

# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Advocacy Coalition

Promote long-term health and well-being of Iowans by ensuring state departments and policymakers develop priorities for action to address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in the areas of prevention, early intervention and mitigation.

## What are ACEs?

ACEs are incidents that harm social, cognitive, and emotional functioning and dramatically upset the safe, nurturing environment that children need to thrive.

ACEs consist of at least one of the following:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Substance Abuse
- Incarcerated Relative
- Mental Illness
- Divorce
- Domestic Violence

Approximately 55% of Iowans have experienced at least one ACE.

## Primary Prevention/Screening

Enhance the capacity of communities to prevent ACEs by strengthening families and ensuring stable, safe, nurturing environments for children.

## Targeted Interventions

Equip parents, teachers, counselors, health care providers, child care providers and all other adults who work with children with the necessary skills and training to engage children in an ACEs and trauma-informed approach.

## Evidence-Based Treatments

Support the creation and development of a children's mental health system that integrates with the current mental health redesign and utilizes a trauma-informed approach and increases access to early identification and response to ACEs.



# Recommendations:

## Primary Prevention/Screening

Support creation and development of a comprehensive children's system of care that incorporates a coordinated response to Adverse Childhood Experiences across all systems (education, public health, mental health, child welfare, etc.) and services (prevention, early identification, family-centered supports, etc.).

Support the affordability of quality child care to provide stable environments for all children, especially children living in poverty.



## Targeted Interventions

Expand 1st Five Healthy Mental Development initiative statewide to increase access to developmental health and family resources.



## Evidence-Based Treatments

Support children's mental health initiatives that are evidence-based and community-driven, such as Functional Family Therapy and continuation of Pediatric Integrated Health Homes.



## Advocacy Coalition

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**American Academy of Pediatrics, Iowa Chapter**  
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