



# HOW TO SUPPORT THE FLOURISHING OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE FACED ADVERSITY

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# ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

- Adverse childhood experiences are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood. They can include violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems.
- It can change brain development and affect how the body responds to stress. ACEs are linked to a number of health problems, mental illnesses, and substance abuse issues in adulthood
- 61% of adults had at least one ACE and 16% had 4 or more types of ACEs
- Children who experience 4 or more ACEs are
  - 32X more likely to have learning or behavioral problems
  - On average, their average life expectancy is 20 years shorter than someone with 0 aces

# CST AND ACES

- For some students, school is not just a place to learn and grow, it is a refuge from an abusive home life
- *Gaudium et Spes*, 47 “the well being of the individual person and of human and Christian society is intimately linked with the healthy condition of that community produced by marriage and family”

# BUILDING RESILIENCE

Some children are able to thrive even after enduring significant trauma in their lives. Why are these children able to adapt and overcome, while others bear lifelong scars of their trauma that dampens their self-actualization?

For some, having **at least one supportive, responsive relationship** in their lives allows them to foster resilience, that is to adapt and respond to adversity, turning toxic stress into tolerable stress.

*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*: solidarity is “not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people,” but rather, “a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good...because we are all really responsible for all.”

# FOSTERING FLOURISHING THROUGH SELF HEALING COMMUNITIES

Flourishing emerges in a **psychosocial environment that is characterized by positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment** (Seligman, 2011).

**Human flourishing is rooted in the common good and human dignity**

The SH-C model:

- distributed leadership
- NEAR-P science
- a community that treats each other in the ways the brain and body expects is extraordinarily effective and is committed to continuous improvement. This kind of community is considered self-healing.
- Rooted in Solidarity (Fratelli tutti & Pope Francis Virginia (2013))