



# Creating Compelling Messaging with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Data

January 20, 2021

Viewpoints and thoughts shared are not necessarily representative of the California Department of Public Health, the California Department of Social Services, or the State of California

# Zoom Housekeeping



## Minimize Distractions

Lines have been muted, but please be sure to mute yourself during the presentation.



## Technical Issues

For any technical issues, please **send a message directly to the host** through the chat box.



## Engage and Participate

Ask questions in the Q&A or chat box



## Join Us!

Consider turning your webcam on.

# Essentials for Childhood Initiative

## Mission & Vision



All California children, youth, and families thrive in safe, stable, nurturing relationships, and communities where they live, work, and play.



Support and participate in mutually reinforcing activities and strategies across multiple agencies and stakeholders that optimize the health and wellbeing of all children in California.

# Webinar Presenters



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ACEs Connection



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# Impact of ACEs

- ACEs impact health. Direct link between childhood trauma and adult onset of chronic disease, as well as mental health and social outcomes
- ACEs are pervasive. About two-thirds of the adults in the study had experienced one or more *types* of adverse childhood experiences. Of those, 87 percent had experienced 2 or more types. **In other words, ACEs usually didn't happen in isolation.**
- ACEs impact toxic stress/ allostatic load: ACEs outcomes are dose-dependent. More ACEs resulted in a higher risk of medical, mental, and social problems as an adult.

## Five parts of ACEs & Resilience Science



**Epidemiology** ACE study and expanded definitions of ACEs

**Impact on the brain** toxic stress caused by ACEs impact children while they (and their brains) are developing

**Impact on the body** health consequences of toxic stress (short & long term)

**Epigenetics** generation-to-generation impact/ historical trauma



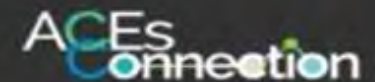


# Building Connection

## WHAT WE DO

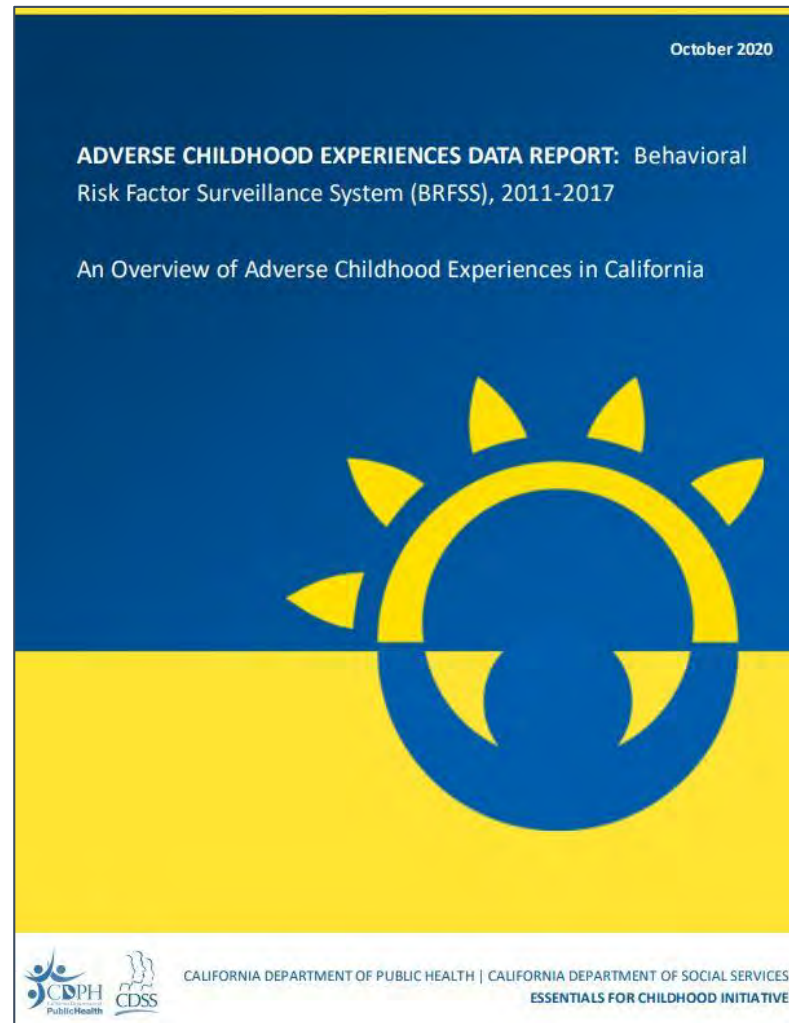


- We support the ever-expanding ACEs movement by **educating** people about ACEs science.
- We **engage** them in the movement by increasing the number of people who join ACEs Connection.
- We help communities launch and grow ACEs initiatives, online and in person, and provide tools to help them **measure** their progress.
- We act as the information resource for the ACEs movement by **telling** its stories and **providing** resources.





# Adverse Childhood Experiences Data Report: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2011-2017: An Overview of Adverse Childhood Experiences in California



# ACEs BRFSS Data Report: Key Findings

- Among adults in California,
  - 62% have experienced at least 1 ACE
  - 16% have experienced 4 or more ACEs
- Among Medi-Cal enrollees,
  - 69% experienced at least 1 ACE
  - 23% experienced 4 or more ACEs

# ACEs BRFSS Data Report: Key Findings

- **ACEs are associated with poor health in adulthood**

Compared to those with 0 ACEs, California adults with 4 or more ACEs were:

- 3.5 times as likely to report frequent mental distress
- 2.8 times as likely to be a current smoker
- 2.0 times as likely to be at risk for acute drinking

- **ACEs are associated with chronic disease in adulthood**

Compared to those with 0 ACEs, California adults with 4 or more ACEs were:

- 3.2 times as likely to have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- 2.3 times as likely to have asthma
- 1.5 times as likely to have heart disease



**kidsdata.org**  
A Program of  Lucile Packard Foundation  
for Children's Health

Kidsdata.org is an easy-to-use resource that offers high-quality, wide-ranging data to those who work on behalf of children in California.

# Adverse Childhood Experiences: Data Sources on Kidsdata.org

- **Adult Retrospective**  
*Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System ACEs Module*
- **Maternal Retrospective**  
*California Maternal and Infant Health Assessment*
- **Parent Perspective**  
*National Survey of Children's Health*

## Summary: Childhood Adversity and Resilience

[Related Data](#) | [Why This Topic Is Important](#) | [How Children Are Faring](#) | [Policy Implications](#) | [Research & Links](#)

Spotlight on Key Indicators: Childhood Adversity and Resilience



### Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (Adult Retrospective)

Year(s): 2011-2017

California	Percent		
	Households with Children	Households without Children	All Households
Number of ACEs			
0 ACEs	36%	39%	38%
1-3 ACEs	47%	46%	46%
4 or More ACEs	17%	16%	16%

[CUSTOMIZE TABLE](#)



# Child Adversity and Well-Being Dashboards California & Counties

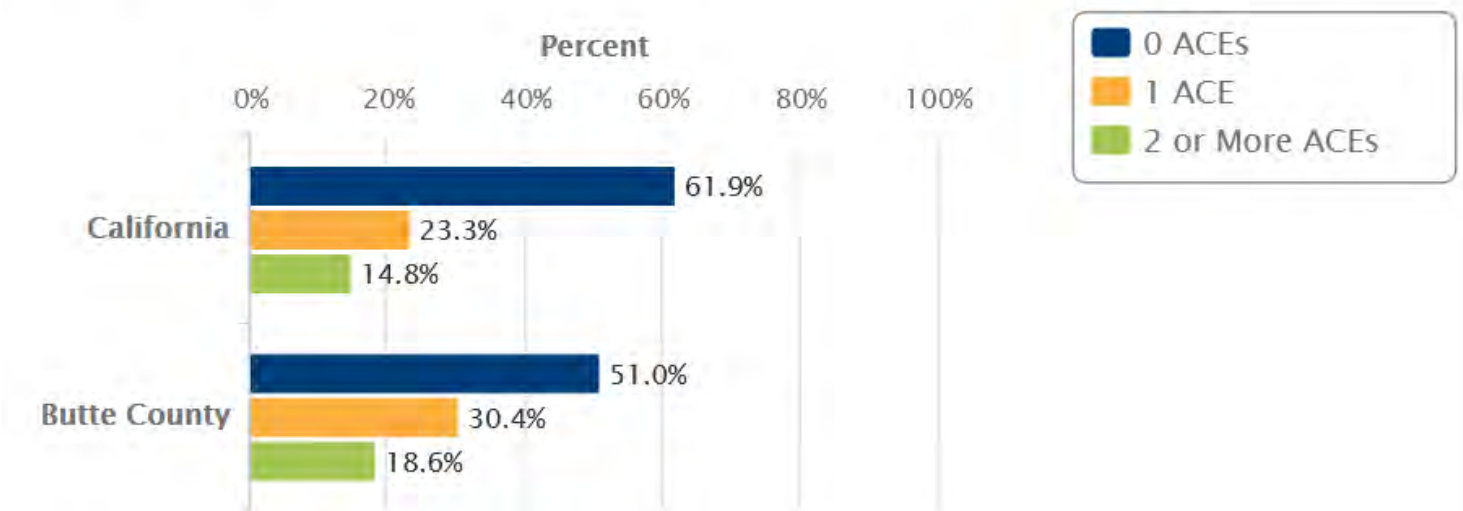
- Child Life Course
- Pregnancy and Birth
- Early/Middle Childhood
- Adolescents

Find dashboards on



## Children with Adverse Experiences (Parent Reported)

Year(s): 2016-2018



# Creating compelling messages with ACEs data

Essentials for Childhood Initiative

Webinar

January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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Shaddai Martinez Cuestas, MPH

- Research on news coverage of public health issues
- Media advocacy training and strategic consultation for community groups and public health advocates
- Professional education for journalists

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# Webinar objectives

1. Align ACEs focused communication efforts with overall strategic goals
2. Describe the components of an effective and persuasive message to address ACEs
3. Incorporate innovative use of ACEs data to strengthen messages and stories

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## **Tip #1**

**Before you know what  
to say, you need to  
know what to do**

- Message is never first

# The layers of strategy





# Overall strategy



- Define the **problem** you want to address
- Clarify the **solution** for which you'll advocate
- Identify the **target** with the power to make the change
- Enlist the **allies** who can help make your case
- Identify what **actions** you'll take to influence the target

# For example...

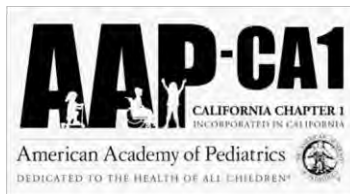
**Problem**     ---> Pediatricians are not equipped to address ACEs

**Solution**    ---> Train providers in ACEs screening

**Target**      ---> Pediatricians across the state

**Allies**        ---> Champions, patients, mental health groups

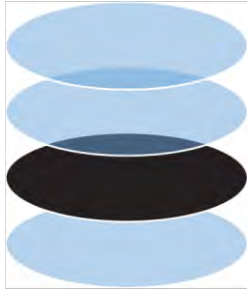
**Actions**      ---> Website with tools, messaging campaign,  
trainings, etc



# Walk the talk

Your ***overall strategy must center racial and health equity*** if you want your message strategy to advance racial and health equity.

# Message strategy



**Framing:** how we characterize the issue

**Message:** what we say

**Messenger:** who says it

**Target:** who we want to hear it

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## **Tip #2**

### **Put ACEs disparities data in context**

- Avoid personal responsibility frames that inadvertently blame Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)

Just a few clues...

**PREVENTION WORKS**





# What is our default frame?



**Portrait** frames tell us a lot about the individual and not much else.



**Landscape** frames show more of the environment around the person, including the systems and structures that surround them.

Frames are mental pathways that help people understand the world.

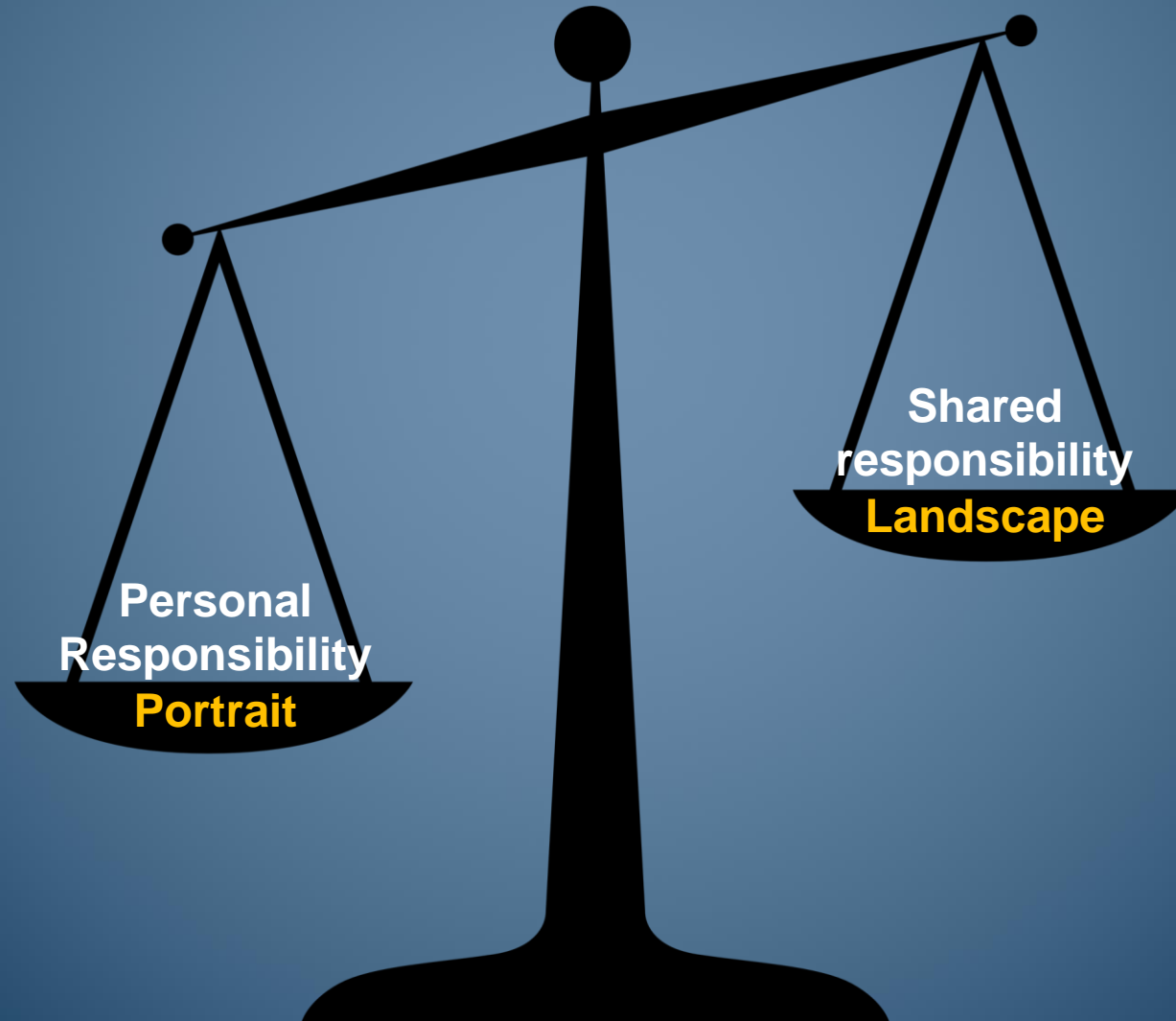
# There are no blank slates

**You say:** People who identify as Black or Hispanic are more likely to report 4+ ACEs than Whites.

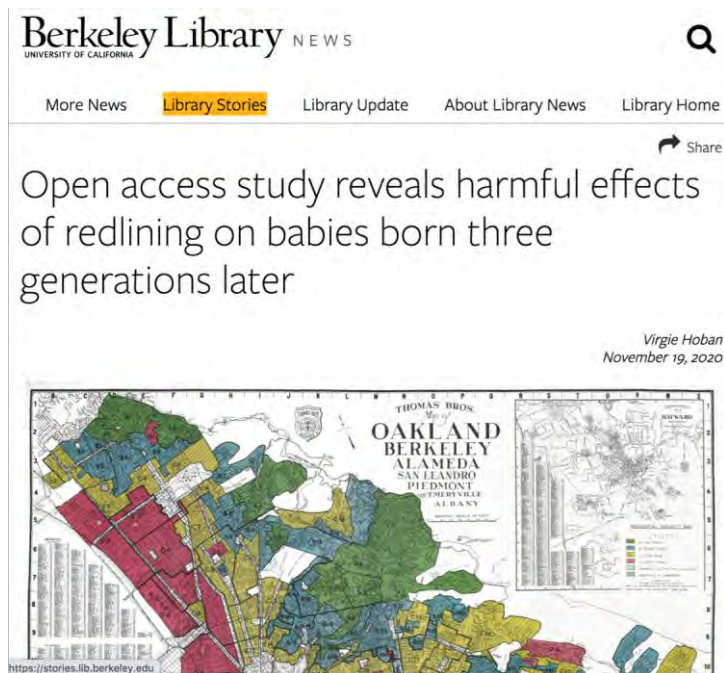
**They hear:** There's something wrong with Blacks and Hispanics. *They* need to do better.



# The need to reframe



# Put disparities data in context



“Studies like this show that these legacies of structural racism, even though they happened many, many decades ago, are still exerting their health effects today.”

“Many of us had nothing to do with those racist policies,” she continues. “But we are responsible for addressing their current-day effects.”

Rachel Morello-Frosch, an author of the study and a professor in UC Berkeley’s School of Public Health and the Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management.



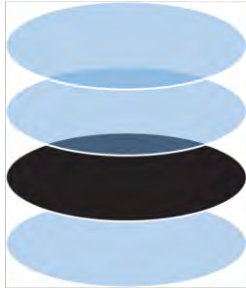
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## **Tip #3**

### **Resist the urge to say everything**

- You can't be strategic and comprehensive at the same time
- Use data judiciously

# Developing an effective message about ACEs



## Components of a message:

- Statement of problem  
*What's wrong?*
- Value dimension  
*Why does it matter?*
- Solution  
*Who should do what by when?*

# Example

## Asking and Listening is an Effective Way to Address ACEs, Here's How:



We may not always be aware of the non physical problems our patients have. As a trusted medical home, for our patient-families, let's learn how to effectively ask.

Our offices have always been a place where patient-families feel safe. We have worked so hard to build that trust. More and more evidence-based links exist between Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and future health outcomes. The [2-hour ACES AWARE training](#) provides pediatricians a great opportunity to understand better how asking and

listening to our patient-families does make a difference even if the problems continue to exist. Time for us to continue asking and listening - we have always done so. And we want our patients to continue feeling safe and heard.

**Take Action**

Solution

Problem

Values



# Use data judiciously

**DAILY REPUBLIC**  
Solano County's News Source

## Solano Voices: Protect public health, housing stability in Solano

By Daily Republic

We at the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition believe that housing is a human right and that everyone deserves to have a safe and stable home regardless of race, culture, age, and social orientation.

The essential role that housing stability plays in protecting the health of Solano County residents is even more visible and critical while in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. That's why the Solano County Board of Supervisors should move quickly to adopt their [proposal](#) which will ensure county residential and commercial tenants are safe, protected, and healthy.

Having a roof over your head matters for everything from diabetes, to depression, to surviving the novel coronavirus pandemic. Studies have shown that housing insecurity can force families to make unhealthy trade-offs between paying for rent and paying for medical care, food, or other basic needs.

Thousands of families in the country, particularly people of color, live in neighborhoods where a lack of basic necessities such as healthy food and primary care providers negatively affects their health. Families are already facing barriers to health care and with many of our residents losing their jobs, being forced out of their homes as well will undoubtedly contribute to the health concerns, including increased exposure to Covid-19.

Many families in Solano County were struggling to afford a home even before Covid-19. The California Housing Partnership reports that Solano County renters need to earn \$9.56 per hour – three times the state minimum wage – to afford the median rent of \$1,875. Additionally, 80% of extremely low-income households pay more than half of their income on housing costs compared to just 4% of moderate-income households. Research from Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative found that African American families in the Bay Area are nearly five times more likely to pay half their income on housing than white families.

The Covid-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the housing crisis as many low-income residents have lost income, don't know when they'll be able to return to work and are struggling to make hard choices between feeding their families and paying rent that's due May 1.

It is more important than ever during this time of hardship to protect our most vulnerable neighbors from eviction and homelessness. While some tenant protections exist at the state level, there are gaps in who and what is protected.

The Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition is working with local tenant attorneys and community organizations to advocate for a temporary emergency countywide eviction moratorium that will fill these gaps by prohibiting late fees, freezing rent increases, removing rent arrearages during the emergency as a grounds for eviction and requiring landlords to inform tenants of their rights. The inclusion of commercial tenants in this ordinance will enable businesses to more quickly rehire their staff, which in turn will enable employees to more quickly pay back their rent.

These measures will help Solano County get health care at the forefront of our Covid-19 response and recovery.

The Board of Supervisors on Tuesday will consider an eviction moratorium, which will protect residential and commercial tenants from evictions during stay-at-home orders through the immediate recovery period. We urge county residents to join us in taking immediate and collective action to protect Solano County residents in the time of crisis.

You can do this by signing our petition at [change.org](#) (Search for Solano County Eviction Moratorium) and by making your voice heard at the meeting Tuesday. To learn more about the Solano County public meeting proceed in response to Covid-19 and to submit a comment in support of eviction moratorium, go to [solanocounty.com](#), select Board of Supervisors from the drop-down menu, then select the link to the new meeting procedure.

For more information about the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition, visit our [Facebook page](#) or contact me by phone at 530-376-2949 or our office by email at [info@vallejohousing.org](mailto:info@vallejohousing.org)

Cristal Little is an organizer with the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition. Reach her by email at [cristal@vallejohousing.org](mailto:cristal@vallejohousing.org)

...  
The Daily Republic is offering select coverage related to the coronavirus pandemic free to readers as a community service. The work of our journalists to produce local coverage of the issue is, of course, not free. To support local journalism, please subscribe.

“Many families in Solano County were struggling to afford a home even before Covid-19. The California Housing Partnership reports that Solano County renters need to earn \$36.06 per hour – three times the state minimum wage – to afford the median rent of \$1,875.

Additionally, 80% of extremely low-income households pay more than half of their income on housing costs compared to just 4% of moderate-income households.”



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## **Tip #4**

### **Articulate shared values**

- Remind your audience why addressing ACEs matters

# Why does ACEs matter to you?

- Facts and data alone are not enough to motivate people
- Connect and inspire with shared values



# Example

## Articulate shared values

...for every child to be healthy, to be growing and thriving in a strong family, and to be supported by a safe and nurturing community...

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## **Tip #5**

### **Make ACEs data easy to understand**

- Use social math and comparisons to make the case to address ACEs

# Social math on the problem

Los Angeles Times

   California's homeless students could fill Dodger Stadium 5 times, study finds



Students sit at tables after school at Telfair Elementary in Pacoima, which serves a high percentage of homeless students. (Francine Orr / Los Angeles Times)

By LAURA NEWBERRY | STAFF WRITER

OCT. 21, 2020 | 5 AM



# Social math on the problem

## ***You could say:***

The number of babies born to teen mothers (aged 15 to 19) in California peaked in 1991 at 70,322. By 1998, the California teen birth rate decreased to 53.2 per 1,000, down to 58,141 babies born to teen mothers that year.

## ***Better to say:***

Every 8 minutes a baby is born to a teen.



# Social math on the solution

**THE COST TO INCARCERATE  
ONE PERSON FROM BALTIMORE**

**COULD BUY 1 MONTH OF  
HOUSING FOR 30 FAMILIES**

\$37,000/yr



\$1,252 ea.

[JusticePolicy.org/TheRightInvestment](https://JusticePolicy.org/TheRightInvestment)



# Social math on the solution



NBC News   
@NBCNews

Preventing the next pandemic will cost \$22,200,000,000 a year, scientists say.



willnoon   
@willnoon

or 3% of the 2020 military budget.



# Social math in a message

Every 8 minutes a baby is born to a teen, and as the grownups here, we have a duty to do something about it. One thing that would help right now is...

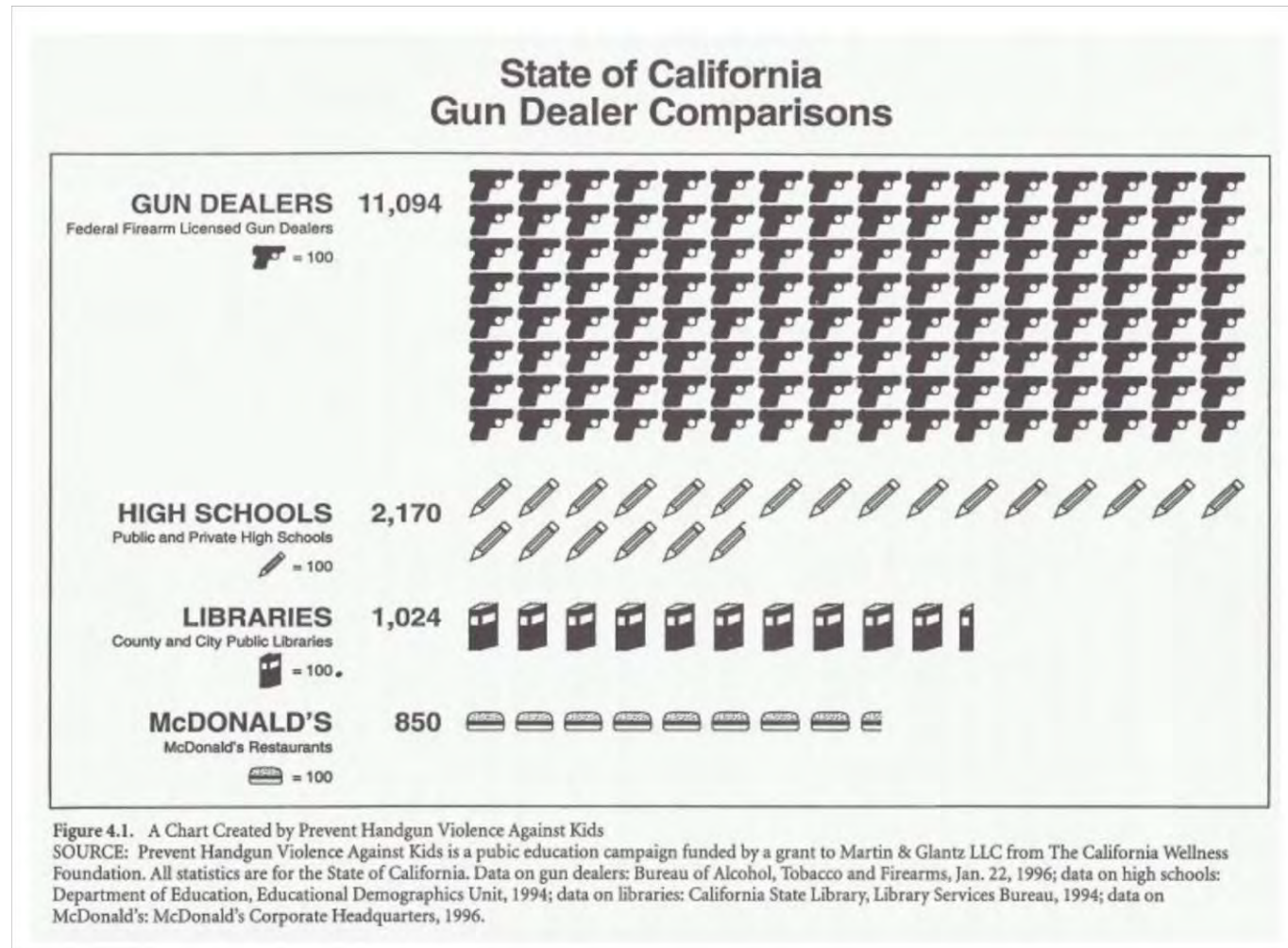
Problem

Values

Solution



# Calculating your social math



# In sum

Top tips for effective messages using ACEs data:

1. Message is never first, your goal is
2. Put ACEs disparities in context
3. Resist the urge to say everything
4. Articulate values
5. Make data easy to understand

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**THANK YOU!**

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Twitter: [@BMSG](https://twitter.com/BMSG)

Facebook: [Berkeley Media Studies Group](https://www.facebook.com/BerkeleyMediaStudiesGroup)

Questions?



Provides support and resource referrals to parent and youth during the current COVID-19 pandemic, 7-days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Call or text 1-855-4APARENT (855-427-2736) for services in English, Spanish and other languages. For more information, please visit:

<https://caparentyouthhelpline.org/>

# Resources

- ACEsConnection: [acesconnection.com](https://acesconnection.com)
- Kidsdata: [kidsdata.org](https://kidsdata.org)
- Berkley Media Studies Group: [bmsg.org](https://bmsg.org)
- Essentials for Childhood Initiative & ACEs BRFSS Data Report: [cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/SACB/Pages/EssentialsforChildhood.aspx](https://cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/SACB/Pages/EssentialsforChildhood.aspx)
- CDC MMWR: [Trends in U.S. Emergency Department Visits Related to Suspected or Confirmed Child Abuse and Neglect Among Children and Adolescents Aged <18 Years Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/aa6003a.htm)
- Prevention Institute's Beyond Screening Report: [https://preventioninstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Beyond%20Screening-Expanding%20California%27s%20Approach%20to%20ACEs\\_final%20Oct%202020%20%28003%29.pdf](https://preventioninstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Beyond%20Screening-Expanding%20California%27s%20Approach%20to%20ACEs_final%20Oct%202020%20%28003%29.pdf)



# Share Your Thoughts!



Survey link:  
<https://tinyurl.com/acesdataeval>

Thank You!