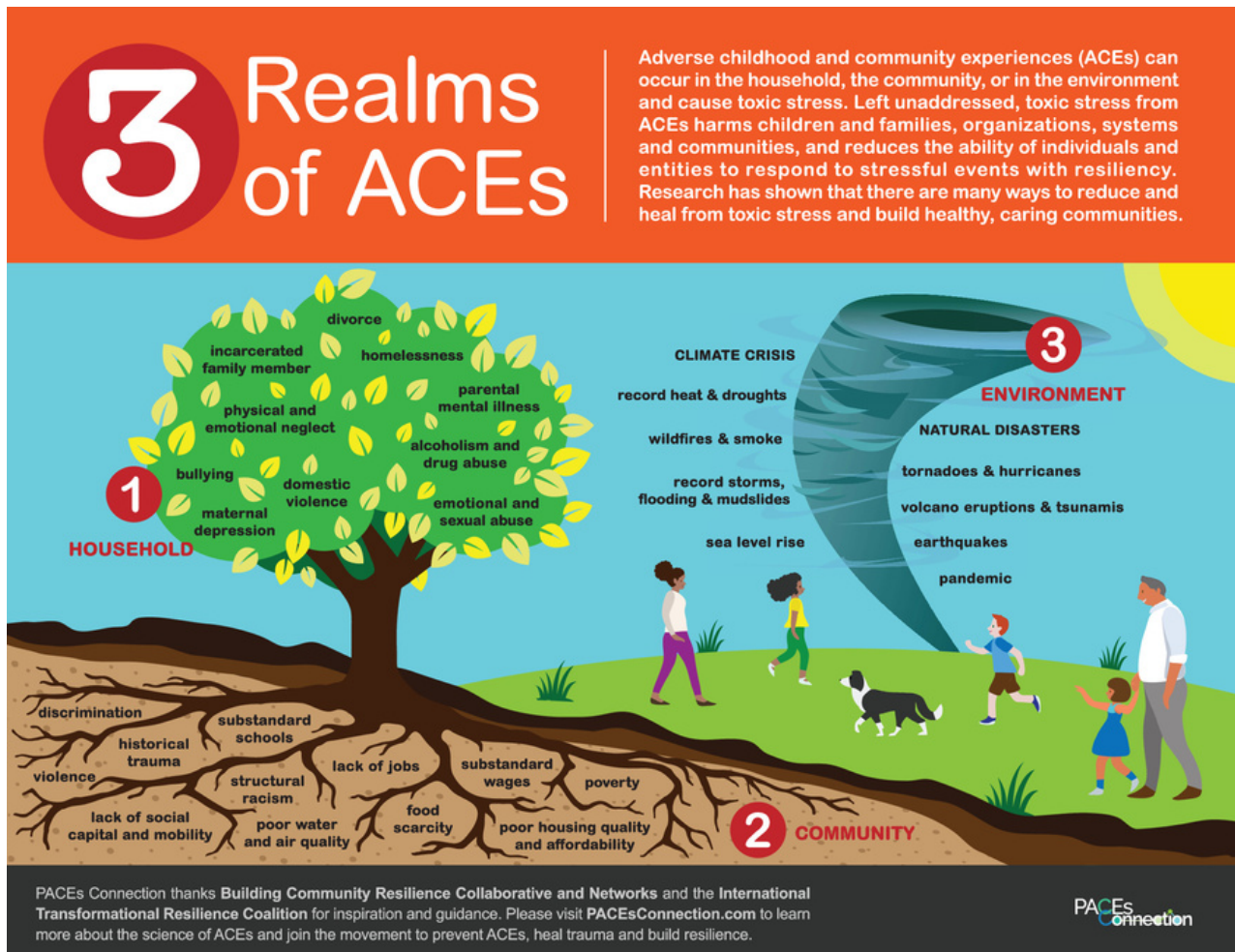


# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially harmful events that occur in childhood. ACEs can include violence, abuse, neglect, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems. Toxic stress from ACEs can change brain development and affect how the body responds to stress. ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood. However, ACEs can be prevented.

Preventing ACEs can help children and adults thrive and potentially:

- Lower risk for conditions like depression, asthma, cancer, and diabetes in adulthood.
- Reduce risky behaviors like smoking and heavy drinking.
- Improve education and employment potential.
- Stop ACEs from being passed from one generation to the next.



## Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) are experiences during childhood that promote safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments. These experiences can include close relationships with any parent or safe, stable adult; feeling safe at home, at school, and in the community; and having chances to learn and belong in a community. PCEs can help children develop a sense of belonging, connectedness, and build resilience.

Encouraging safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments for children has lifelong positive effects on the health of Tennesseans. Children with PCEs are:

- Less likely to engage in risky health behaviors
- less likely to experience long-term illness
- more likely to enjoy better mental health and overall health throughout life



**To learn more about ACEs and PCEs, visit:**

- [1. PACEs - Tennessee Department of Health, Family Health and Wellness](#)**
- [2. Adverse Childhood Experiences -Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth \(tn.gov\)](#)**
- [3. The Economic Cost of ACEs in Tennessee - The Sycamore Institute \(Economic Impact\)](#)**
- [4. Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences](#)**



**Referrals to home visiting programs are evidence-based to prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and child maltreatment.**

## **Evidence-Based Home Visiting**

Evidence Based Home Visiting (EBHV) programs can be an effective early-intervention strategy to improve the health and well-being of children and parents. Research demonstrates that young children of families enrolled in EBHV programs show improvements in health and development outcomes and increased school readiness.

EBHV programs:

- Improve family functioning and parenting skills.
- Link families with appropriate social service agencies.
- Promote early learning.
- Help new parents provide safe, nurturing environments for their children and become more self-sufficient.

Families participate on a voluntary basis and are provided with ongoing support in times of need. The Tennessee Department of Health funds 18 agencies that deliver services to 95 counties.

To learn more visit [Family Health and Wellness \(tn.gov\)](https://www.tn.gov).



## Mindfulness and Managing Emotions

By teaching children meditation and mindfulness skills it can help to increase their wellbeing and enable them to meet the stresses of the world with self-respect, compassion, and openness.

Mindfulness meditation, at its simplest, is paying attention to what is happening in the present moment. It may be what the child is feeling, hearing, or anything else they notice. There's no special place of calm a child must reach and it's not about clearing their mind, it's just an honest and kind look at what the child is feeling in that moment.

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# Research Supports Yoga & Mindfulness in Schools

A growing body of research studies investigating school-based yoga and mindfulness implementation suggest beneficial effects on student health, behavior, and performance, teacher well-being, and classroom climate, among other potential benefits.

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## Mental Health and Resilience

Reduces anxiety,<sup>1</sup> problematic stress responses<sup>2</sup> and depression.<sup>3</sup> Improves resilience<sup>4</sup> and coping frequency.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Noggle (2012)    <sup>3</sup> Sibinga (2015)    <sup>5</sup> White (2012)  
<sup>2</sup> Mendelson (2010)    <sup>4</sup> Sarkissian (2018)

## Social-Emotional Skills

Improves social-emotional outcomes<sup>6</sup> such as self-regulation<sup>7</sup> and social skills.<sup>8</sup> Reduces problem behaviors such as suspensions and disciplinary referrals,<sup>9</sup> bullying<sup>10</sup> and hostility.<sup>11</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Maynard (2017)    <sup>8</sup> Fishbein (2016)    <sup>10</sup> Centello (2017)  
<sup>7</sup> Razza (2015)    <sup>9</sup> Bakosh (2015)    <sup>11</sup> Frank (2014)

## Physical Health

Increases physical well-being<sup>12</sup> and physical fitness<sup>13</sup> as well as flexibility, balance and strength.<sup>14</sup>



<sup>12</sup> Chen (2014)    <sup>13</sup> Purohit (2016)    <sup>14</sup> Folleto (2016)

## School /Classroom Climate

Cultivates positive climates by fostering beneficial mental, social-emotional, academic and physical outcomes for educators and students.<sup>22, 23, 24</sup>



<sup>22</sup> Roeser (2012)    <sup>23</sup> Wisner (2014)    <sup>24</sup> Kiehlty (2017)

## Academic Performance

Enhances focus and attention<sup>15,16</sup> and supports positive academic outcomes such as improving grades<sup>9,17</sup> and test scores,<sup>18</sup> and preventing declines in Grade Point Average (GPA).<sup>19</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Bakosh (2015)    <sup>16</sup> Tarrasch (2018)    <sup>18</sup> Bellinger (2015)  
<sup>15</sup> Mak (2018)    <sup>17</sup> Bennett (2016)    <sup>19</sup> Butzer (2015)

## Teacher Well-Being

Educators who participate in yoga-and-mindfulness-based training experience improvements in mood, classroom management, physical symptoms, blood pressure and cortisol awakening response<sup>20</sup> as well as teaching efficacy, well-being, stress reduction and burnout prevention.<sup>21</sup>



<sup>20</sup> Harris (2016)    <sup>21</sup> Jennings (2013)

Visit [www.yoga4classrooms.com](http://www.yoga4classrooms.com) to view the supporting research and download the *Research Repository: Yoga, Meditation and Mindfulness for Children, Adolescents and In Schools*, sponsored by Yoga 4 Classrooms®.

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# Mindfulness and Managing Emotions Resources

