



Recent research in the field of child abuse and neglect prevention focuses on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs include abuse and neglect as well as other household dysfunctions or circumstances that affect children adversely including substance abuse, parental separation or divorce, mental illness, domestic violence and criminal behavior. The childhood trauma stemming from early adversity has a profound impact on social connections, school readiness and the increased likelihood of developing negative health behaviors that can lead to disease and early death. Here are some of the effects:

1. Child Abuse and Neglect

- Since SFY 2010, Kansas has seen a 14% increase in the number of child abuse and neglect reports; a 22% increase in reports screened as needing an investigation; and of those investigated a 31% increase rate of substantiations.
- Non-fatal child maltreatment has an average lifetime cost of \$210,012 per victim, according to the Centers for Disease Control (2012), including health care costs, lost work productivity, and costs incurred in the child welfare, criminal justice, and special education systems.
- In Kansas, the cost of out-of-home placement was \$27,000 per child, per year, in 2011, compared with \$5-\$7,000 for a targeted home visitation program.

2. Impact on Education

- By age three, a child's brain is already 80% developed; 90% by age five. Home visitation is the early childhood education system for our very youngest children (0-3); waiting until pre-K or Head Start is too late.
- Four-year old children from low-income families are often 18 months behind other four-year old children developmentally.
- About one out of five children is not prepared with the literacy skills to succeed in kindergarten. Children considered to be at-risk are even less prepared to learn due to circumstances beyond their control and, all too often in the years ahead, are the children who cannot read at an appropriate grade level. Home visitation addresses those issues as well as literacy.
- Children living in poverty without access to high quality early education programs are 50% more likely to be placed in special education; 25% more likely to drop out of school; and 60% more likely to never attend college.

3. Impact on Health

- There is a direct and significant relationship between the number of adverse childhood experiences and increases in disease; injury; disability; health-risk behaviors; and social, emotional and cognitive impairments.
- Children living in poverty without access to high-quality early education programs are 40% more likely to become teen parents.
- Adults who experienced four or more ACEs are five times as likely to consider themselves to be alcoholics, almost ten times as likely to attempt suicide, and eight times as likely to report having been sexually assaulted.

4. Impact on Juvenile Justice and Corrections

- For every child who participates in a high quality preschool program, the public benefit is \$70,000 in avoided crime costs.
- Adolescents whose mothers received in-home support through quality home visitation programs when they were infants were 55% less likely to have been arrested and 80% less likely to have been convicted of a crime.

5. Impact on the Economy

- Children who are successful in their early years will be better able to achieve higher educational achievement and enter the job market as tax-paying citizens.
- For every \$1 invested in early childhood development programs there is a \$7 return.

Although Adverse Childhood Experiences are damaging, science also shows that providing stable, responsive, nurturing relationships in the earliest years of life can prevent or even reverse the damaging effects of early life stress with lifelong benefits for learning, behavior and health. You can help Kansas families and children do better by supporting evidence-based programs that strengthen families and provide a foundation for healthy child development at home.



Prevent Child Abuse
Kansas