

# TALES OF TRAUMA

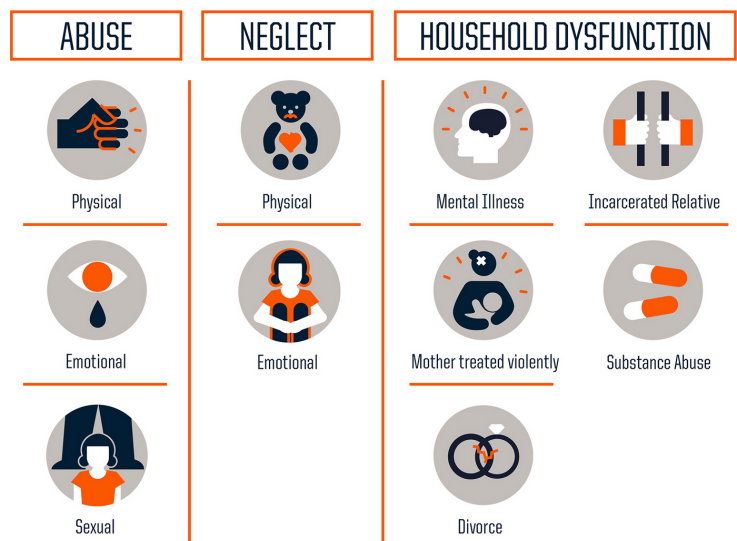
## National Trauma-Informed Programs to Promote Resiliency

### DUVAL COUNTY INTRODUCES CHANGEMAKERS

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Duval County has been stigmatized and labeled as Florida’s murder capital for years. It is also known as leading in the number of kids who kill. Unfortunately, Duval county currently has the highest higher rate of minors arrested with murder charges and other crimes such as drug dealing, robbery, and assault. But, these children did not intend on being murderers or committing crimes. So, what led them down this path?

The potential answer to this question is Adverse Childhood Experiences. These children are not monsters, they are a product of their toxic environment. Nearly 21-30% of Duval county residents have reported that they have had at least two adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as trauma, abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction. Trauma and family dysfunction can have generational effects such as divorce, death, substance abuse, or just having neglectful guardians. Having a violent environment can cause environmental and toxic stress on children, and in Duval county most of the youth have witnessed someone get shot or have had a close family member that was murdered. Living in low-income neighborhoods with inadequate resources foster unsupportive, negative peer groups which decreases the amount of positive influences on children. Peer pressure can sway kids to make poor choices, even if it is something that they do not necessarily agree with.



Ultimately, ACEs can exacerbate poor health outcomes such as chronic diseases, substance abuse disorders, mental illness, and premature death. ACEs are 100% preventable. It is also possible to mitigate and completely prevent the early-onset of poor health outcomes and illnesses. But, how can that be done?

To combat this issue, the Department of Health (DOH) in Duval County received funding from the CDC to hire 200 community health workers (CHWs) and Community Health Educators (CHEs) to implement a new after-school program for Duval County Public Schools in August of 2020. Collaboratively, the public health team at the DOH in Duval county proposed Changemakers, a 2-hour after school service that provided free workshops and activities to build resilience and capacity amongst vulnerable student populations who are 4-17 years of age.

Every day, CHEs and CHWs will craft a daily agenda that implements various resilience building workshops that are two hours long at all Duval County Public Schools. These lesson plans will include curriculum on personal growth, coping skills leadership skills, teamwork, confidence, relationship building tactics, and emotional intelligence.

The overall goal that the DOH in Duval has in mind is that they want their students to become more knowledgeable on ACEs and to spread awareness on how to prevent ACEs. The resilience building curriculum implemented in the student's schools will aid positive behavior change by teaching them healthy coping skills for difficult emotions, fostering healthy relationships, and understanding the implications of violence in all forms. To reduce crime, we must understand and empathize with our youth by creating safe spaces where knowledge and learning can flourish, social support is readily available. I think that Changemakers is a great step in that direction.



DUVAL COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

