

A stylized mountain range graphic in shades of teal and blue, positioned behind the main title text.

# — THE — **MONTANA** INSTITUTE

GROWING POSITIVE NORMS TO CREATE  
HEALTHIER, SAFER COMMUNITIES.

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# Guiding Questions

## Spirit

What will be the spirit of our work?

## Science

How will we approach the science/data?

## Action

What will be our actions/strategies? What will

## Return

What returns will we seek?



Linkenbach, J. (2007, 2018). The Science of the Positive: The Seven Core Principles Workbook: A Publication of The Montana Institute, LLC.

# SPIRIT





## **CHAT BOX**

**What's one positive  
experience you  
remember as a child?  
OR**

**What's one positive  
experience you have  
provided to a child in  
your life?**

What if these little things, are  
the big things?

# SCIENCE

# Science of the Positive Framework

The Science of the Positive is the study of how positive factors impact culture and experience.

The focus is on how to measure and grow the positive, and is based upon the core assumption that the positive is real and is worth growing – in ourselves, our families, our workplaces and our communities.





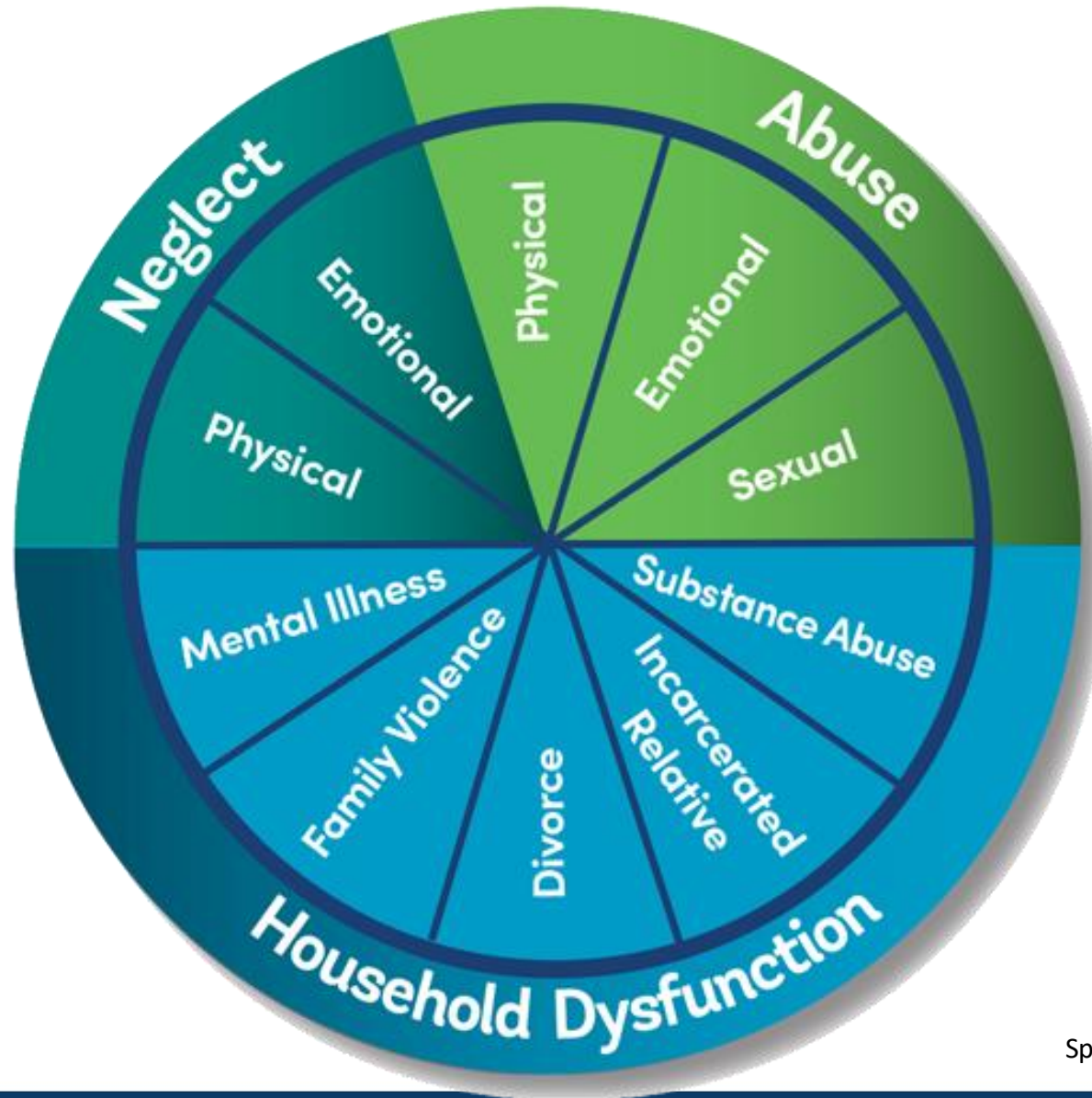


## The story of your number is the story of your ACE history.



ACEs are Adverse Childhood Experiences. Our ACE history counts experiences of abuse, neglect and household challenges that happened to us as children. But that number does not define us. It is simply an entry point to our own personal story.

**Where it leads is up to you.**



Springboard Community Services, [springboardmd.org](http://springboardmd.org)



What if...**THE  
POSITIVE** has  
lasting impact  
like trauma  
does???



# Common Terminology

- PCEs – Positive Childhood Experiences
- PECEs –Positive Early Childhood Experiences
- BCEs – Benevolent Childhood Experiences
- Counter-ACEs – Advantageous Childhood Experiences
- PACEs – Protective and Compensatory Experiences or Positive & Adverse Childhood Experiences

# Positive Childhood Experiences Scale

- Feeling your family stood by you during difficult times
- Enjoying participation in community traditions
- Having at least two non-parent adults who took genuine interest in you
- Feeling safe and protected by an adult in your home
- Feeling supported by friends
- Feeling a sense of belonging in high school
- Feeling able to talk to your family about feelings.

Sege, R., Bethell, C., Linkenbach, J., Jones, J., Klika, B. & Pecora, P.J. (2017). *Balancing adverse childhood experiences with HOPE: New insights into the role of positive experience on child and family development*. Boston: The Medical Foundation. Accessed at [www.cssp.org](http://www.cssp.org)

Ungar, M., Liebenberg, L., Boothroyd Larte, R., Man Kwong, W. Tak Yan Lee, T., J Leblanc, J. & Makhnach, A. (2008). The study of youth resilience across cultures: Lessons from a pilot study of measurement development. *Research in Human Development*, 5(3), 166-180.

# Benevolent Childhood Experiences Scale

- Having at least one caregiver with whom you felt safe.
- Having at least one good friend.
- Having beliefs that gave you comfort.
- Liking school.
- Having at least one teacher who cared about you.

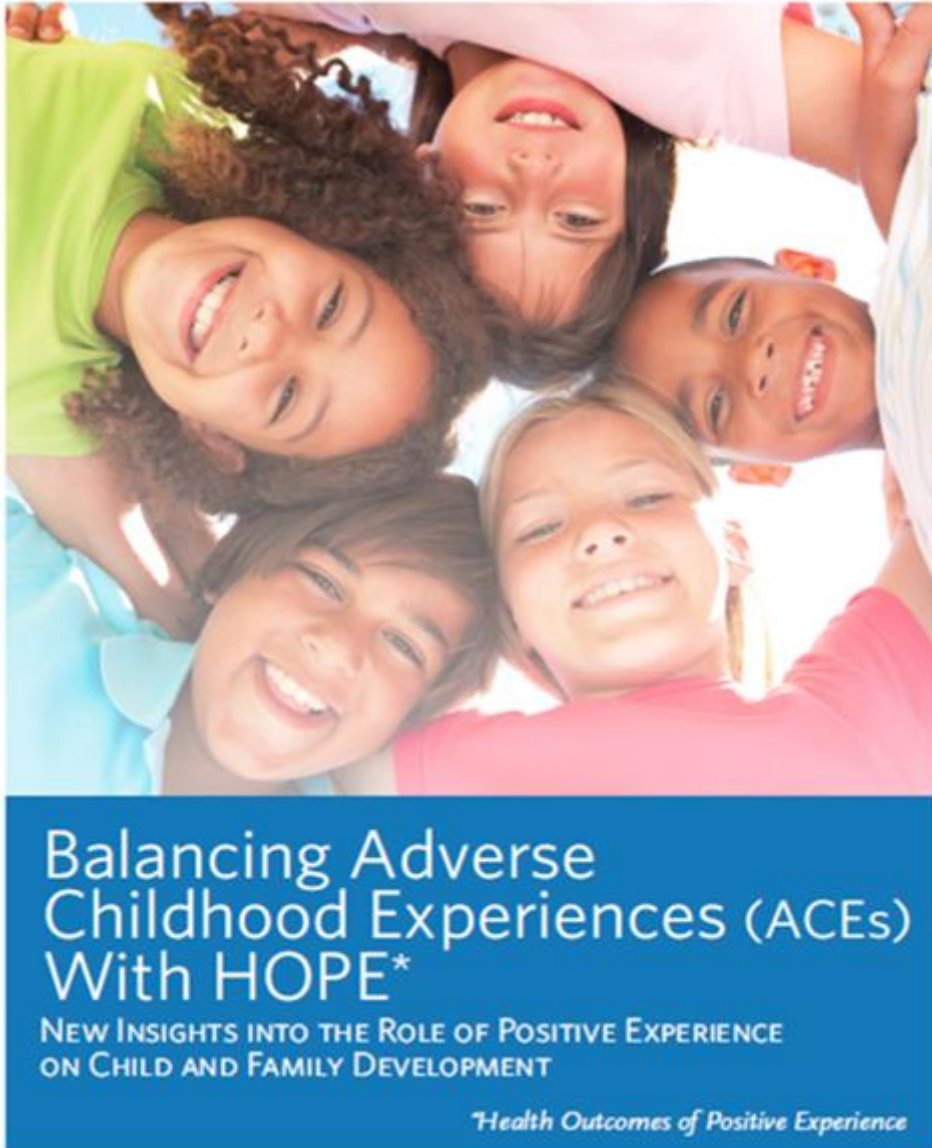
Benevolent childhood experiences scale, ©Narayan, Rivera, Ghosh Ippen, & Lieberman, 2015



## Benevolent Childhood Experiences Scale (cont.)

- Having good neighbors.
- Having an adult (not your parent or caregiver) that could provide you with support or advice.
- Liking yourself and feeling comfortable with yourself.
- Having a predictable home routine, like regular meals and regular bedtime.

Benevolent childhood experiences scale, ©Narayan, Rivera, Ghosh Ippen, & ... 2015



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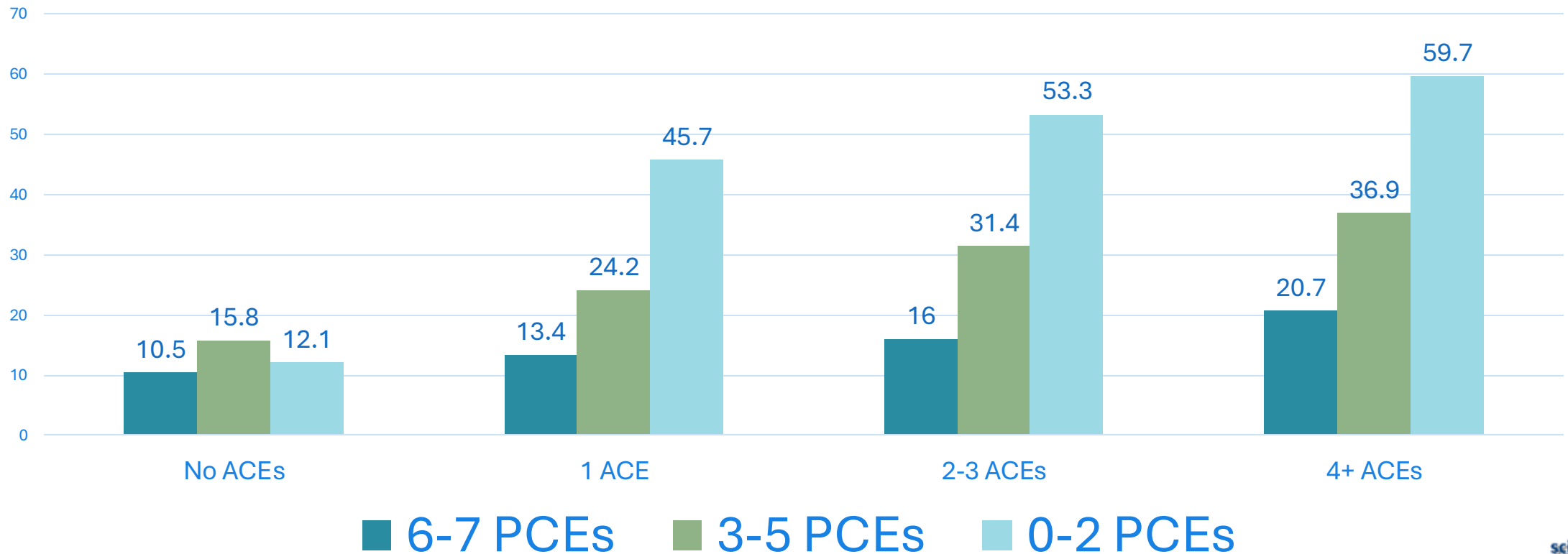
**Peter J. Pecora, PhD**

Sege, R., Bethell, C., Linkenbach, J., Jones, J., Klika, B. & Pecora, P.J. (2017). *Balancing adverse childhood experiences with HOPE: New insights into the role of positive experience on child and family development*. Boston: The Medical Foundation. Accessed at [www.cssp.org](http://www.cssp.org)



# Positive childhood experiences mitigate ACEs






% with Depression or Poor Mental Health with PCEs by ACEs



Bethell, C., Jones, J., Gombojav, N., Linkenbach, J., Sege, R. (2019 - September JAMA Peds) - *Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample: Associations Across Adverse Childhood Experiences Levels.*



# Positive Experiences SCIENCE

1.   Experiences shape our brains
2.  Experiences improve health
3.  Experiences help us heal
4.  Experiences are more fun!

# What about PCEs and adult substance use?



## Journal of Community Health

The Publication for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Graupensperger, S., Kilmer, J. R., Olson, D. C., & Linkenbach, J. W., (In Press). Associations between positive childhood experiences and adult smoking and alcohol use behaviors in a large statewide sample. *Journal of Community Health*.





# Are PCEs Protective Against Substance Use Behaviors?

## Data Source

Data were collected through the 2019 Montana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), which is a cross-sectional telephone survey of English and Spanish-speaking adults 18 or older, conducted with technical and methodological guidance from the CDC. One adult per household is randomly selected to be interviewed, and recruitment entails calls to both cellphones and landlines. Data are weighted using a post-stratification adjustment raking procedure to increase generalizability of the data. Additional details of the Montana BRFSS procedures are available online (<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/BRFSS/FAQDataUsers>).

## Race/Ethnicity\*

### All Other Races Including Multi-Racial and/or

<u>White</u>	<u>AIAN</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
5,485	493	420
(85.5%)	(7.6%)	(6.4%)

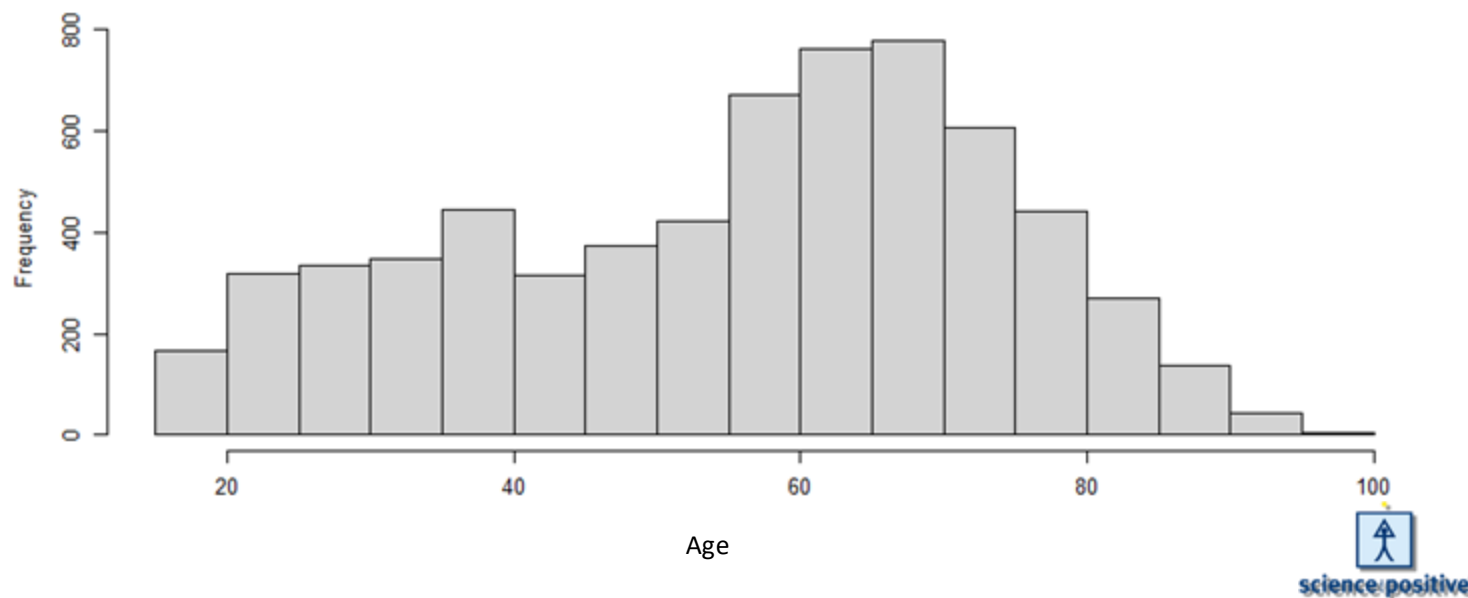
**\*Note:** AIAN = American Indian and Alaska Native. Other race/ethnicity categories were collected but are not publicly available. An additional 97 (1.5%) participants did not report their race/ethnicity.

## Birth Sex

<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>
3,306	3,189
(50.9%)	(49.1%)

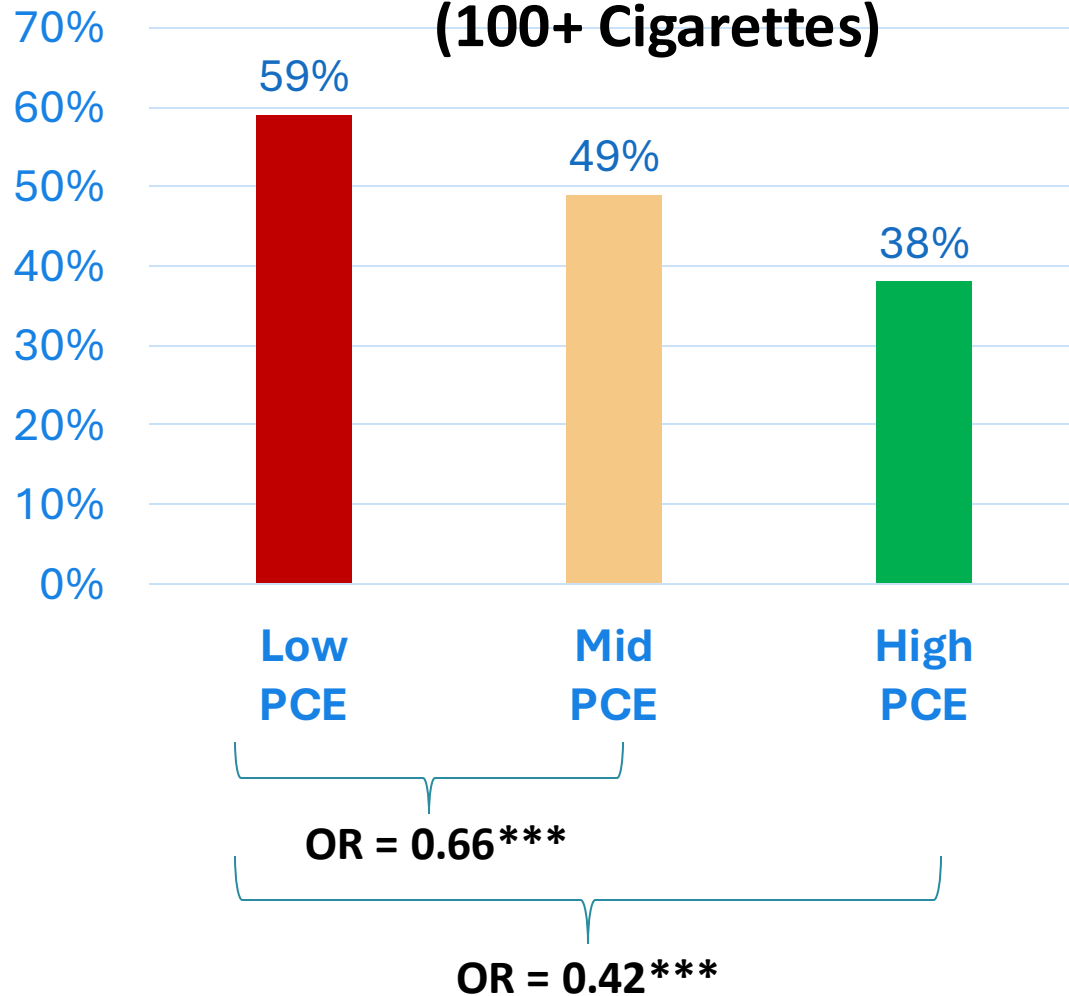
## Sample Demographics

**AGE:** Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 98 years old. Mean age was 55.9 (SD = 18.4)

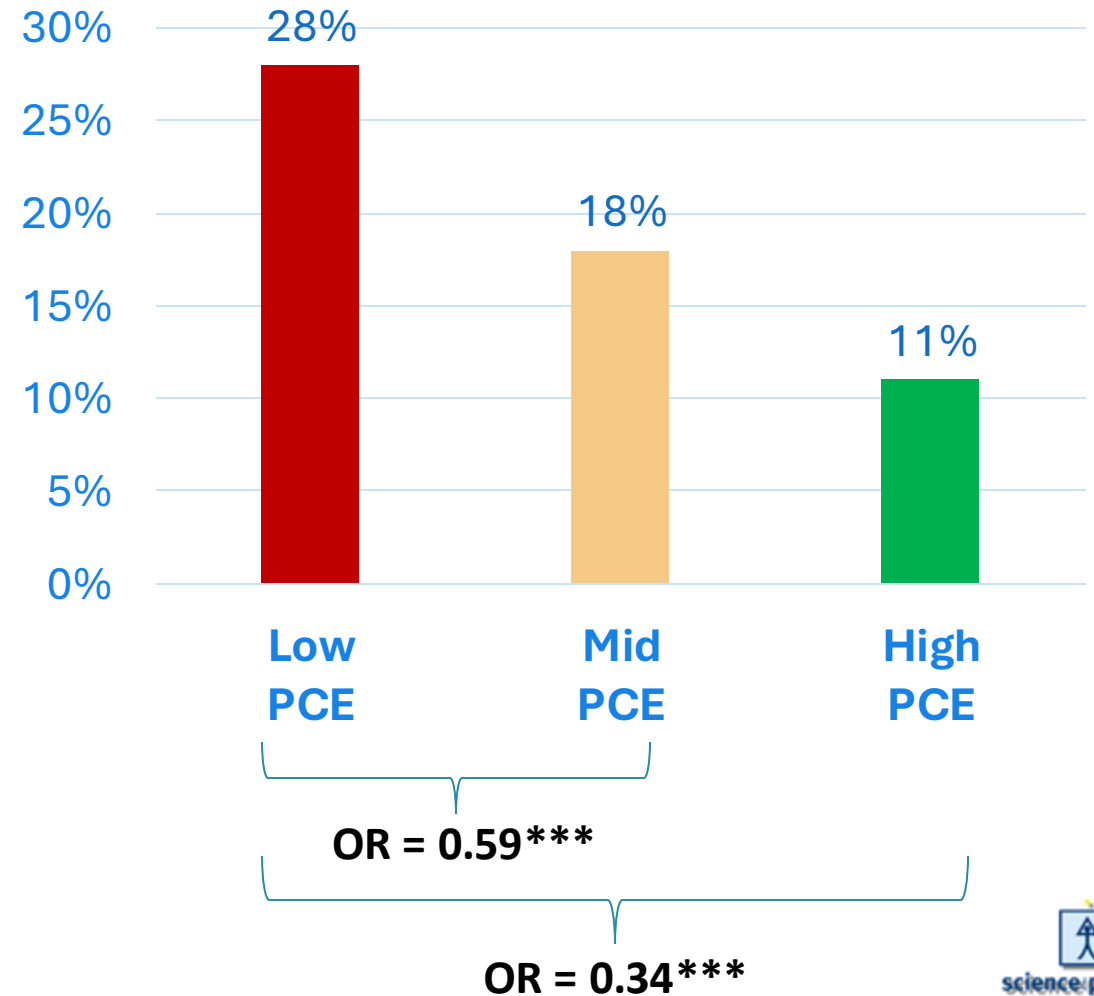


## Adult Cigarette Use

### Lifetime Smoking (100+ Cigarettes)



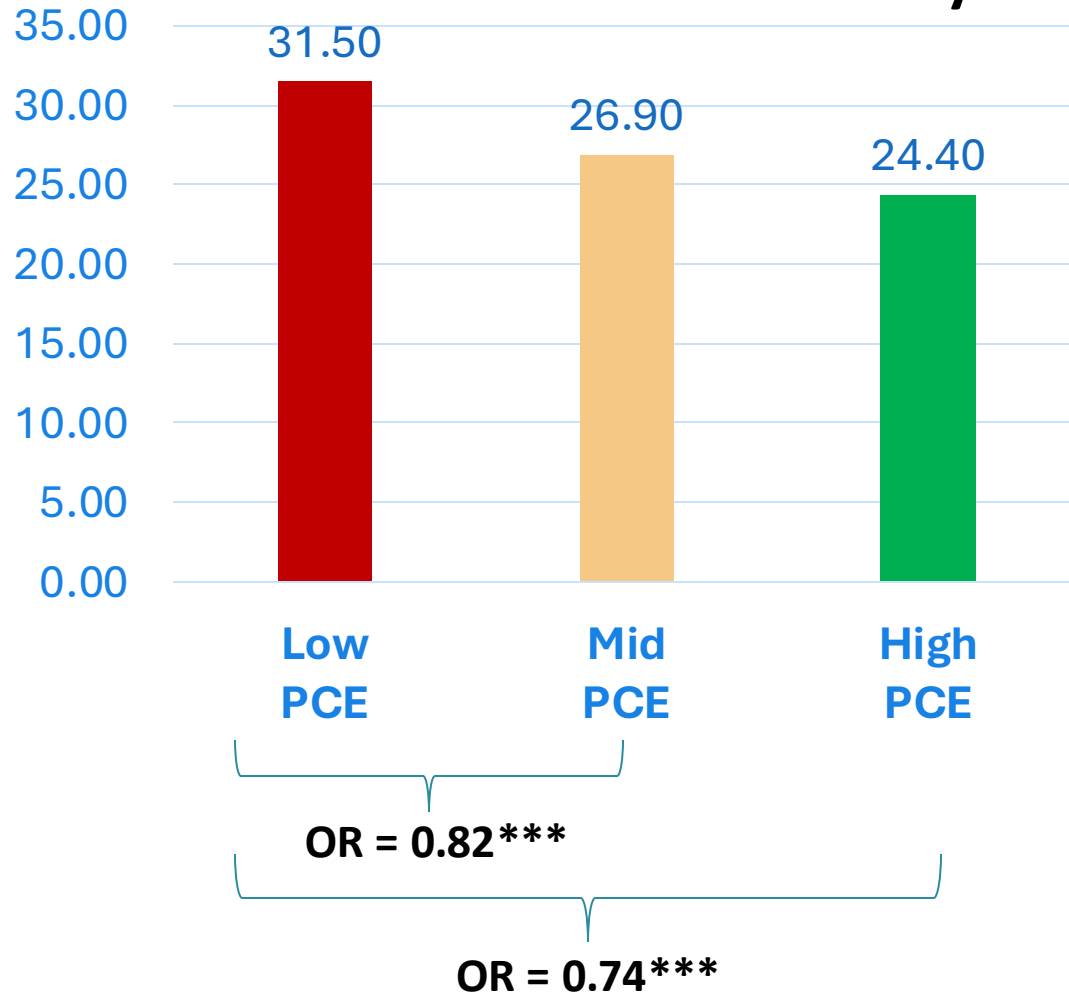
### Current Smoker



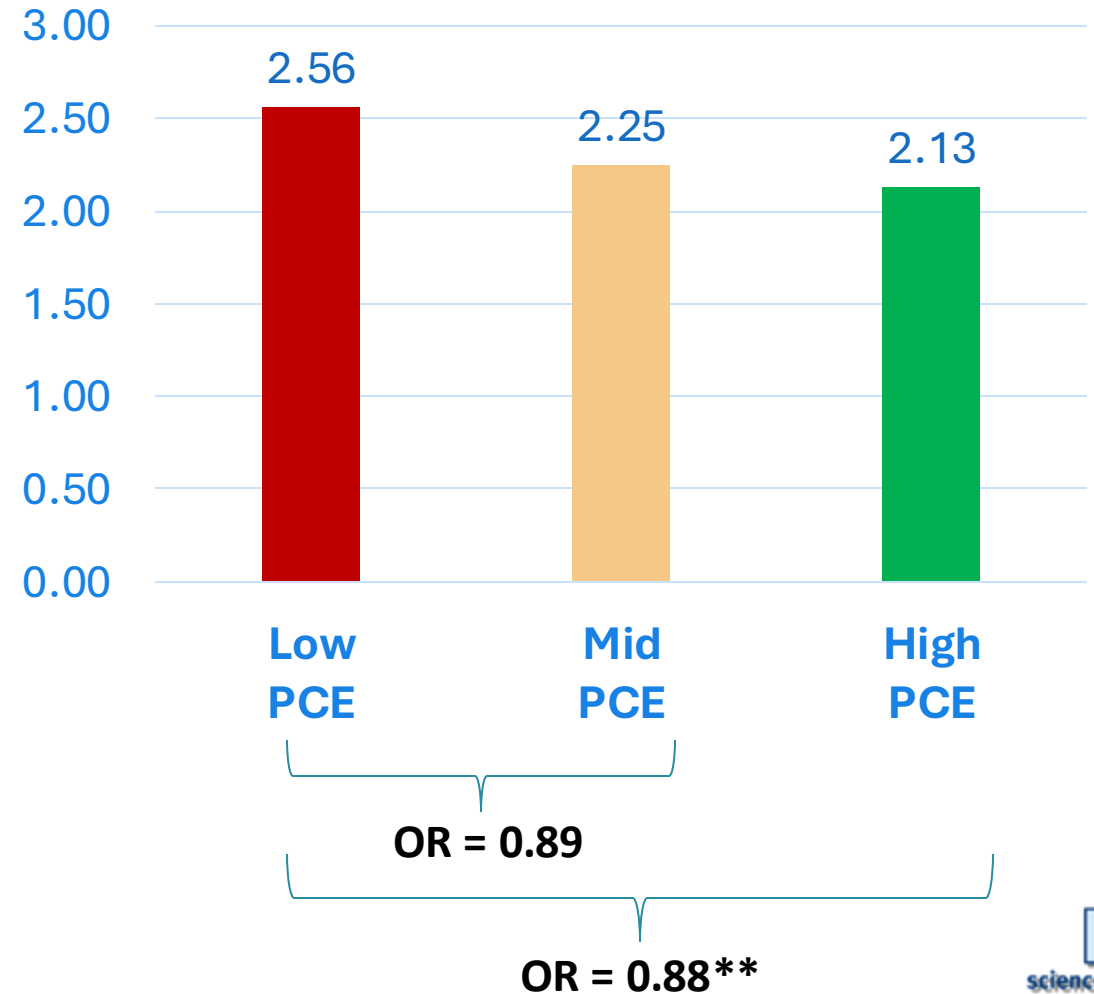
**Note:** AOR = Adjusted odds ratio derived from logistic regression model controlling for age at time of survey, birth sex, race/ethnicity, and annual household income. Values >1 indicate positive association and values < 1 indicate inverse/negative associations. \*p < .01, \*\*p < .001.

## Adult Alcohol Use

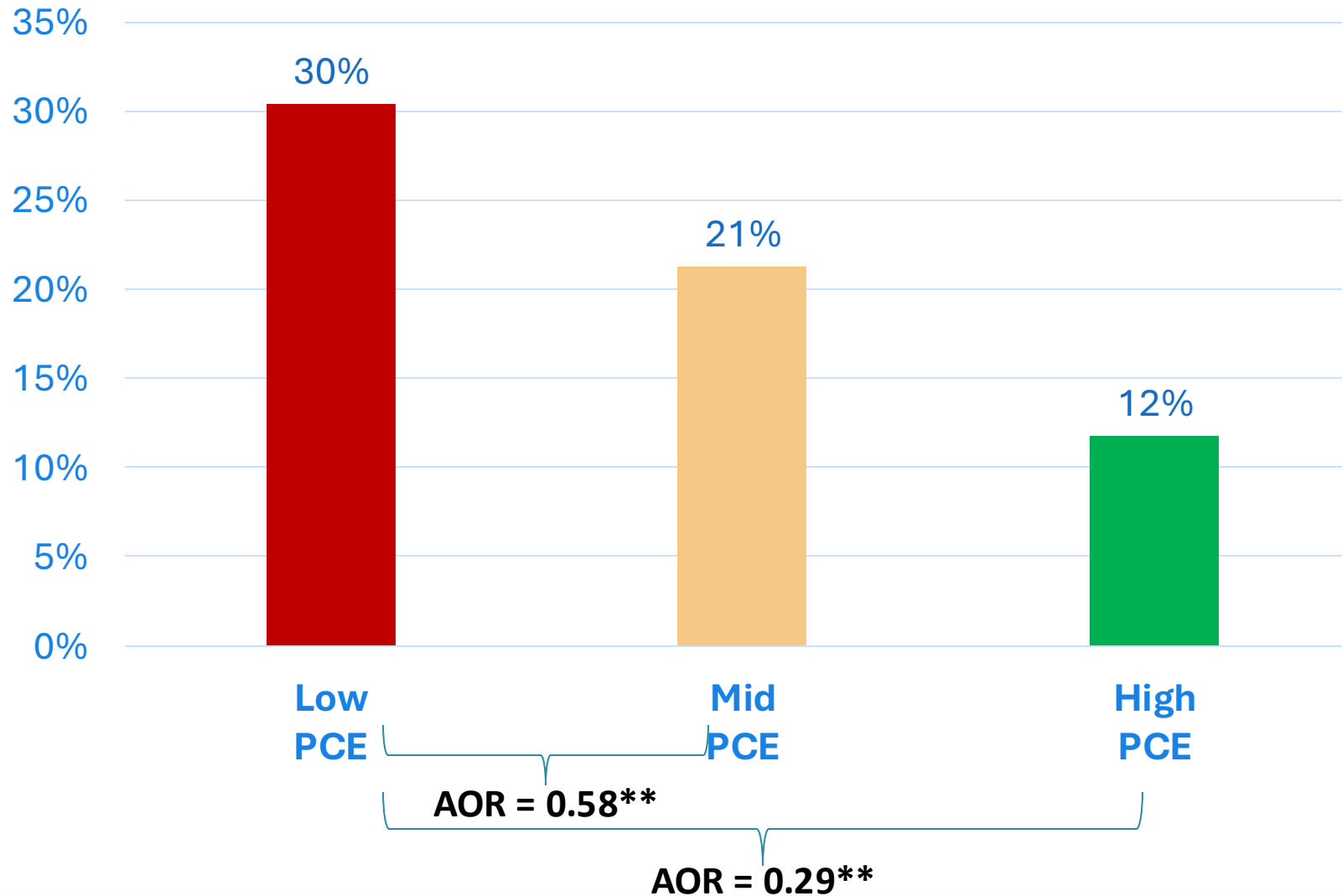
### Total Drinks in Past 30 Days



### Drinks Per Occasion



## Lifetime Illicit Drug Use



# You can now find research in the peer reviewed literature on PCEs and...

Bullying behaviors

Rural vs. urban environments

Racial and ethnic differences

Chronic pain

Youth depression and anxiety

Childhood obesity

Resiliency

School readiness

Cardiovascular health

Parenting

Food insecurity

Self esteem

Mental toughness

# PECEs and School Readiness

So, M., et al. (2023). Positive early childhood experiences and school readiness among US preschoolers. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 262, 113637-113637.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2023.113637>

- **Sample**: National data on 26,871 children ages 3-5 from 2016 to 2020
- **Examined**: Associations between key PECE domains (nurturing relationships, home learning opportunities, safe and stable environments, and family routines) and school readiness
- **Findings**: **The more exposure to PECEs, the greater odds for being healthy and ready to learn. Strong correlations were indicated across demographic groups, ACE levels, and ACE types.**



# PCEs and Bullying

Crouch, et al. (2023). Examining bullying victimization, bullying perpetration, and positive childhood experiences. *Journal of School Health*, 93: 669-678. DOI: 10.1111/josh.13323

- **Sample**: National data on 43,999 U.S. children ages 6 to 17.
- **Examined**: Associations between 7 selected PCEs and bullying victimization and perpetration
- **Findings**: Children who experienced a resilient family, safe neighborhood, supportive neighborhood, or connected caregiver had lower odds of perpetrating bullying. The majority of those who were victims of bullying reported no guiding mentor, no resilient family, and no participation in after school activities.

# PCEs and Childhood Obesity

Crouch, et al. (2022). Examining the influence of positive childhood experiences on childhood overweight and obesity using a national sample. *Preventative Medicine*. 154, 106907.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2021.106907>

- **Sample**: National data on 28,771 U.S. children ages 10 to 17.
- **Examined**: Associations between exposure to PCEs and ACEs and childhood obesity and overweight
- **Findings**: Children who had experienced 2 or more ACEs were less likely to be overweight or obese if they also participated in afterschool activities, volunteered in their community, had a mentor, lived in a safe neighborhood, lived in a supportive neighborhood, or lived with a resilient family.

# PCEs and Childhood Flourishing

Crouch, et al. (2023). Association between positive childhood experiences and childhood flourishing among US children. *Journal of Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics*, 44(4), e255-e262. <https://doi.org/10.1097/DBP.0000000000001181>

- **Sample**: National data on 40,561 children ages 6-17 from 2018 to 2019
- **Examined**: Associations between 7 selected PCEs and 3 flourishing measures: showing an interest and curiosity in learning new things, working to finish the task they started, and staying calm and in control when faced with a challenge.
- **Findings**: Children who experienced each type of PCE had higher odds of flourishing.

# PCEs and Adult Health

Charite, et al. (2023). Specific domains of positive childhood experiences associated with improved adult health: A nationally representative study. *SSM-Population Health*. 24, 101558.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2023.101558>

- **Sample**: National data on 7,105 adults
- **Examined**: Associations between 5 selected PCEs and adult general health ratings
- **Findings**: Experiencing childhood peer support, a healthy school climate, and neighborhood safety were especially protective against multiple adult health conditions, including for ACE exposed individuals. Interventions that promote PCEs may yield population health gains.

## HEALTH & WELLBEING OUTCOMES OF INCREASED PCEs

2024 Study of over 11,000 U.S. pre-teens examining the role of perceived discrimination and PCE's in behavioral symptoms while accounting for ACEs.

**Findings:** PCEs were associated with both reduced internalizing and externalizing symptoms and reduced odds of clinical range scoring in anxiety, depression, aggression, attention problems, and oppositional behaviors

Choi, K. R., Bravo, L., La Charite, J., Cardona, E., Elliott, T., James, K. F., Wisk, L. E., Dunn, E. C., & Saadi, A. (2024). Associations between Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs), Discrimination, and Internalizing/Externalizing in Pre-Adolescents. Academic Pediatrics.

[https://www.academicpedsjnl.net/article/S1876-2859\(24\)00275-4/fulltext](https://www.academicpedsjnl.net/article/S1876-2859(24)00275-4/fulltext)

# HEALTH & WELLBEING OUTCOMES OF INCREASED PCEs

2024 Study of 2022 data on 28,617 adults in Japan

**Findings:** CPCEs were associated with lower odds of adult diseases (such as stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic pain, depression, suicidal ideation and severe psychological distress) after adjusting for ACEs.

Mitani H, Kondo N, Amemiya A, *et al.* Promotive and protective effects of community-related positive childhood experiences on adult health outcomes in the context of adverse childhood experiences: a nationwide cross-sectional survey in Japan

*BMJ Open* 2024;**14**:e082134. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2023-082134

<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/14/6/e082134>



# HEALTH & WELLBEING OUTCOMES OF INCREASED PCEs

2024 Study of 453 participants of Healing Pathways, a longitudinal, community-based panel study with Indigenous families in the Midwestern U.S. and Canada

**Findings:** the strength of association between ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and young adult well-being was weaker than that between BCEs and well-being. Evidence of high levels of BCEs reflects realities of strong Indigenous families and an abundance of positive childhood experiences.

Herman KA, Hautala DS, Aulandez KMW, Walls ML. The resounding influence of benevolent childhood experiences. Transcultural Psychiatry. 2024;0(0). doi:10.1177/13634615231192006

<https://pure.johnshopkins.edu/en/publications/the-resounding-influence-of-benevolent-childhood-experiences>

## HEALTH & WELLBEING OUTCOMES OF INCREASED PCEs

2024 Study of 2016-2019 data from the National Survey of Children's Health of 256 adolescents who have SUD

**Findings:** Positive Childhood Experiences promote recovery from substance use disorder in youth. "In terms of the influence of PCEs and ACEs on SUD recovery, PCEs served as a promotive factor for SUD recovery, whereas ACEs did not serve as barriers. This finding suggests that, in the context of SUD recovery, the role of PCEs may outweigh that of ACEs."

Kim, I., Park, Y., Chasek, C., Bjornsen, A., & Shin, K. (2024). Recovery from substance use disorder among adolescents: Roles of adverse and positive childhood experiences. *Journal of Addictions & Offender Counseling*. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jaoc.12136>

# HEALTH & WELLBEING OUTCOMES OF INCREASED PCEs

2024 Study of 8,864 11<sup>th</sup> graders in British Columbia

**Findings:** Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) serve as promotive factors for mental health of pandemic-era adolescents. PCEs mitigate severity of depressive symptoms in adolescents with ACEs.

Samji, H., Long, D., Herring, J., Correia, R., Maloney, J. (2024) Positive childhood experiences serve as protective factors for mental health in pandemic-era youth with adverse childhood experiences. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. Online January 25, 2024, 106640 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2024.106640>

# What if the little things, are the big things?

Science is proving the impact of the little  
things we do every day!

# ACTION

# Guiding Questions

## Spirit

What will be the spirit of our work?

## Science

How will we approach the science/data?

## Action

What will be our actions/strategies?  
What will we do?

## Return

What returns will we seek?



Linkenbach, J. (2007, 2018). The Science of the Positive: The Seven Core Principles Workbook: A Publication of The Montana Institute, LLC.



## Lake of the Woods, MN

- 3,923 county population
- 464 students K-12
- Resort Community
- Over 50 liquor licenses



# The solutions are in community.

Linkenbach, J. (2007, 2009-2011, 2015-2016). The Science of the Positive: The Seven Core Principles Workbook.





We asked adults...and kids:

How are you being Positive, Present, Perceptive,  
Purposeful, Perfected, Proactive, and Passionate  
about your relationships with the youth in our  
community?

What are you already doing, what could you be doing?

Billboards in 3 locations around town:



## Banners at area businesses and events:

### WAYS TO SHOW KIDS WE CARE



- Acknowledge their efforts.
- Actively listen when they are talking.
- Admit when you are wrong and apologize.
- Ask them what was the best thing that happened to them today.
- Tell them you care about them.

**STUDENTS WHO FEEL THAT ADULTS IN THEIR COMMUNITY CARE ABOUT THEM ARE 2 TIMES LESS LIKELY TO USE ALCOHOL MONTHLY OR MORE OFTEN.**





Data from 2016 Minnesota student survey. Funded by a Drug Free Communities Grant.

### WAYS TO ENCOURAGE TEENS



- Ask questions when youth are talking with you.
- Show youth that their voice and opinion matters.
- Help youth discover ways to say no to such away from a dangerous or unhealthy situation.
- Ask youth about their homework or other school projects.
- Talk with youth about your family rules and consequences of underage alcohol and other substance use.

**MOST LAKE OF THE WOODS STUDENTS PLAN AHEAD AND MAKE GOOD CHOICES.**





Data from 2016 Minnesota Student Survey of Lake of the Woods 8th, 9th and 11th Graders. Funded by a Drug Free Communities Grant.

### WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH YOUTH



- Attend school sporting events.
- Attend school concerts and plays.
- Put away your phone when talking with youth.
- Bring youth to community events.
- Help out with an organization you believe in; encourage youth to do the same.

**82% of Lake of the Woods High School students AGREE that parents and other adults should talk with them about the importance of NOT using alcohol.**





Data from 2016 PCN Student Survey of 107 Lake of the Woods 9th-12 Graders. Funded by a Drug Free Communities Grant.



## Table tents and posters around town

**MOST<<**  
**LAKE OF THE WOODS COMMUNITY**  
**MEMBERS** BELIEVE IT'S POSSIBLE TO  
REDUCE ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG  
PROBLEMS THROUGH PREVENTION.




**SHOW YOU CARE:**  
Talk with youth about the  
positive impacts of **NOT**  
using alcohol and other drugs.




Data from 2016 PCH Community Survey taken by 321 Lake of the Woods community members.  
Funded by a Drug Free Communities Grant.

**MOST** LAKE OF THE WOODS  
HIGH SCHOOL **STUDENTS PLAN**  
**AHEAD AND MAKE GOOD CHOICES.**




**SHOW YOU CARE:**  
Talk with students about  
the importance of thinking  
through their actions  
and consequences.




Data from 2016 MSS Community Survey of Lake of the Woods 6, 8, and 11th graders.  
Funded by a Drug Free Communities Grant.

**MOST<<**  
**LAKE OF THE WOODS HIGH SCHOOL**  
**STUDENTS CHOOSE NOT TO USE ALCOHOL**  
**OR MARIJUANA IN A TYPICAL MONTH.**



**SHOW YOU CARE:**  
Talk with youth about the positive  
choices they make and that  
they see their friends making.



Data from 2019 PCH student survey of 107 Lake of the Woods 9-12 graders.  
Funded by a Drug Free Communities Grant.



## Social Media Images



# RETURN



**JUST AS A TRAUMATIC  
EXPERIENCE CAN  
ALTER A LIFE IN  
AN INSTANT,  
SO TOO CAN A  
THERAPEUTIC  
ENCOUNTER.**

*Bruce D. Perry*



*NVR  
Northampton*

