

August 2025



From Adversity to Resilience: A Framework for Hope

Presenter:

Jessica Herzog-Hall
ACEs Indiana Coalition

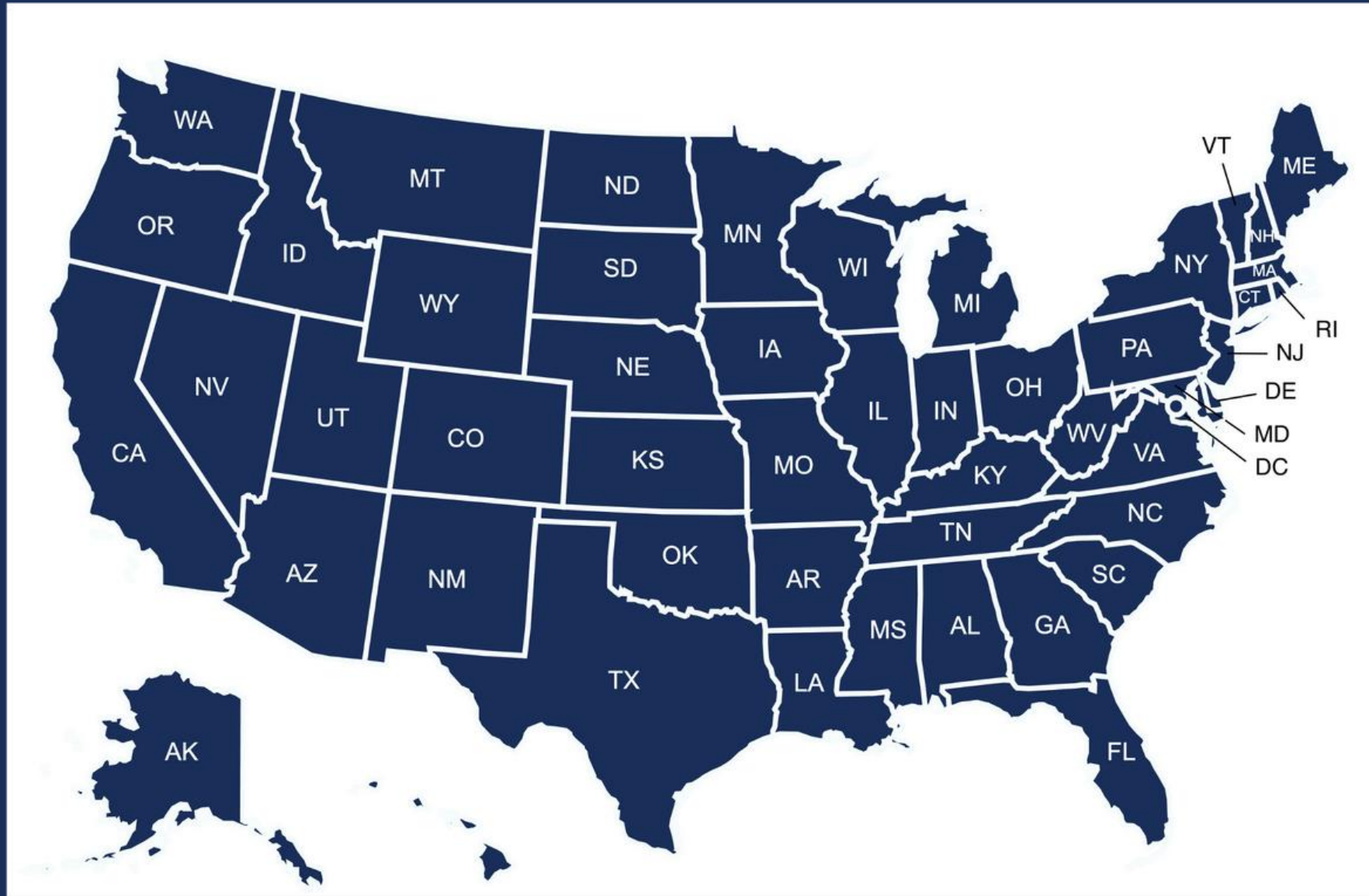
Technical Questions

1. If you cannot hear this presentation, **check your audio settings located in the control panel**. If that still does not work, please **dial in on your phone**.
2. You will find “**handouts**” in the chat located in the control panel.
3. Questions? The **Q&A box** is located in your control panel.
4. **Closed Captioning** is available in your control panel.

Charlie and Helen Dibble



2023-2024 Clients
served approximately 114,890 youth



The Dibble Institute is
a national,
independent,
non-profit
organization.

Our Mission

Empowering youth and young adults with skills to build and sustain healthy interpersonal and romantic relationships.



We believe in **research**.



We believe in **stable, safe, and nurturing** families.



We believe that relationship education is for everyone.



UNDERSTANDING

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Building Self-Healing Communities



The ACEs Indiana Coalition is dedicated to interrupting generational trauma, building resilience, and increasing awareness about the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). ACEs are traumatic events that occur during childhood and can significantly affect long-term health and well-being. The coalition brings together professionals from across sectors to form a collaborative learning community, supporting cross-system dialogue and growth. Through training and outreach, the coalition promotes a deeper understanding of trauma, the importance of Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs), and strategies for creating healing-centered environments. By encouraging an upstream, prevention-focused approach, the coalition works to support sustainable well-being for individuals, families, and communities throughout Indiana.



Before We Begin...

We want to acknowledge that some of the topics discussed during this conference, including trauma, loss, adversity, and healing, can be emotionally activating. While these conversations are important, they may bring up strong feelings or memories. Please know that you are not alone, and you are encouraged to care for yourself in whatever way feels right. You are always welcome to take a break or step away if needed. Your well-being matters more than anything. Your presence is valued, and your needs are respected.

Focused-Attention Practice



Memory of our experiences
IS STORED IN OUR BODY



It's about you and me
CHANGING
the future of
PUBLIC HEALTH

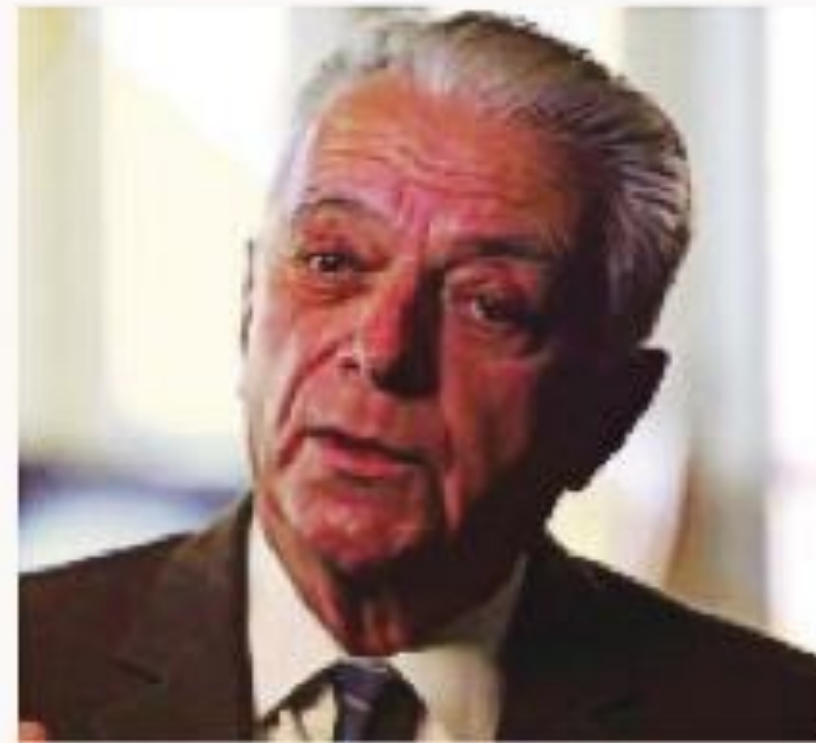
DISCOVERY



01/12/14

NEWS

Early Adversity Increases Physical, Mental, Behavioral Problems, Scientists Report



Dr. Robert Anda & Dr. Vincent Felitti
Investigators

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention,
Kaiser Permanente Study

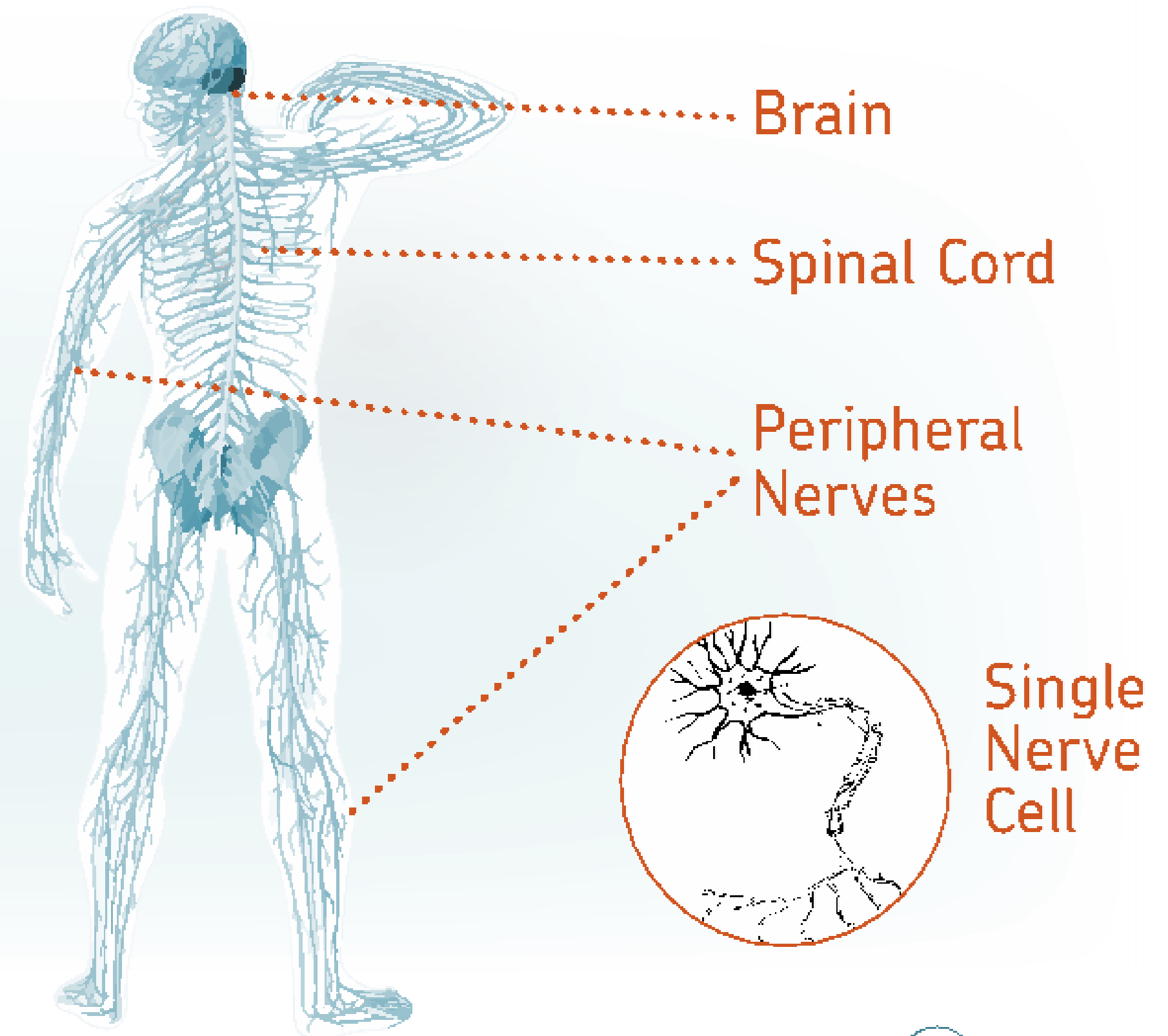
Over 17,000 study participants

The ACE Study confirms, with scientific evidence, that adversity early in life increases physical, mental and behavioral problems later in life.

HUMAN NERVOUS SYSTEM

Nervous system
ORCHESTRATES BODY
FUNCTIONS & PERCEPTIONS

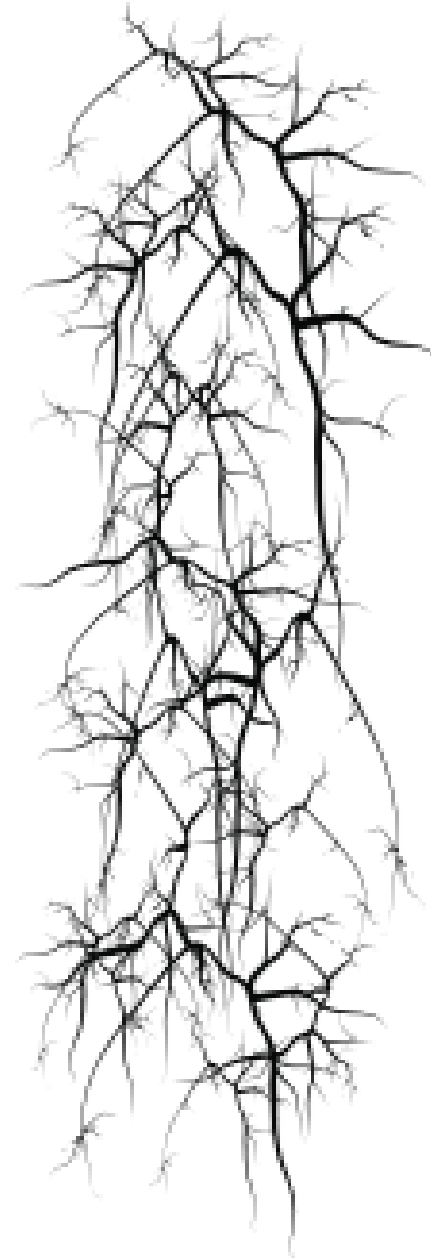
Neuroscience
HELPS US UNDERSTAND WHY
A C E S
ARE SO POWERFUL



SYNAPTIC DENSITY



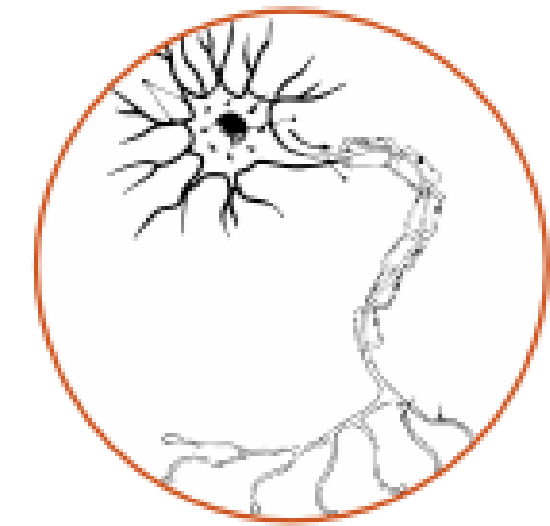
At Birth



Elementary Age



Puberty



Single
Neuron

CONCEPTION



Danger

Fight
Flight
Freeze

Survive
Worst
Conditions

Childhood Experience

Adaptation

Adult Functioning

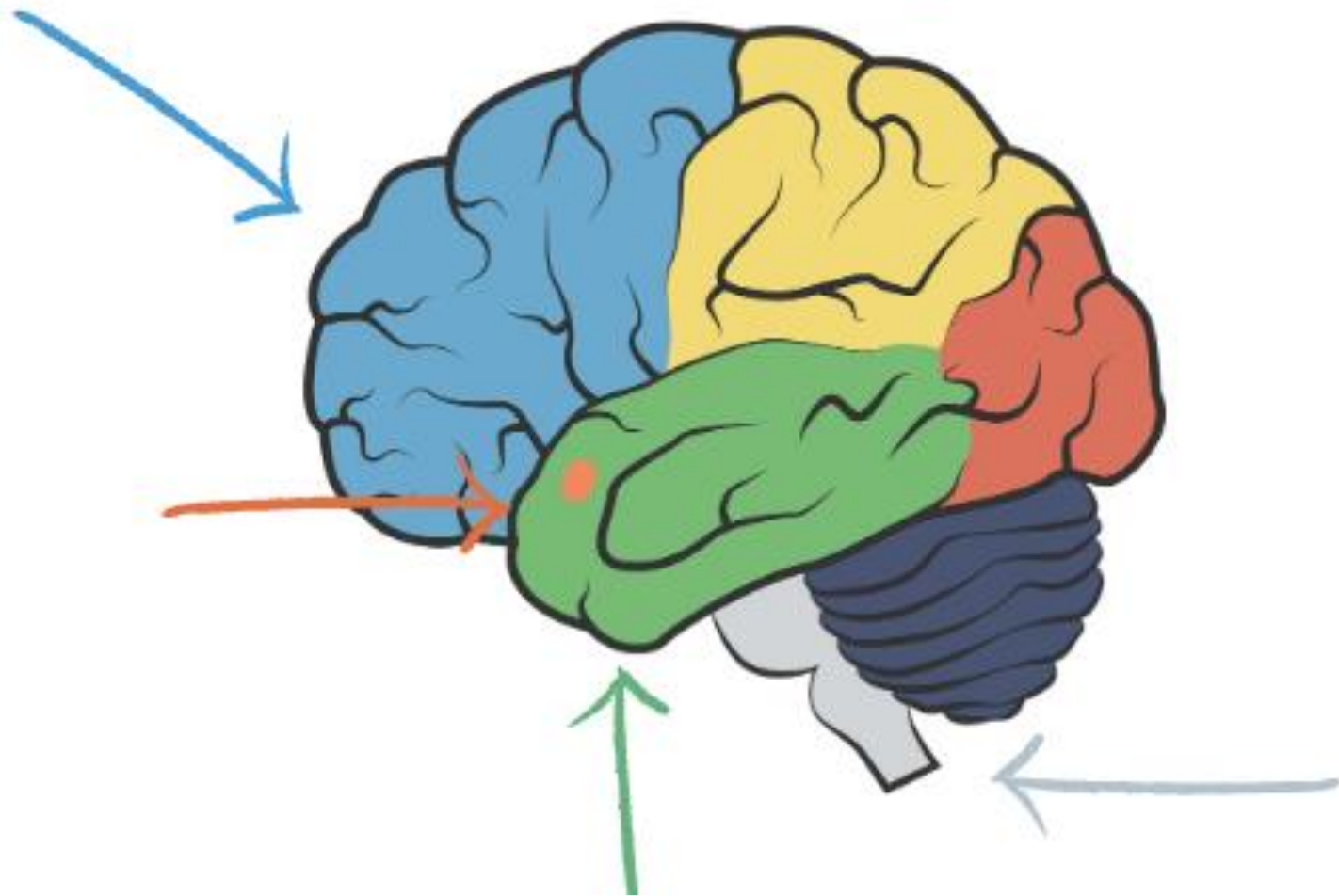
Safety

People
Process
Possibility

Survive Best
Conditions -
*Vulnerable in
Worst*



The Amazing Brain



1 Prefrontal Cortex

Our executive functions live here! Decision-making, emotional regulation, working memory, sustained attention, problem-solving, social engagement, and more.

3 Limbic System

Our limbic system helps us feel and sense our inner and outer environments. It helps us detect threat and safety.

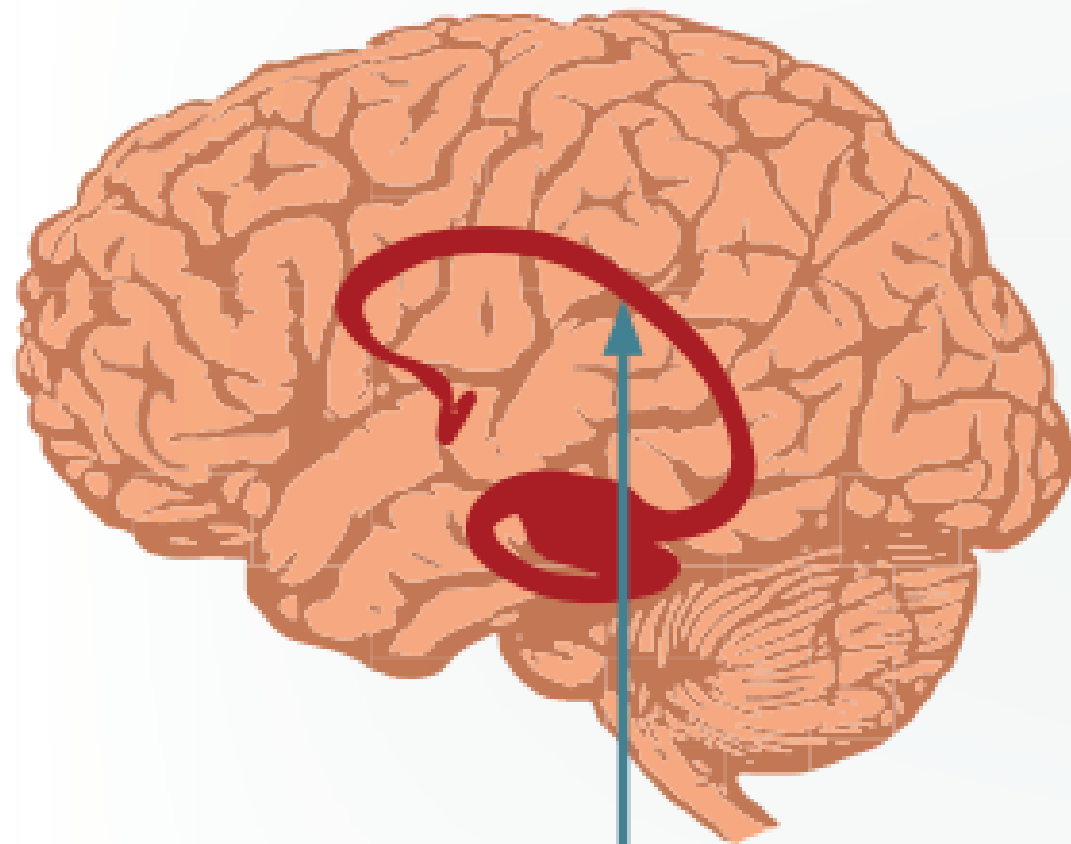
2 Amygdala

Our amygdala is housed in the limbic system and assists us with our fight or flight response. It also helps us with negative and positive emotions.

4 Brainstem

Our brainstem is the oldest part of our brain! It helps us with our heartbeat, breathing, digestion, and it's where our freeze or "shut-down" response.

THE LIMBIC SYSTEM



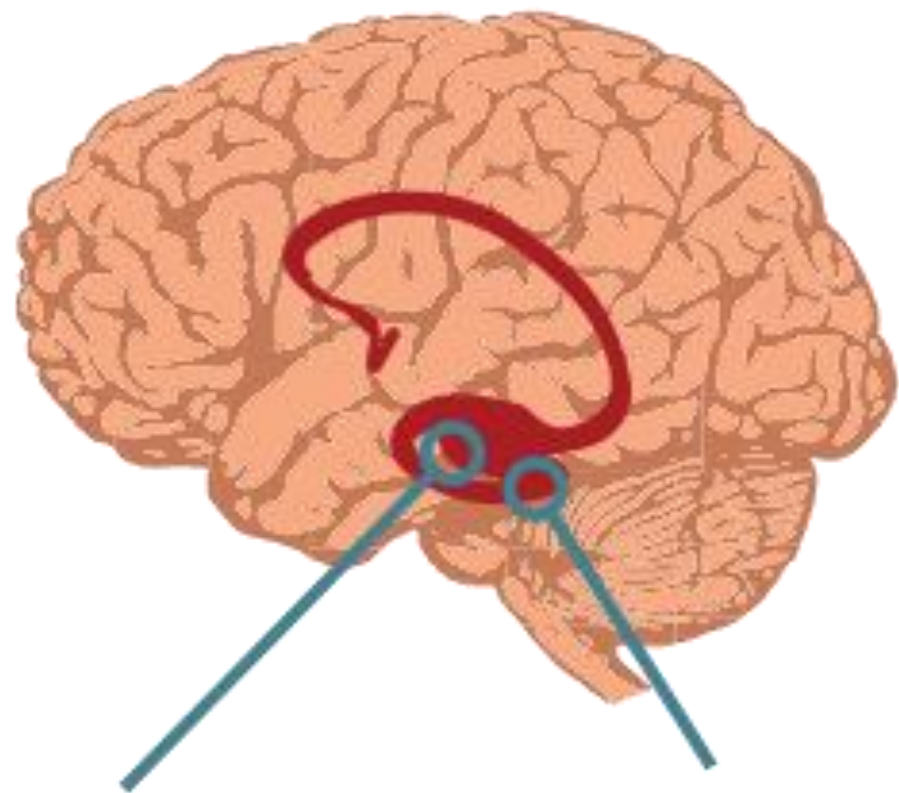
LIMBIC SYSTEM

FIGHT
or
FLIGHT

vital for
LEARNING
MEMORY
REWARD
REINFORCEMENT

regulates
HORMONES
MOOD
HEARTBEAT
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

THE HIPPOCAMPUS AND AMYGDALA



Amygdala

Hippocampus

**VITAL
for
RELATIONSHIPS**



Panic & Fear | Attention | Memory | Social Cues

Executive Skills

for complex thinking and goal-focused action

Response Inhibition

Working memory

Emotional control

Flexible thinking

Sustained attention

Task initiation

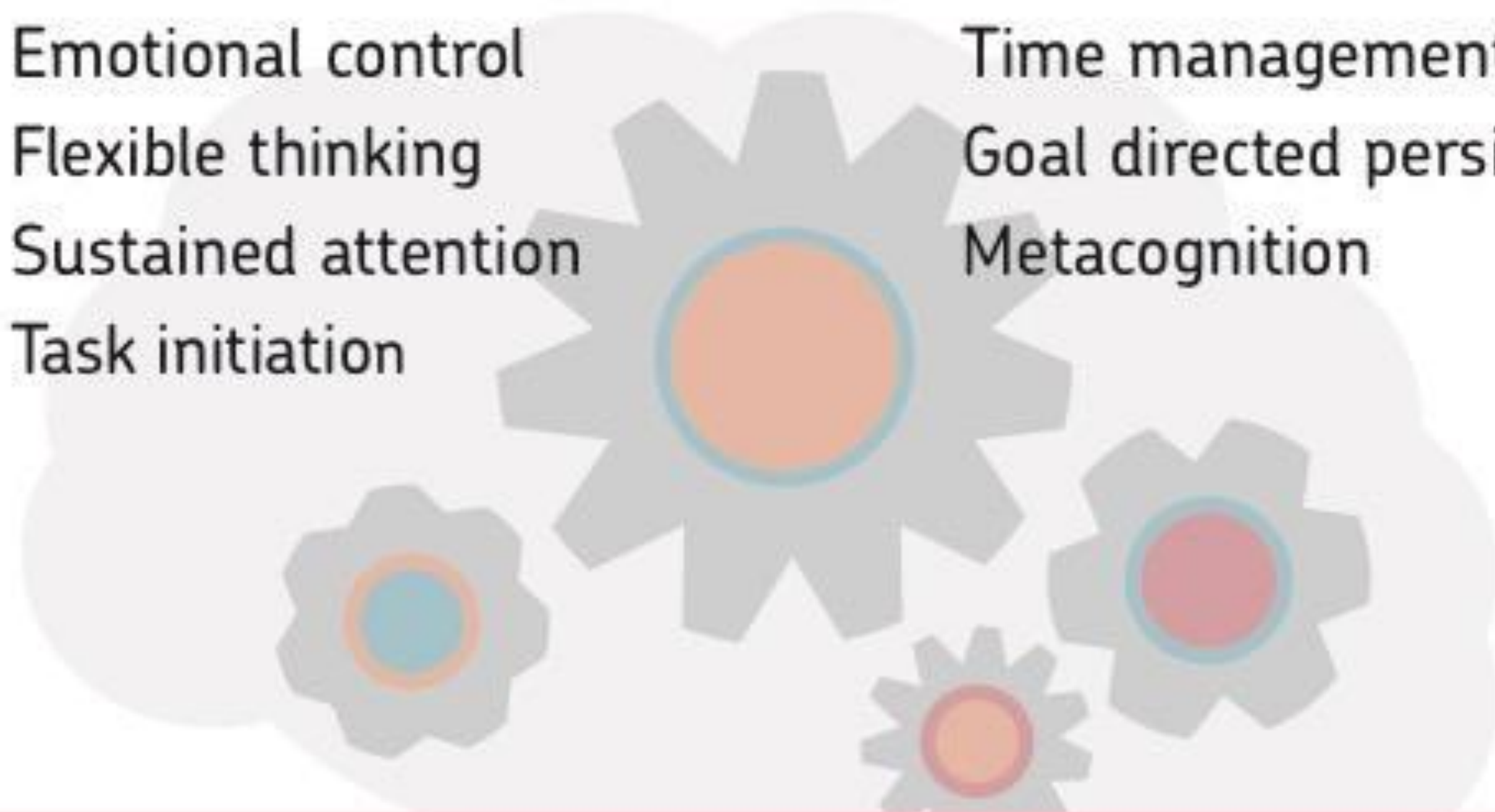
Planning & Prioritizing

Organization

Time management

Goal directed persistence

Metacognition



Introduction to the Nervous System



**Autonomic
Nervous System (ANS)**



Sympathetic Nervous System

Prepares the body for the fight
or flight response

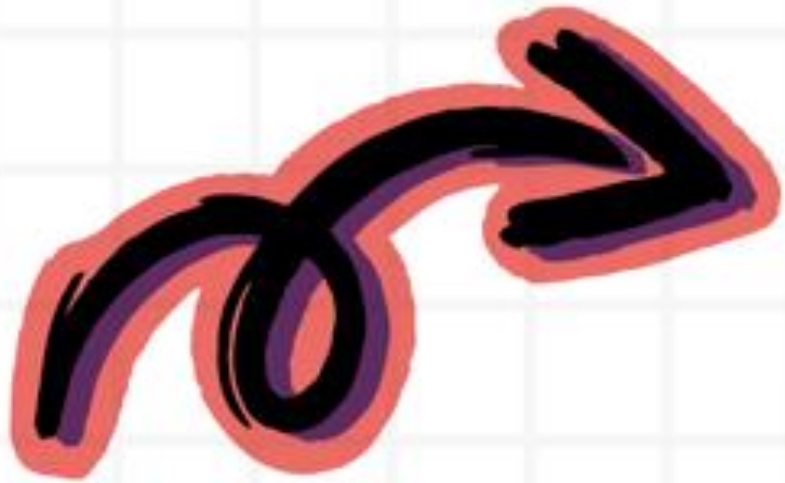
**Parasympathetic Nervous
System**

Relaxes the body and slows high
energy responses

Nervous System Survival Responses: **Fight**

WHAT WE SEE

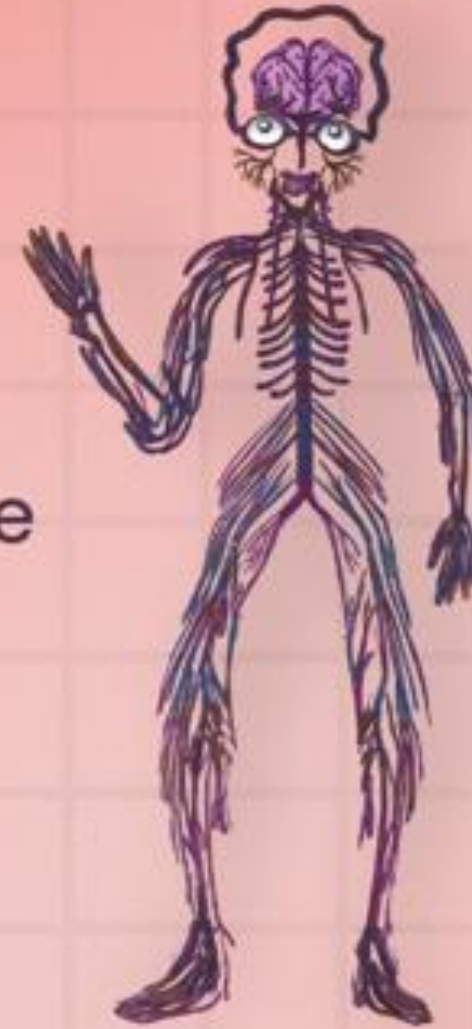
- Yelling
- Criticizing
- Blaming
- Hitting
- Throwing
- Aggressive
- Demanding
- Reactive



WHAT IS UNDERNEATH?

POSSIBLE FEELINGS

- Fear
- Anxious
- Pressured
- Frightened
- Feeling unlovable
- Feeling stuck



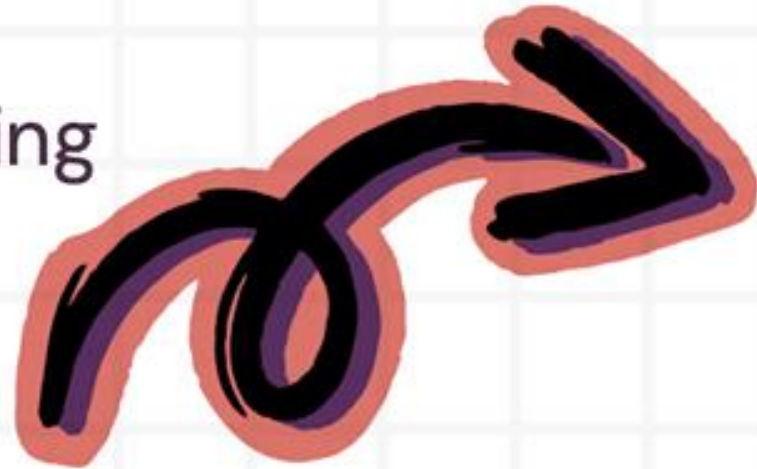
POSSIBLE SENSATIONS

- Teary
- Pounding
- Burning
- Tight
- Tense
- Electric
- Hot
- Fast
- Sharp
- Knotted

Nervous System Survival Responses: **Flight**

WHAT WE SEE

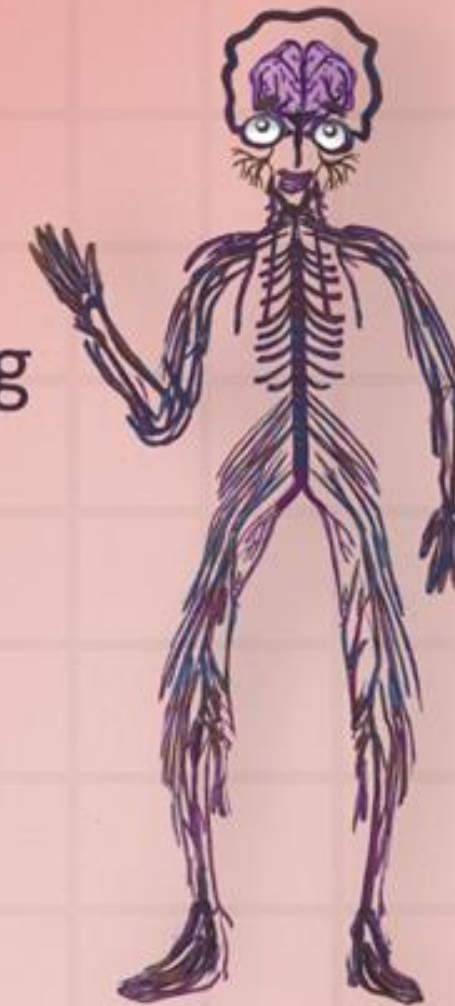
- Fidgeting
- Avoiding
- Unfocused
- Procrastinating
- Running
- Eloping
- Disengaging



WHAT IS UNDERNEATH?

POSSIBLE FEELINGS

- Restless
- Pre-occupied
- Over-doing
- Over-stimulating
- Pulled in many directions
- Scared
- Anxious



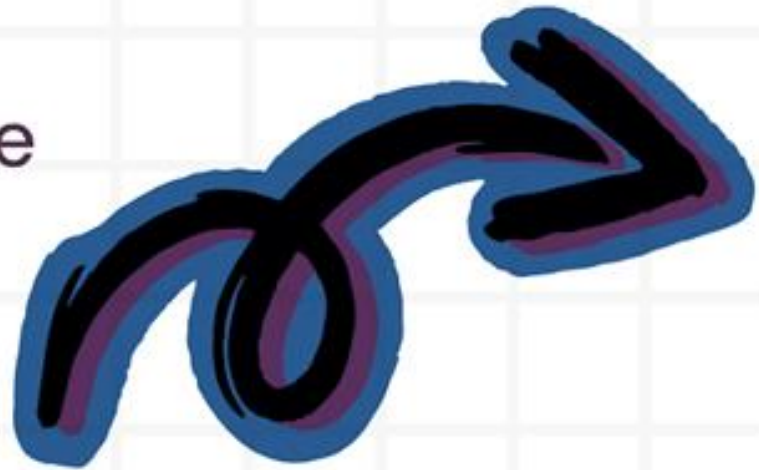
POSSIBLE SENSATIONS

- Teary
- Buzzing
- Prickly
- Dizzy
- Twitching
- Scattered
- Knotted
- Fluttery
- Queasy
- Breathless

Nervous System Survival Responses: Collapsed / Shut Down

WHAT WE SEE

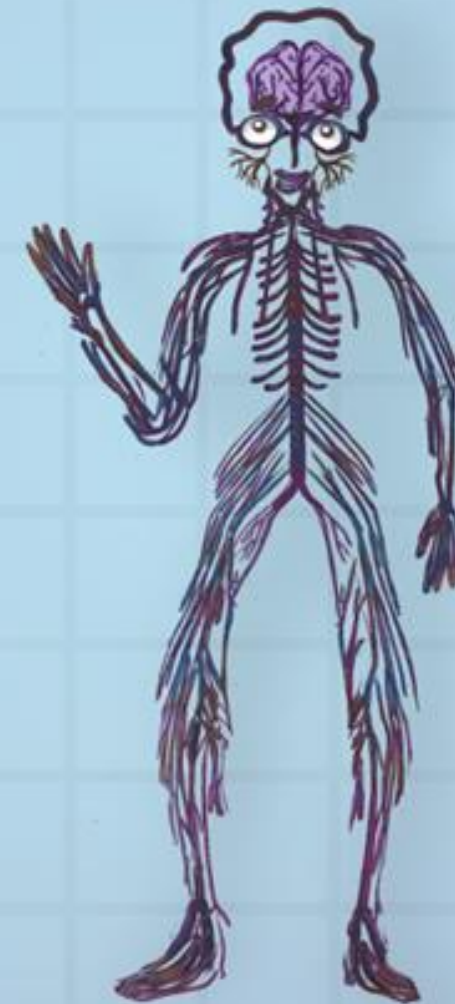
- Absent
- Hiding
- Zoning Out
- Unresponsive
- Isolating
- Scrolling
- Day-dreaming
- Not completing work
- Tired / exhausted
- Disconnecting



WHAT IS UNDERNEATH?

POSSIBLE FEELINGS

- Lonely
- Terrified
- Despair
- Hopeless
- Exhausted
- Judged
- Overwhelmed
- Abandoned
- Isolated



POSSIBLE SENSATIONS

- Teary
- Knotted
- Queasy
- Numb
- Void
- Flat
- Dull
- Hollow
- Empty
- Heavy

Nervous System Survival Responses:

Steady / Grounded

WHAT WE SEE

- Focusing
- Friendly
- Collaboration
- Asking for help
- Kindness
- Pause
- Reflective
- Creative



WHAT IS UNDERNEATH?

POSSIBLE FEELINGS

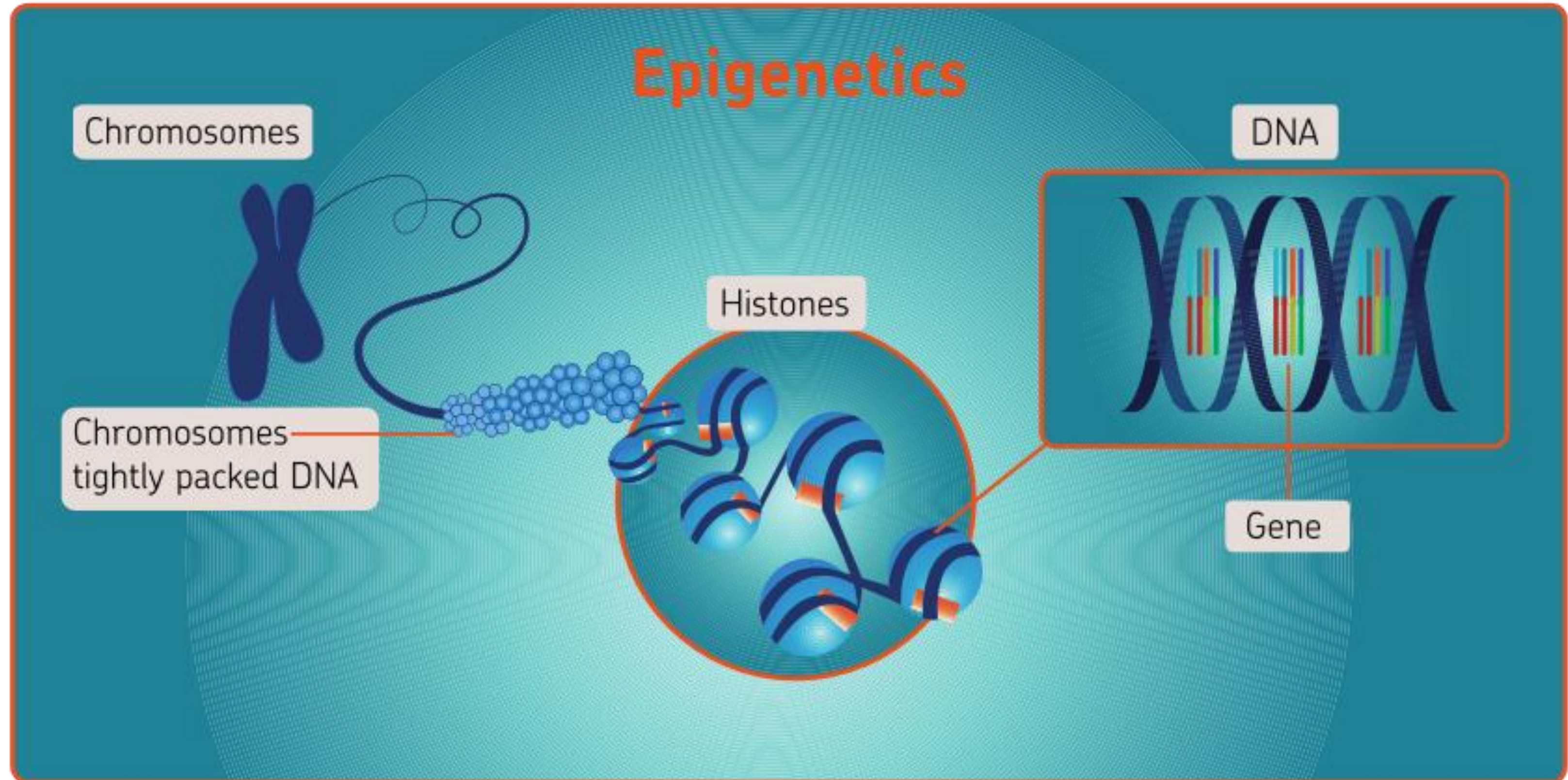
- Peaceful
- Curious
- Hopeful
- Safe
- Connected
- Engaged



POSSIBLE SENSATIONS

- Fluffy
- Open
- Airy
- Bubbly
- Smooth
- Light
- Radiating
- Loose
- Sparkling

ACEs Influence Gene Expression



Epigenetics & Enduring Health



ADAPTATIONS VS EXPECTATIONS

WHEN BIOLOGY

collides

WITH SOCIAL
EXPECTATIONS
we run into

TROUBLE

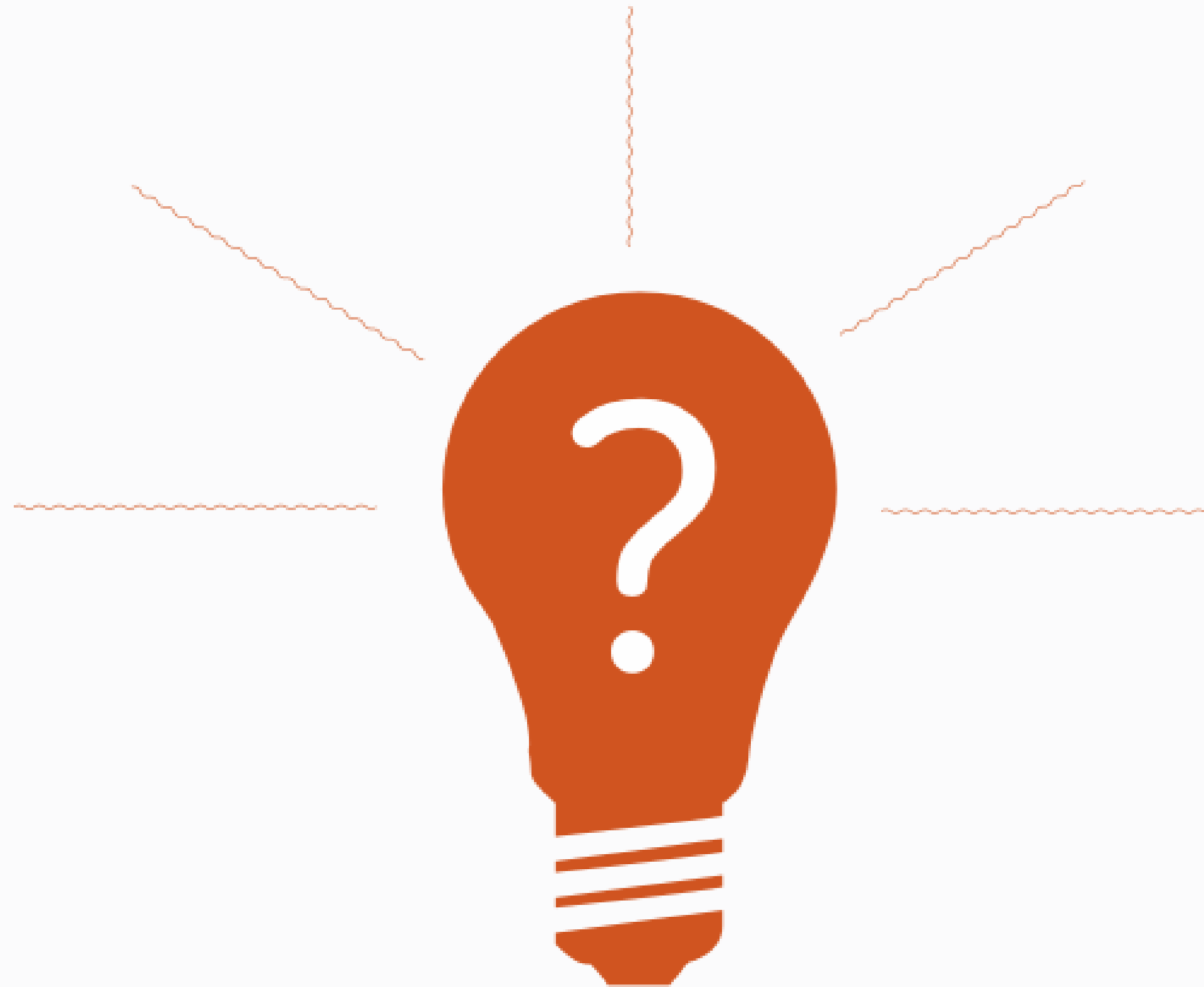


ACEs Are Not Destiny

ACEs Tend to Create Risk

ACEs Tend to Create RISK

Does the Risk for Chronic Health Problems Originate in Childhood?



Adverse Childhood Experiences **ARE COMMON**

Household Dysfunction

Substance Abuse	27%
Parental Sep/Divorce	23%
Mental Illness	17%
Battered Mothers	13%
Criminal Behavior	6%

Neglect

Emotional	15%
Physical	10%

Abuse

Emotional	11%
Physical	28%
Sexual	21%

5

2

3

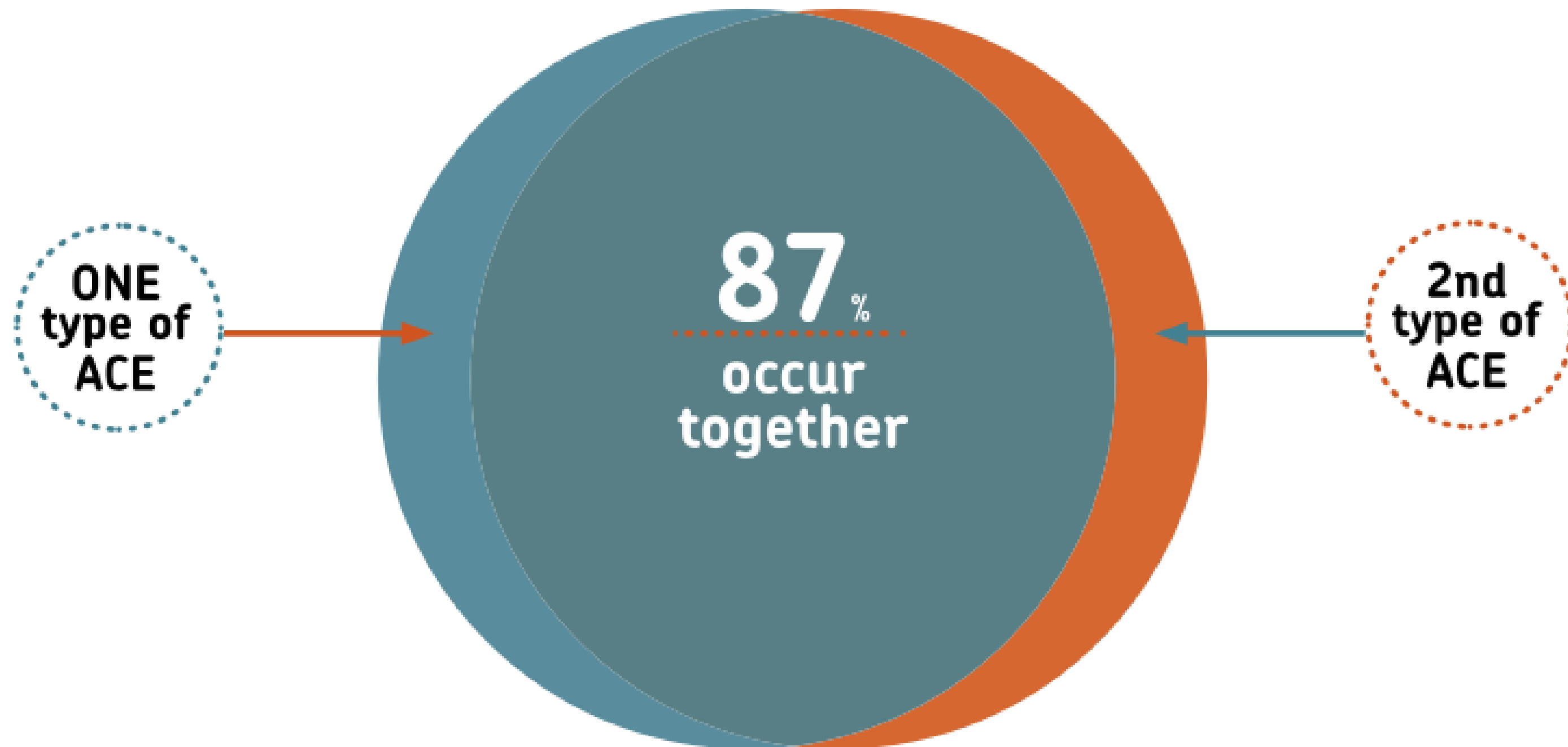
TOTAL

10

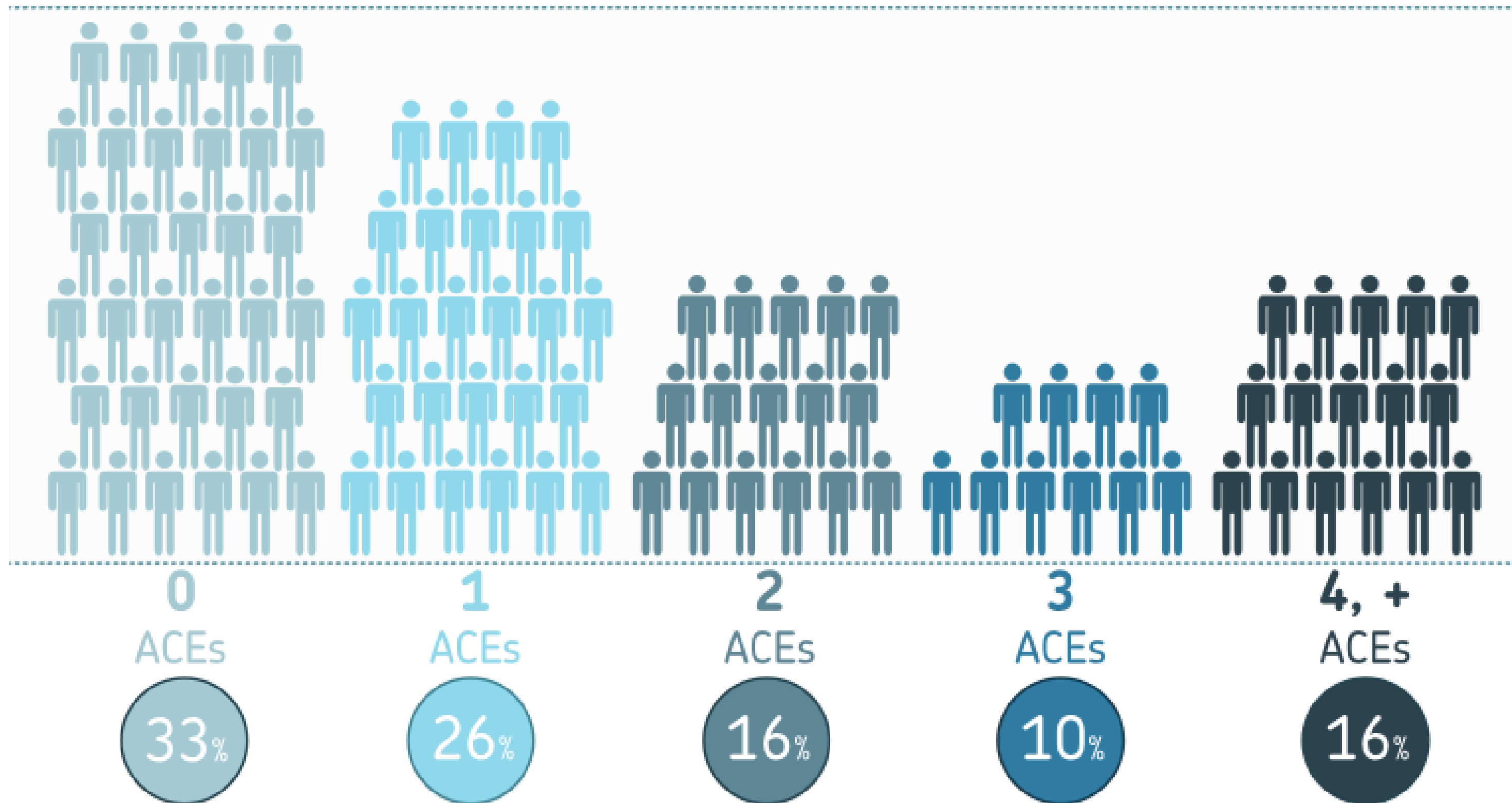
ACEs

ACEs are Highly Interrelated:

Where One ACE Occurs,
There are Usually Others



ACE Score = Number of ACE Categories



ACE Scores Reliably Predict Challenges During the Life Course

Uses of the ACE Score

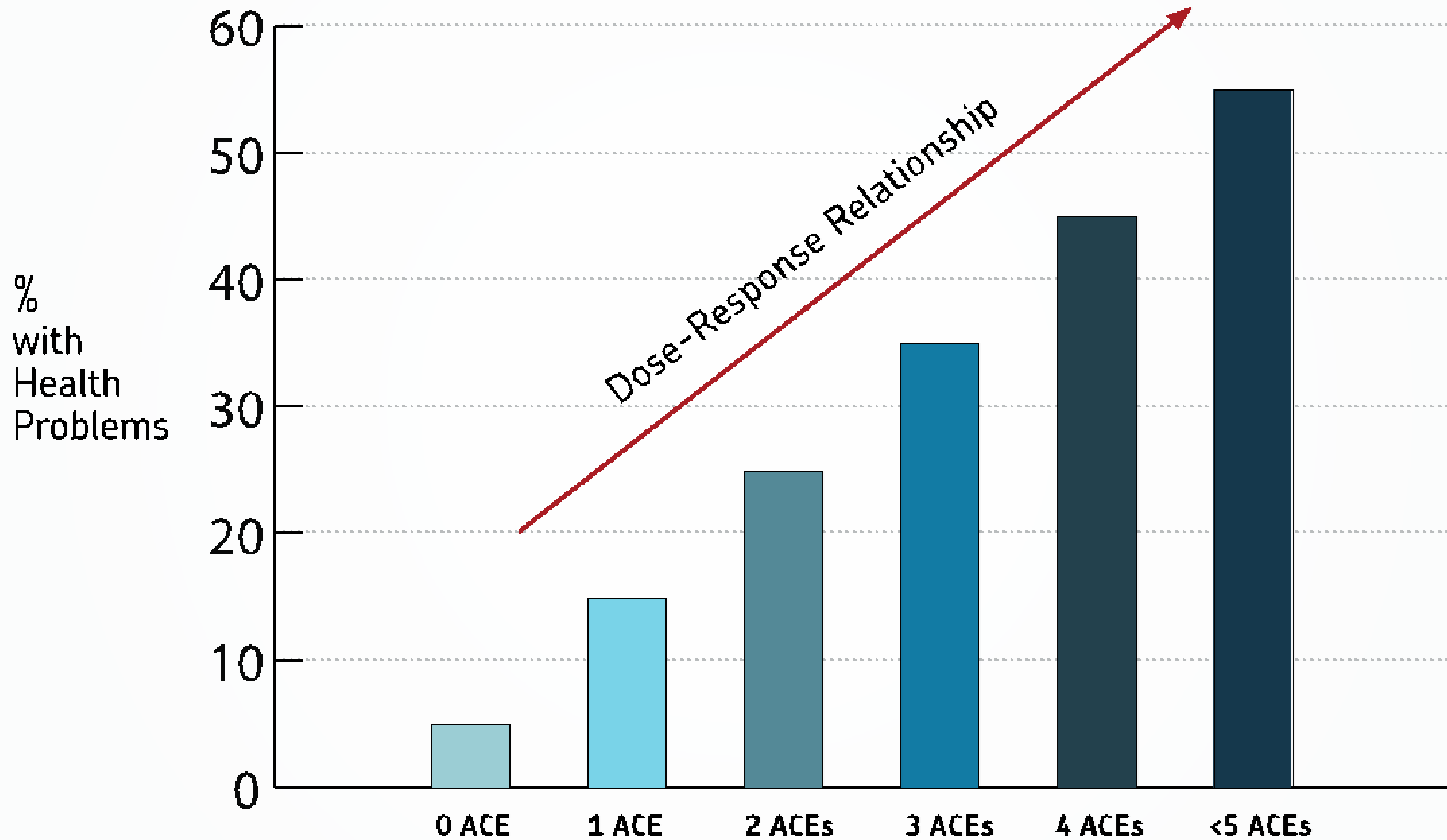
The ACE Score is

- A powerful research tool**
- A useful measure for public health**
- A measure of how adversity increases risk**
- A narrative history/communication tool**
- A common language**

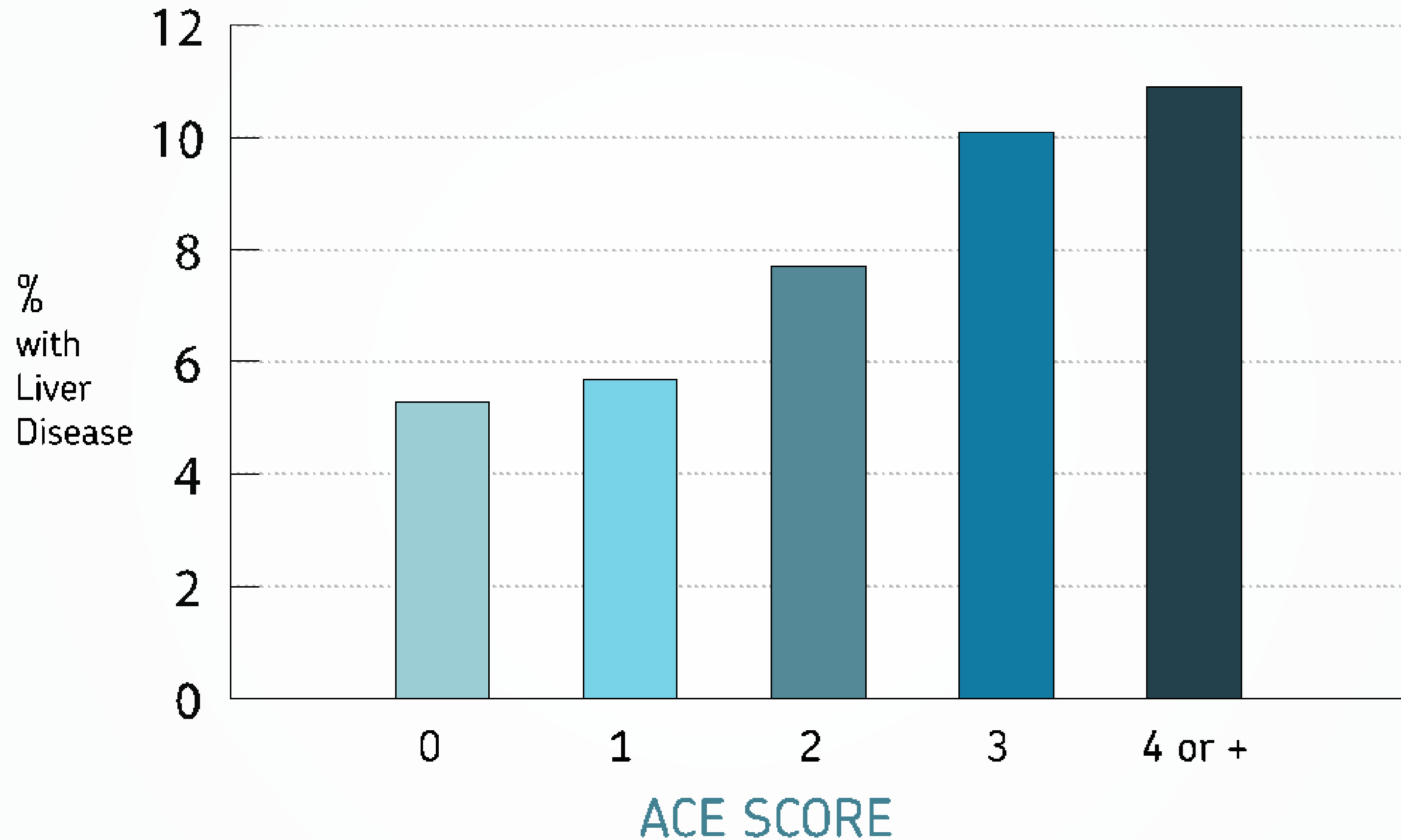
The ACE Score is not

- A diagnostic tool**
- A screening tool. No cut-points for decision making**
- A predictor at the individual level**
- A fun quiz**

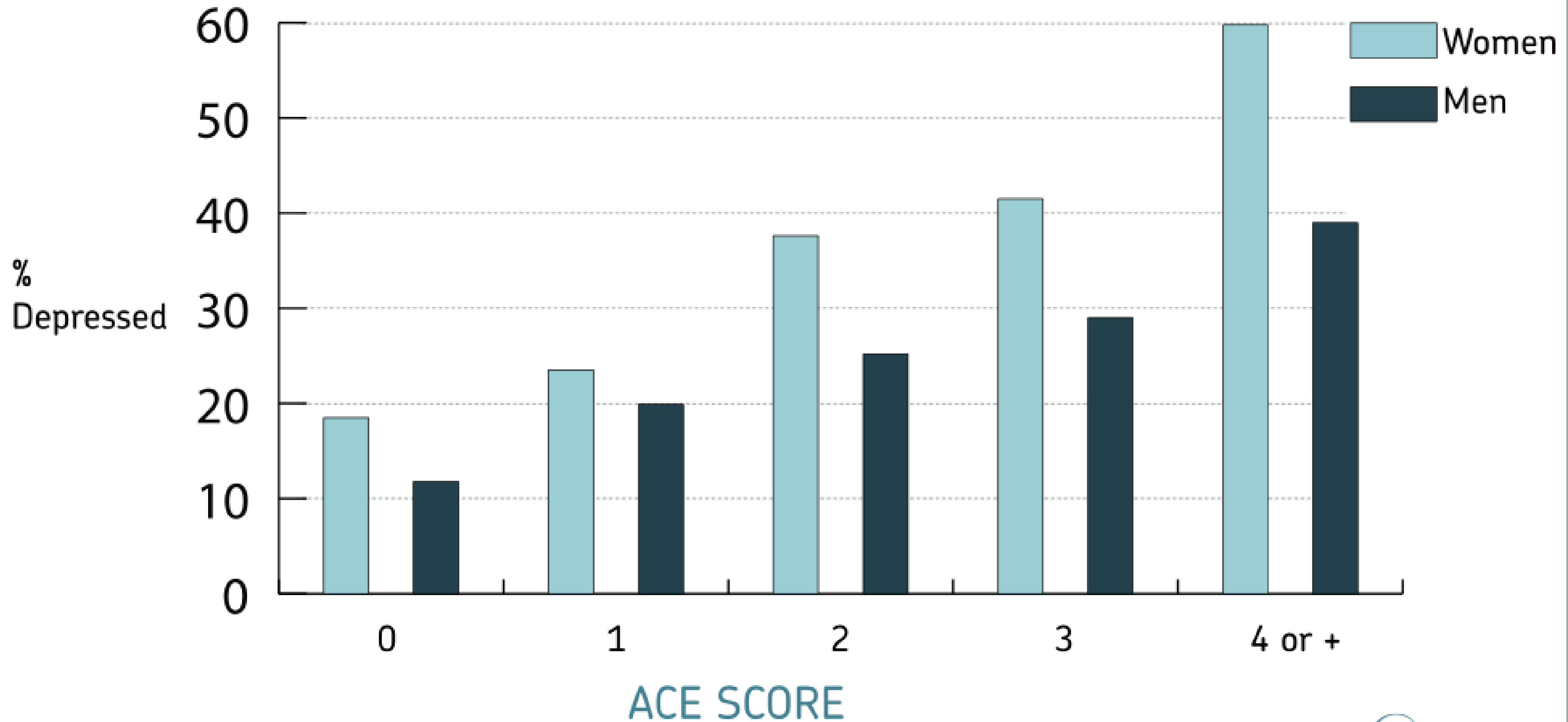
ACE Score and Health Problems



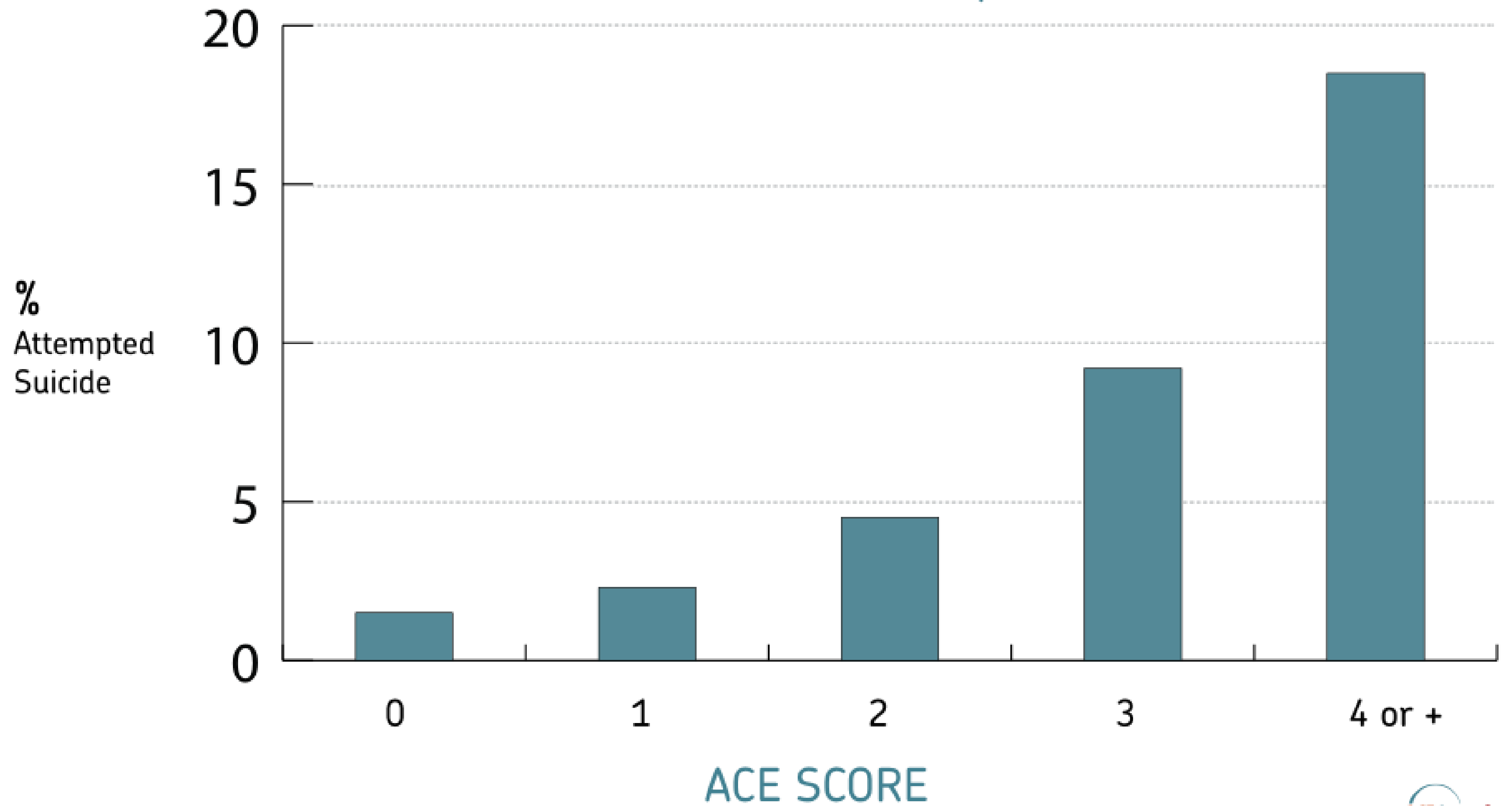
ACE Score and Liver Disease



ACEs & Depression



ACEs & Suicide Attempt



EXAMPLES OF ACE-ATTRIBUTABLE PROBLEMS

Alcoholism & Alcohol Abuse

Chronic Obstructive
Pulmonary Disease

Coronary Heart Disease

Depression

Drug Abuse & Illicit Drug Use

Fetal Death

Intimate Partner Violence

Liver Disease

Mental Health Problems

Obesity

Sexual Behavior Problems

Smoking

Unintended Pregnancy

Violence

Workplace Problems

ACEs are Common, Interrelated, Powerful



High ACE Scores
in Population



Increased Risk of Multiple
Health and Social Problems



Intergenerational
Transmission of ACEs

The Pair of ACE's

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Maternal Depression

Emotional &
Sexual Abuse

Substance
Abuse

Domestic Violence

Physical &
Emotional Neglect

Mental Illness

Divorce

Incarceration

Homelessness

ADVERSE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS

Poverty

Discrimination

Community Disruption

Violence

Poor Housing
Quality & Affordability

Lack of Opportunity, Economic Mobility & Social Capital



2015 population study
in Wisconsin

Part of the BRFSS

Asked about ACEs

Asked about Positive
Childhood experiences

Correlated with mental
health

Developing the Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) score



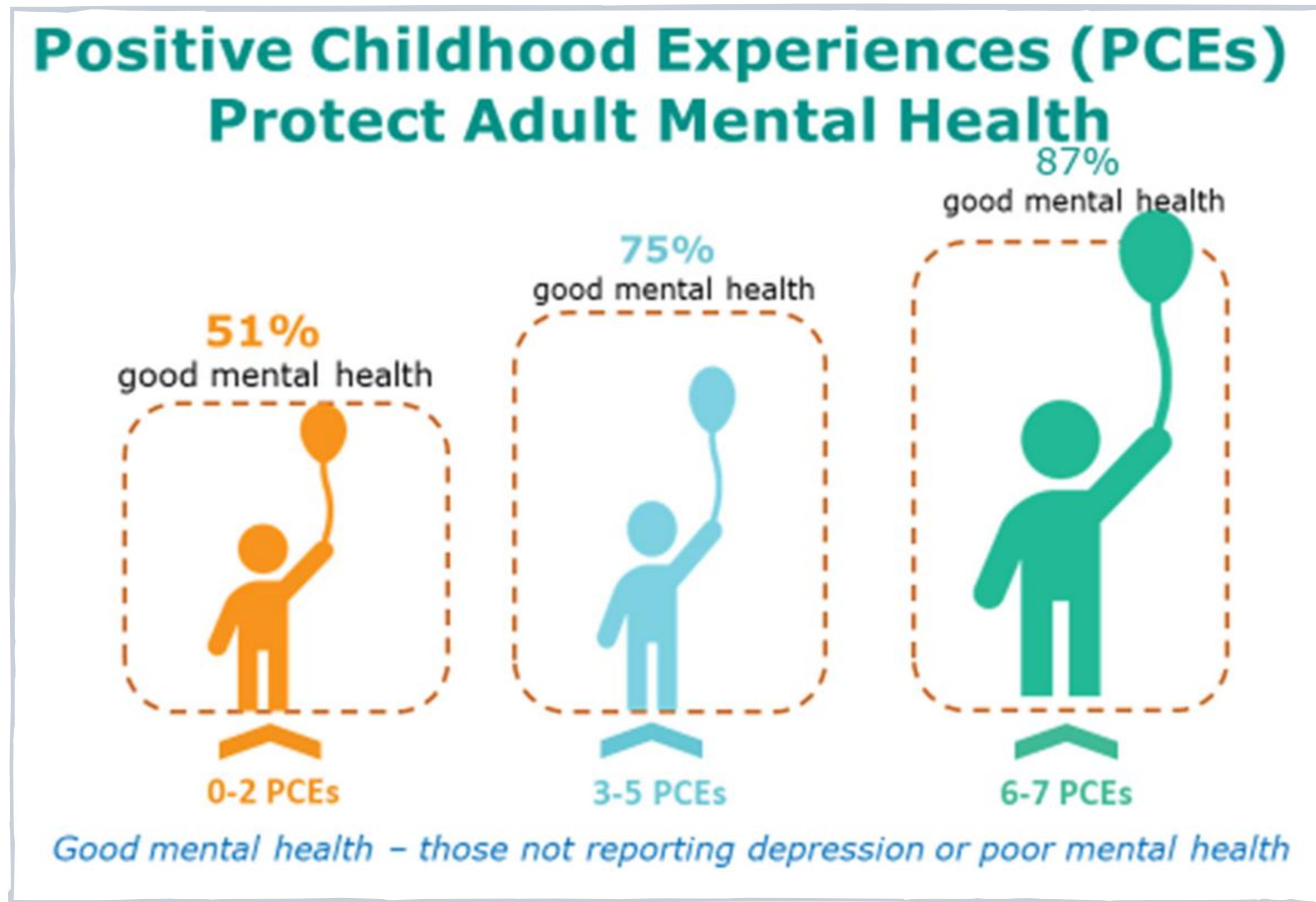


Positive Childhood Experiences scale questions



As a child, how often did you ...

1. Feel able to talk to your family about feelings
2. Feel your family stood by you during difficult times
3. Enjoy participating in community traditions
4. Feel a sense of belonging in high school
5. Feel supported by friends
6. Have at least two non-parent adults who took genuine interest in you
7. Feel safe and protected by an adult in your home



PCEs
protect
adult
mental
health

Bethell C, Jones J, Gombojav N, Linkenbach J, Sege R. Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample: Associations Across Adverse Childhood Experiences Levels. JAMA Pediatr. 2019 Sep 9;



Higher PCEs Associated With Lower Substance Use

2019 Montana BRFSS Data



Less Cigarette
Smoking



Less Alcohol
Consumption



Lower Lifetime Odds Of
Illicit Drug Use



Lower Lifetime Odds Of ANY
Substance Use

Graupensperger S, Kilmer Jr, Olson Dc, Linkenbach Jw. Associations Between Positive Childhood Experiences And adult Smoking And Alcohol Use Behaviors In A Large statewide Sample. Journal Of Community Health. 2022 Nov 15:1-9.



Higher PCEs Protects Overall Health

2021 Tennessee BRFSS Data



Lower Rates Of
Depression



Lower Rates Of Heart
Disease



Improved Physical
Health



More Likely To Be
Employed

Source: TN Department of Health. PCEs among Tennesseans 2021.
<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/PCEs-Factsheet%202021.pdf>



Higher PCEs
in Childhood Improve
Adolescent Outcomes

National Longitudinal Survey of
Australian Children

HOPE Framework

Validated in Prospective Study

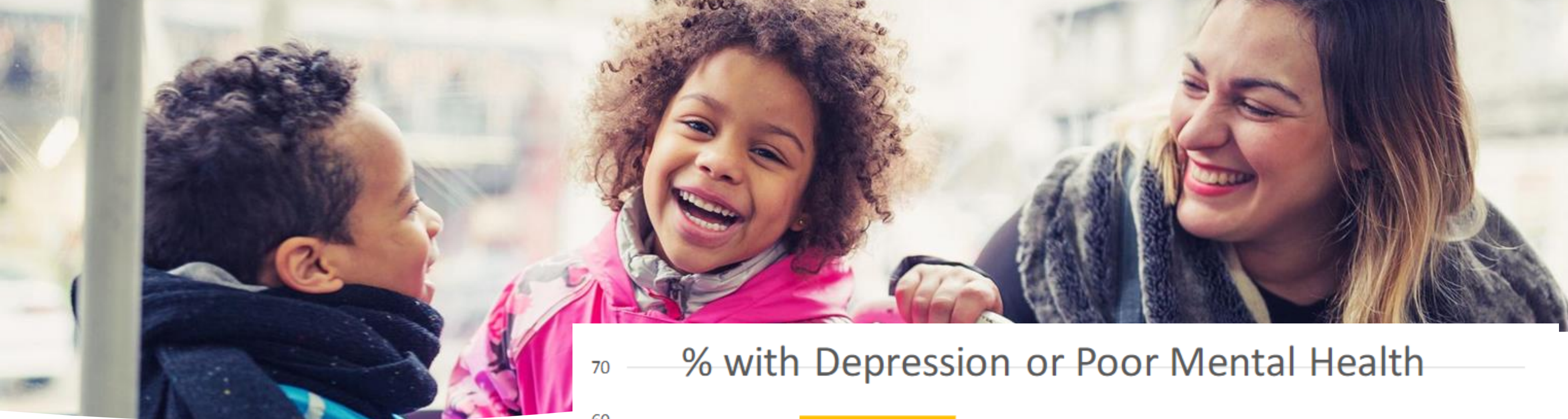


Improved Mental
Health

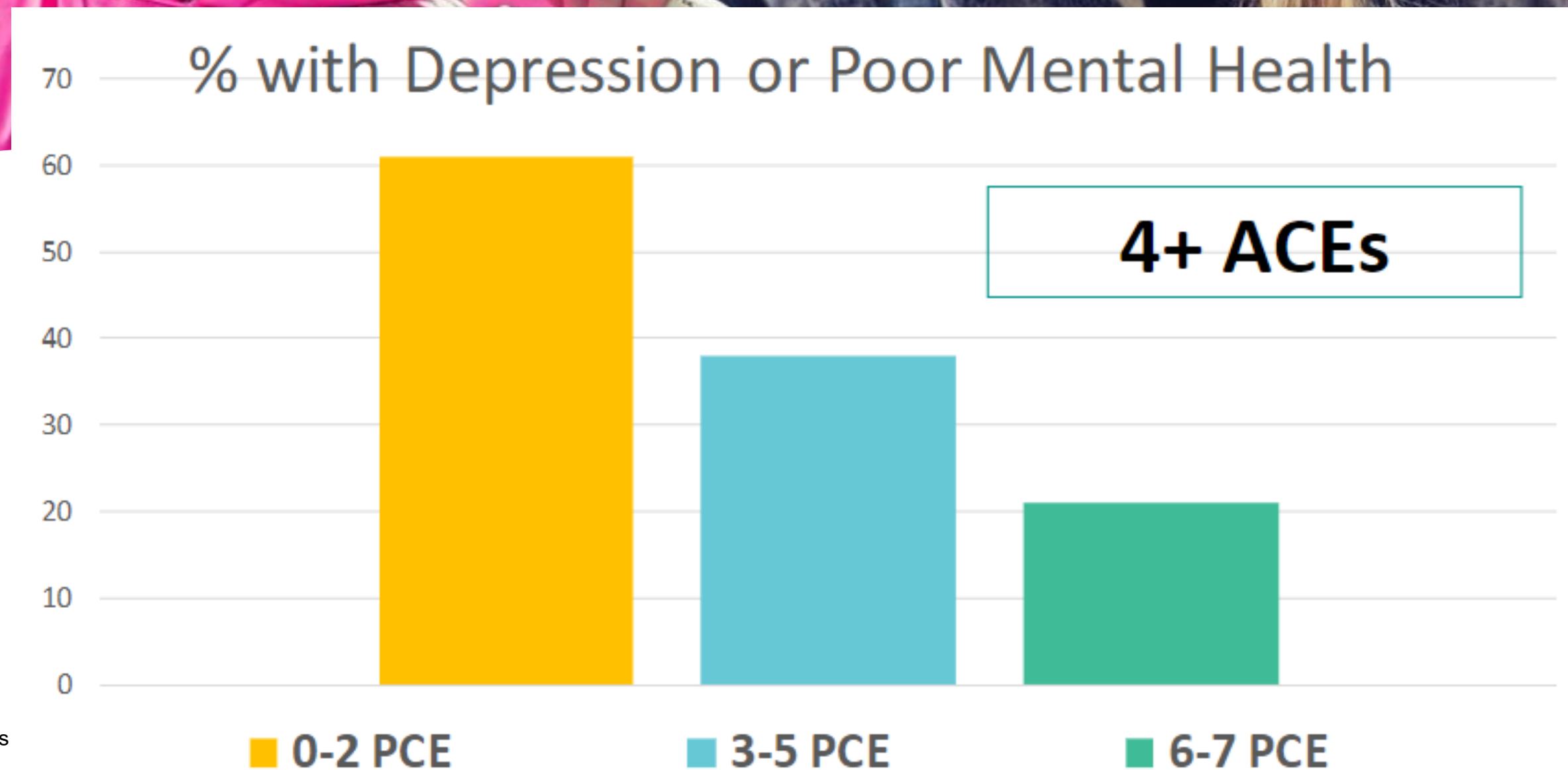


Better Academic
Skills

Source: Guo, Shuaijun, et al. "Measuring positive childhood experiences: testing the structural and predictive validity of the health outcomes from positive experiences (HOPE) framework." *Academic Pediatrics* 22.6 (2022): 942-951.



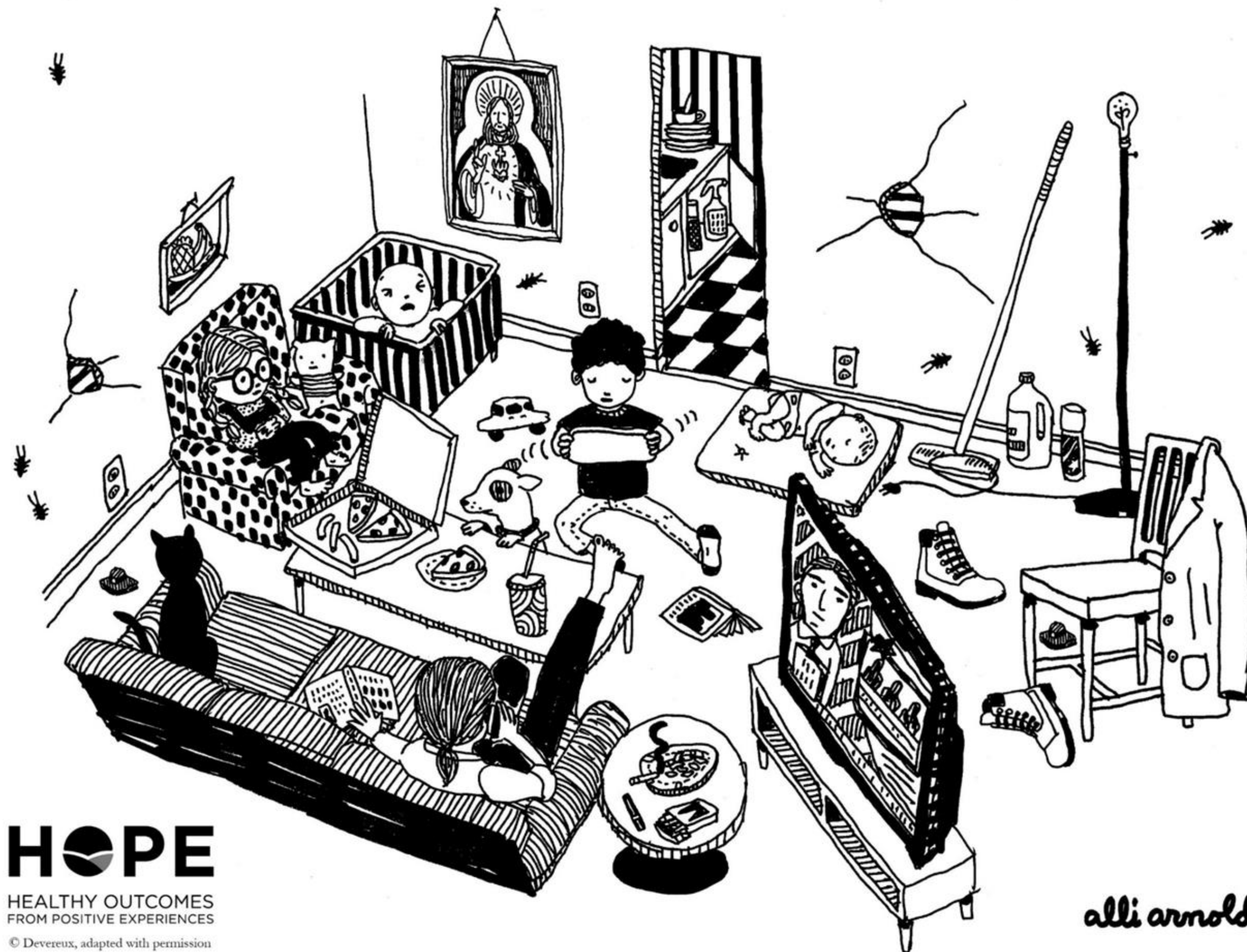
PCEs reduce the effects of ACEs



Bethell C, Jones J, Gombojav N, Linkenbach J, Sege R. Positive Childhood Experiences and Adult Mental and Relational Health in a Statewide Sample: Associations Across Adverse Childhood Experiences Levels. JAMA Pediatr. 2019 Sep 9; e193007



Please share what first stands out to you about this picture.
What do you notice?





Type 1 Vs. Type 2 Thinking

Type 1 Thinking

- Fast, intuitive, unconscious thought
- Everyday activities
- Effortless
- Training and experience
- **Implicit bias**





Type 1 Vs. Type 2 Thinking

Type 1 Thinking

- Fast, intuitive, unconscious thought
- Everyday activities
- Effortless
- Training and experience
- **Implicit bias**



Type 2 Thinking

- Slow, calculating, conscious
- Solving a problem
- Takes more effort!
- Something novel
- **Perceiving variability**
- **Perspective taking**

Introduction to HOPE





Our Vision is a world that recognizes, honors, and promotes positive experiences because they are fundamental to people's health and well-being.

The Four Building Blocks of HOPE



RELATIONSHIPS



ENVIRONMENT



ENGAGEMENT



EMOTIONAL
GROWTH





The Relationships Building Block



RELATIONSHIPS

Stable nurturing **relationships** with other children and adults through interpersonal activities.

Being in nurturing, supportive relationships are critical for children to develop into healthy, resilient adults. Individuals that recall having these types of relationships during childhood experience significantly lower rates of depression and poor mental health during adulthood.

Sege and Browne. Responding to ACEs with HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences. Academic Pediatrics 2017; 17:S79-S85



How can you promote access to safe and supportive relationships?

- Be a supportive relationship! Take the time to connect with the children around you.
- Share information about after-school activities where they might connect with coaches, mentors, or peers.
- Ask parents about the positive experiences they remember from childhood and what made those experiences good.
- Celebrate those with them and encourage them to think about which of the components of those relationships they want to offer their children



How can you promote access to safe and supportive relationships?

- Share information about parent-child attachment, validate and reflect back when you see warm reactions between parent and child.
- Ask about other positive adults in the child's life - coaches, teachers, pastors, mentors. Celebrate those relationships and encourage consistent connection with those individuals.
- Play and connect with your children regularly! Be silly, move your bodies together, read a book, watch a movie. The options are endless!
- Be the model! Practice self-regulation and co-regulation.



The Environment Building Block



Safe, equitable, stable environments for living, playing, learning at home and in school.

Children who live, learn, and play in safe, stable, and equitable environments are less likely to experience poor mental and physical health as adults.

Sege and Browne. Responding to ACEs with HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences. Academic Pediatrics 2017; 17:S79-S85



How can you promote access to safe, stable, and equitable environments?

- Make sure schools are safe spaces for all students! Address bullying and teasing, and encourage students to be upstanders, not bystanders.
- Make sure that children and families feel represented. Look at any books, posters, curricula, or handouts. Are all kinds of families, all genders, all races, and people with disabilities represented?
- Share and connect with local resources to help families have safe, equitable, stable environments.
- Create spaces within organizations and homes where individuals can go to feel calm and safe.



The Engagement Building Block



Social and civic engagement to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Children need to feel connected to their communities, loved, and appreciated. Involvement in social institutions and environments, awareness of cultural customs and traditions, and a sense that they matter and belong helps them develop into secure and resilient adults.

Sege and Browne. Responding to ACEs with HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences. Academic Pediatrics 2017; 17:S79-S85



How can you promote access to social and civic engagement?

- Ask children about the activities they do outside of school, and delight with them in those activities.
- Work on creative projects and sharing their favorite activities with their friends.
- Have fliers available for Community Centers, after-school activities, and mentoring programs in your community.
- Families can volunteer in the community together.
- Create new after-school activities
- Get involved in a place of worship, if that feels supportive. Many spiritual and religious institutions have youth groups or classes for children and youth.



The Emotional Growth Building Block



Emotional growth through playing and interacting with peers for self-awareness and self regulation.

Children need to have a lot of opportunities to develop their sense of self-awareness and social cognition, learn how to self-regulate emotions and behavior, and acquire skills needed to respond functionally and productively to challenges. Many of these skills arise during child-centered play.

Sege and Browne. Responding to ACEs with HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences. Academic Pediatrics 2017; 17:S79-S85



How can you promote social and emotional growth?

- Help children to name their feelings as they talk about them and what they feel like. Practice self-regulation and co-regulation.
- Remember that disagreements in peer groups are normal and show children how to disagree respectfully and productively.
- Schools can implement social and emotional learning curriculum.
- Make time for open play with friends and siblings that the children lead on their own.
- Encourage social connection the same way you encourage eating healthy foods or exercising.

Self-Regulation and Co-Regulation

1. Breathing exercises or Focused-Attention Practices
2. Meditation
3. Grounding Practices
4. Mindfulness Practices
5. Movement
6. Anchors

How to Practice Co-regulation

Stay Present- Sit close, get down to their level, and offer your presence without trying to fix or rush their feelings.

Use a soft and calm tone- Children need this when dysregulated.

Breathe slowly and deeply- Kids will mirror our breath. Taking slow, deep breaths can guide them to a calmer state (and help your regulation as well).

Offer gentle touch (if welcome)- A hand on the back, hug, or hand hold can be grounding for some children. Some may not want to be touched and that is okay!

Validate & Support- “I see you are feeling _____, that is completely valid, I am right here with you when you are ready.” “Sometimes feelings can be really overwhelming, do you want to take a deep breath together?”



Multigenerational Approach



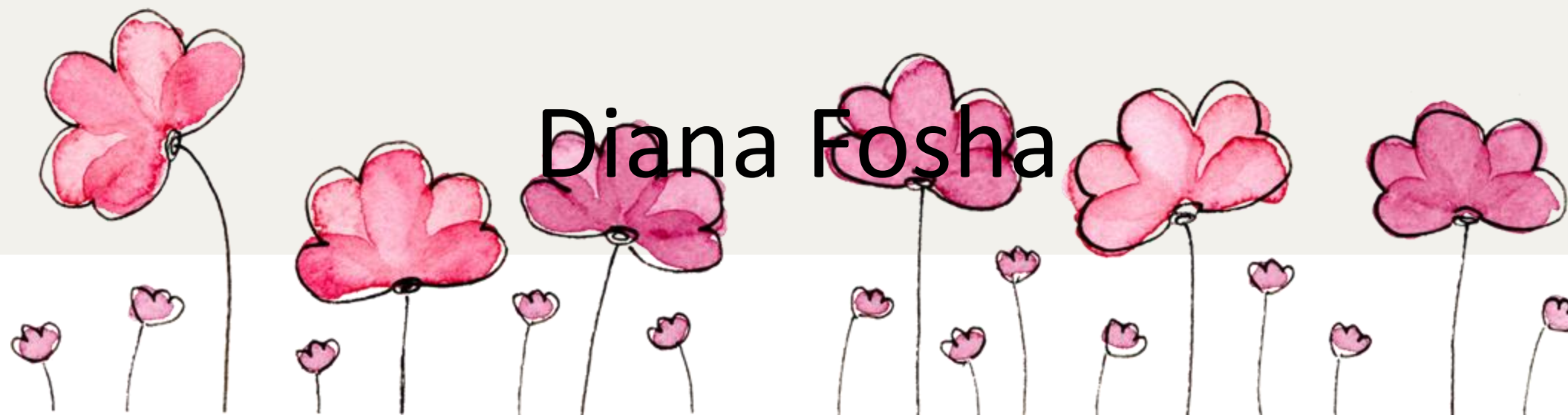
Resilience

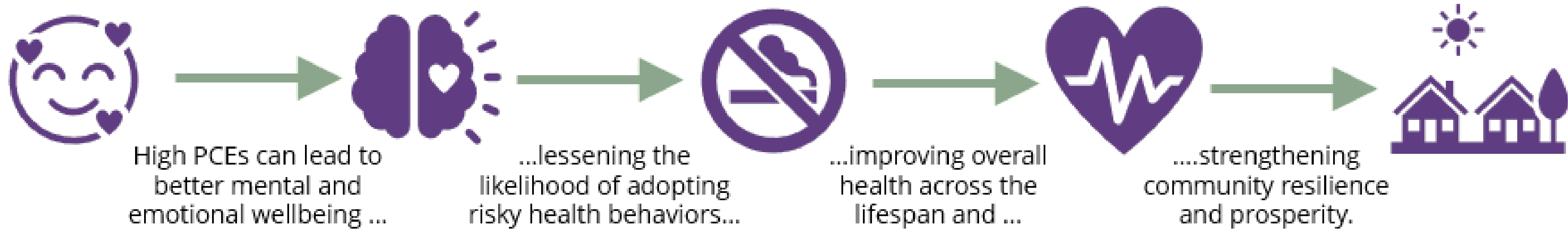
Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity. Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone.



The roots of resilience are to be found in the sense of being understood by and existing in the mind and heart of a loving, attuned, and self-possessed other.

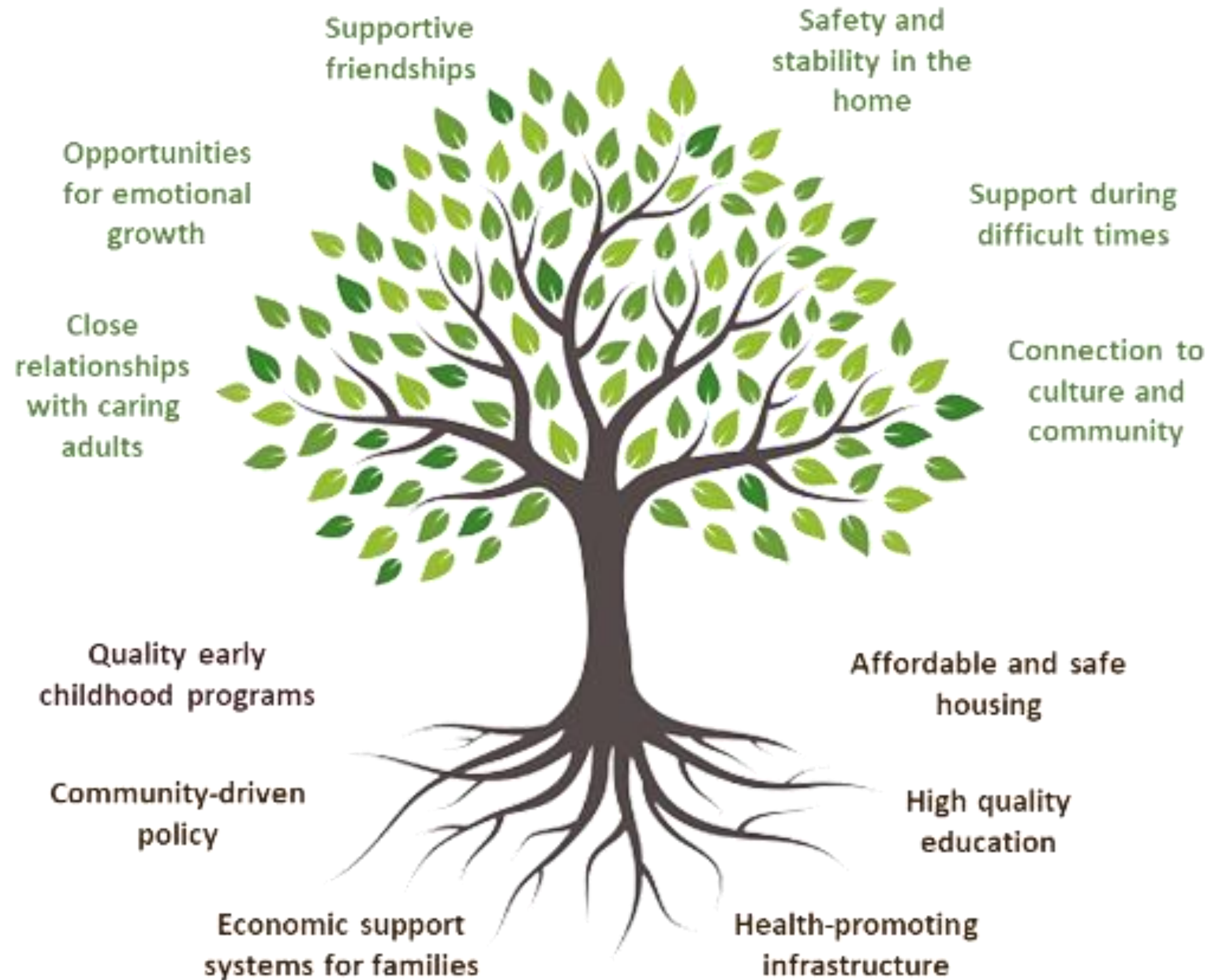
Diana Fosha







Growing Our Resilience Tree



Adapted from Center for Community Resilience, Community Resilience Tree

CHANGE is up to US



It is shaped by our thoughts, our conversations, the way we relate with one another in relationships, in families, and in communities.

Have questions or
need additional
resources?

Contact me at
info@flourishtogetherllc.com



Thank you for joining us today!

There is a brief survey after the end of this webinar.
Thank you for providing us feedback by completing this survey.

Webinar will be available in 3 days:

<http://www.dibbleinstitute.org/webinar-archives/>

Questions? RelationshipSkills@Dibbleinstitute.org

Second Wednesday Webinar



September 10, 2025

**The Price of Love:
Keeping Relationships Safe &
Financially Healthy**

Kristy Kelly and Sisilia Kusumaningsih

SAFE