

# Tennessee

## ACEs Initiatives and Actions

As knowledge about the science of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) spreads, ACEs initiatives have launched in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. Hundreds of cross-sector collaboratives are educating and engaging organizations and policymakers about ACEs science. In turn, these organizations are implementing trauma-informed and resilience-building practices and policies based on ACEs science; many legislatures are passing resolutions and/or bills.

### Highlights

The success of a Memphis parenting initiative — Universal Parenting Places — drew the interest of high-level state officials and helped inspire a state initiative, “Building Strong Brains Tennessee.” The Governor, First Lady, and Supreme Court Chief Justice joined other top officials, lawmakers, mayors, doctors, business executives and educators for the 2015 ACEs Summit. This meeting launched a campaign to change the culture of childhood trauma and make Tennessee the first U.S. state to aspire to change public policy to become trauma-informed.

[Building Strong Brains Tennessee](#) is structured around brain science and communication science. The state provides seed funding for community innovations in multiple sectors and created a Public Sector Steering Group to involve child-serving agencies. Tennessee has done two BRFSS surveys and issued the report “ACEs in TN: Fact NOT Fate” in 2015.

### State Initiative

[Building Strong Brains Tennessee](#)

### Local Initiatives

Community projects are growing around the state, including in Northeast Tennessee, Nashville, and Memphis.

On ACEs Connection: [All Children Excel \(ACE\) Nashville](#), [Northeast Tennessee ACEs Connection](#), [ACEs Task Force of Shelby County](#).

### Legislation

Pending bills in juvenile justice and trafficking:

[SB 197/HB 274](#) — ACEs can be mitigating factor in parole, sentencing.

[HR 616/SB 552](#) — Mentions ACEs in report on minors who are victims of trafficking.

Find links and add your updates to all initiatives and legislation at [www.bit.ly/ACEsInitiatives](http://www.bit.ly/ACEsInitiatives)

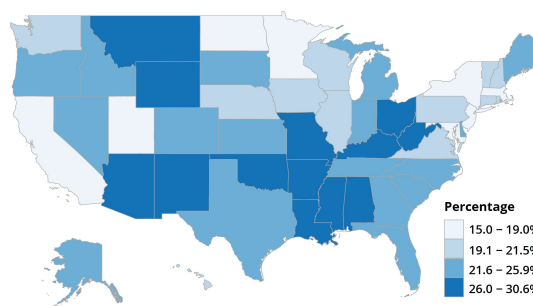


24.6%  
TN\*

21.7%  
USA

### Percent of children with 2 or more ACEs

TN ranks 34th in the US for lowest percentage of children with ACEs scores of 2 or more.



CAHMI (Child & Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative) surveys parents or guardians about their children ages 0-17.

Percentage of children aged 0-17 yrs. who experienced two or more of the following:

- Hard to get by on income (somewhat or very often)
- Saw or heard violence in the home
- Victim/witness of neighborhood violence
- Lived with anyone mentally ill, suicidal, or depressed
- Lived with anyone with alcohol or drug problem
- Parent/guardian divorced or separated
- Parent/guardian died
- Parent/guardian served time in jail
- Often treated or judged unfairly due to race/ethnicity

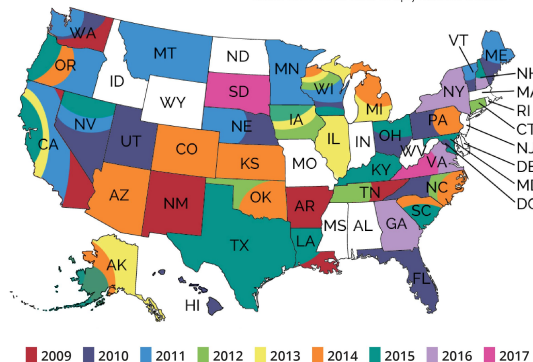
**Citation:** Bethell, CD, Citation: Bethell, CD, Davis, MB, Gombojav, N, Stumbo, S, Powers, K. Issue Brief: A national and across state profile on adverse childhood experiences among children and possibilities to heal and thrive. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, October 2017.

[www.cahmi.org/projects/Adverse-childhood-experiences-aces](http://www.cahmi.org/projects/Adverse-childhood-experiences-aces)

\* State Range: 15.0% – 30.6%

### States Collecting ACEs Data 2009 – 2017

Source: CDC National Center for Injury Prevention & Control



The ACEs module of Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) data comes from interviews with adults about their experiences to age 18. BRFSS is sponsored by the CDC and other federal agencies.