

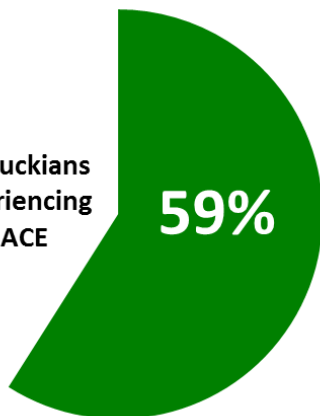
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and well-being including early death¹. These experiences range from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse to parental divorce or the incarceration of a parent or guardian. The original ACE Study was a research study conducted by Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Participants were recruited to the study between 1995 and 1997 and have been in long-term follow up for health outcomes. The study has demonstrated that ACEs are common, often occur together, and are associated with health and social problems as an adult^{2,3}.



Prevalence of ACEs in Kentucky

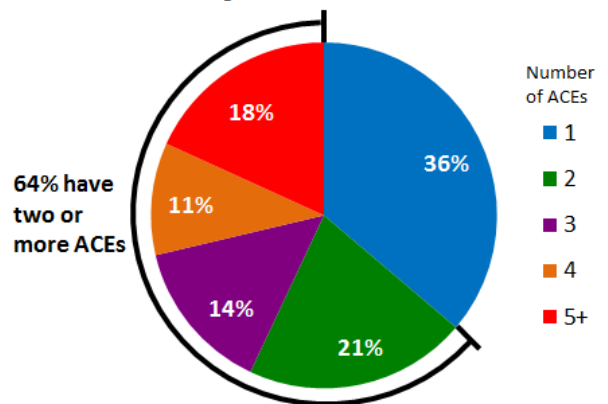
59% of Kentuckians report experiencing at least one ACE



More than half (59%) of Kentucky residents have experienced at least one ACE. Of those that have experienced at least one ACE, 64% have experienced two or more ACEs.

Distribution of ACEs

among those with at least one ACE

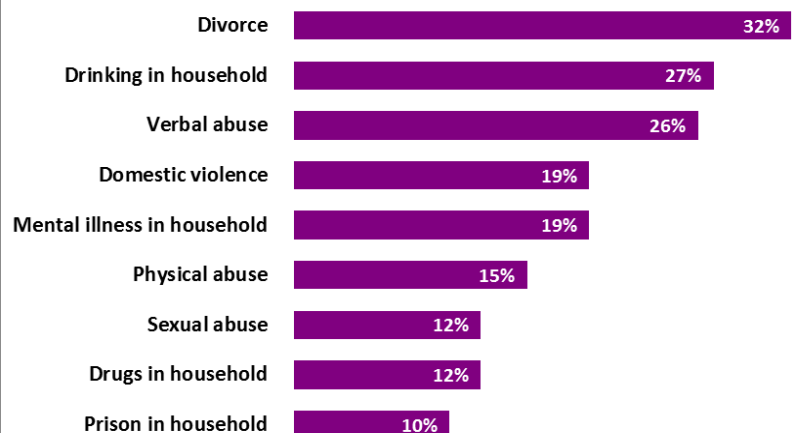


Data Source: Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance (KyBRFS); Year 2015

Common ACEs in Kentucky

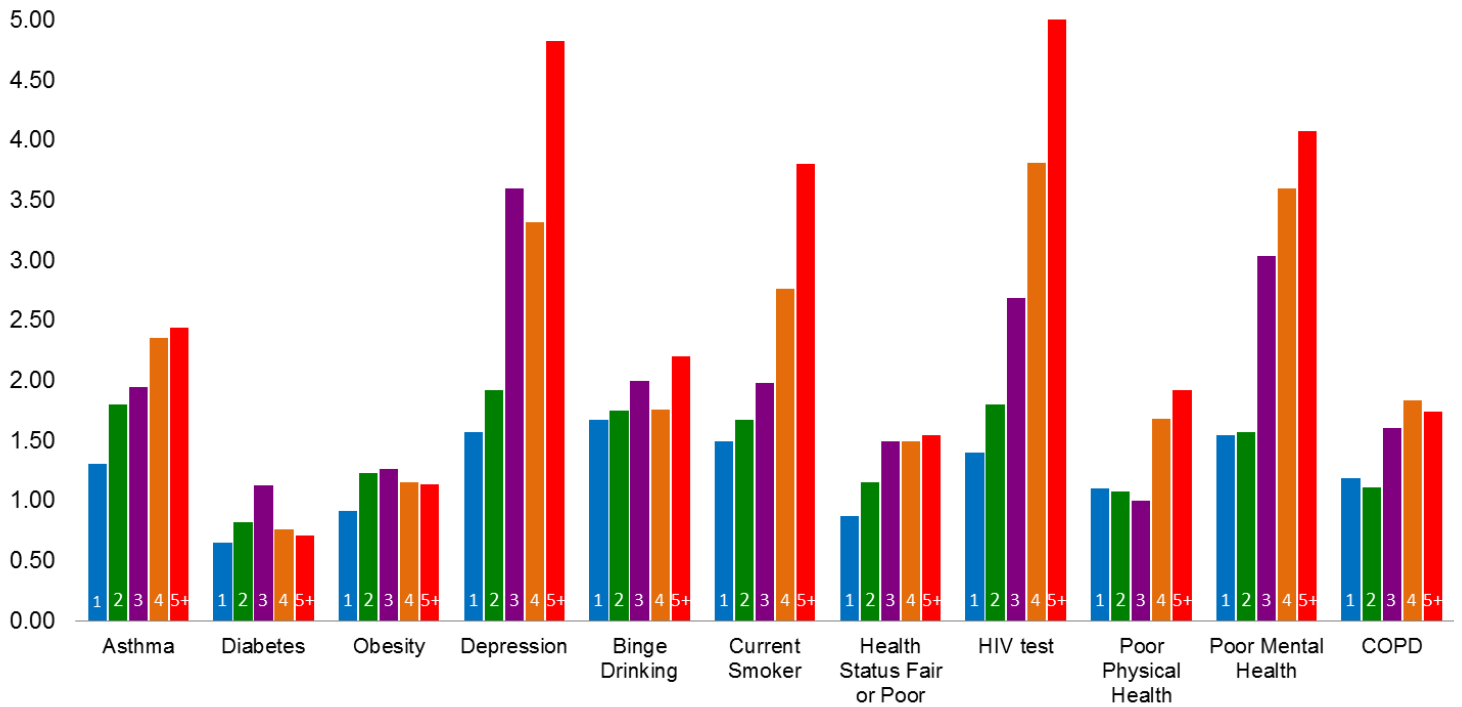
Data from the Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance (KyBRFS) indicates that several Kentucky adults experienced various types of ACEs. Of those experiencing at least one ACE, 32% experienced divorce in the household, 27% experienced drinking (problem drinker or alcoholism) in the household, and 26% experienced verbal abuse. These data suggest that ACEs are very common in Kentucky and should be addressed during routine health care visits.

Prevalence of Individual ACEs



Data Source: Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance (KyBRFS); Year 2015

Increased Risk of Condition/Behavior By Number of ACEs Present Compared to No ACEs



Data Source: Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance (KyBRFS); Year 2015

HIV test=Human Immunodeficiency Virus test

COPD=Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

In assessing select chronic conditions and health risk behaviors in relation to ACEs, there appears to be an increase among certain behaviors/chronic conditions for those experiencing four or more ACEs compared to those experiencing no ACEs. Individuals who report having experienced five or more ACEs are at a much higher risk of having select risk behaviors and chronic conditions.

Among those Kentuckians experiencing five or more ACEs compared to those with no ACEs, they are:

- five times as likely to have an HIV test;
- almost five times as likely to have depression;
- over four times as likely to have poor mental health;
- almost four times as likely to be a current smoker; and
- almost two and a half times as likely to have asthma.

These data support addressing ACEs in the health care setting as well as in communities. A better understanding of the adverse events experienced by an individual during childhood could provide insight into their physical and mental health status as an adult. All families experience times of stress, and research demonstrates that children grow and learn best in families who have the supports and skills to deal with those times. One program in Kentucky addressing ACEs is Kentucky Strengthening Families (KYSF). KYSF strengthens families by enhancing protective factors that reduce the impact of adversity and increase the well-being of children and families through family, community, and state partnerships building resiliency.

References:

¹ Child Trends; Research Brief; Adverse Childhood Experiences; Year 2014

² The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved Nov. 4, 2016

³ Adverse Childhood Experiences; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, MD; Retrieved Nov. 4, 2016



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