

Human Flourishing

A CATHOLIC SOCIAL TRADITION



Adverse Childhood Experiences

(Aces)



For many families, **potentially traumatic events can affect a child's health, behavior, and their ability to learn.** Events like these are referred to as ACEs—Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)—and they are more common than you may think.

The science of Adverse Childhood Experiences shows we can improve people's lives and help them thrive

Types of ACEs

- emotional, physical or sexual abuse
- emotional or physical neglect
- household challenges such as substance abuse, mental illness, divorce or separation, incarceration, domestic violence
- other adversities such as bullying, community violence, natural disasters, refugee or wartime experiences, or witnessing or experiencing acts of terrorism

Children who Experience Four or More ACEs:

- 32X more likely to have learning and behavioral problems
- 5X more likely to have attendance issues
- 3X more likely to experience academic failure
- 10-12X greater risk for intravenous drug use and attempted suicide
- 2-3X greater risk for developing heart disease and cancer

Close to 40% of students in the US have been exposed to some form of traumatic stress in their lives

How common are ACEs?

- 61% nonHispanic black children
- 51% of Hispanic children
- 40% non-Hispanic white children
- 23% non-Hispanic Asian children

How to Support Students Affected by Adversity

through the lens of CST



For some students, school is not just a place to learn & grow, it is a refuge from an abusive home life

"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" (Gaudium et Spes, 47)

"Never tire of working for a more just world, marked by great solidarity!" (Pope Francis, Virginia, 2013)

RESILIENCE: A STEP TOWARDS FLOURISHING

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.

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/15/03/science-resilience>

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

The scientific study of strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive.

Positive psychology researchers have found that the concept of human flourishing includes factors that may counteract high stress load, and the subsequent potential health damaging effects of that stress. Flourishing emerges in **a psychosocial environment that is characterized by positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment** (Seligman, 2011).

<https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu>

SELF HEALING COMMUNITIES



how to help

Self-Healing Communities is a community change model that is rooted in an understanding of the neurobiology of trauma. By taking into account that communities are dynamic, living and ever changing systems, this approach resulted in decreases in a number of community health measures like youth suicide and family violence.

Essential pieces of the SH-C model:

- distributed leadership: owned not by any one organization, but by the community at large with key organizations in the community serving in "meta leadership" roles.
- NEAR-P science: the scientific evidence surrounding Neuroscience, Epigenetic, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Resilience, and Positive Childhood Experiences. These disciplines help us understand how to address the impacts of toxic stress on communities, allowing us to scientifically alleviate impact and reverse effects of trauma
- 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.

Solidarity

"Solidarity means much more than engaging in sporadic acts of generosity. It means thinking and acting in terms of community.

It means that the lives of all are prior to the appropriation of goods by a few" (Fratelli Tutti, 116)

Resources from
the local
community:

<https://www.selfhealingmichiana.org/>

<https://linktr.ee/shcmichiana>

<https://linktr.ee/shcresources>

Berkeley Study: five ways to
support students affected by
Trauma

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TRADITION

RESOURCES:

[Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching](#)

[An Introduction to the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching](#)

[The importance of the family in shaping an individual](#)

[Solidarity.](#)

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VISIT [HTTPS://ADALAB.ND.EDU](https://adalab.nd.edu) FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE ADA LAB

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