



KENTUCKY'S FUTURE

depends on the well-being of its children. Strong communities launch thriving families, and thriving families nurture children who grow into healthy, hopeful adults.

That's why Bloom Kentucky is working to cultivate a Commonwealth where every child has the opportunity to bloom.

Bloom Kentucky is powered by grantmaking partners across the state, united by a shared commitment to end Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and promote resilience through systemic change. We focus on forward thinking policy solutions and strategic investments that address the root causes of adversity, strengthen protective factors, and build brighter futures for all Kentuckians.

WHAT SURROUNDS US, SHAPES US: THE PAIR OF ACES

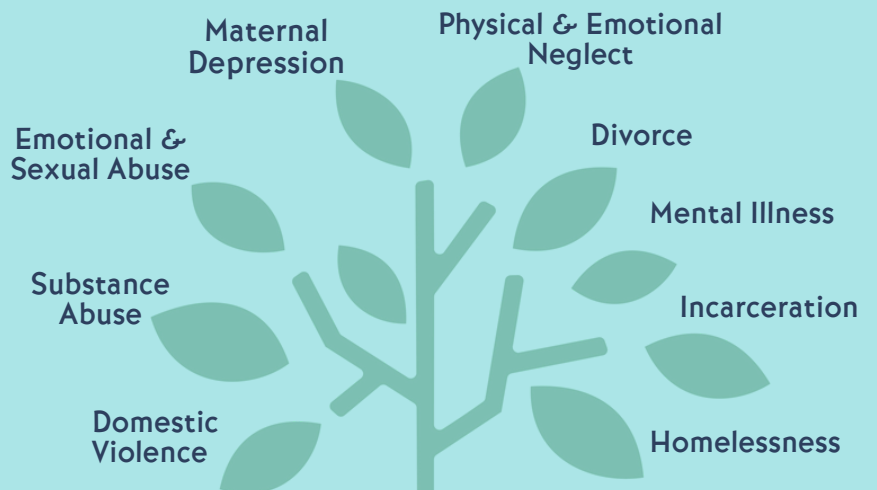
To truly address ACEs, we must also confront Adverse Community Environments or conditions like poverty, racism, violence, and unstable housing, that make it harder for families to thrive. Just like trees need healthy soil to grow, children need safe, stable environments to flourish.

WHAT ARE ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES?

Adverse Childhood Experiences are stressful or traumatic events that occur before age 18 and can affect health and well-being across a lifetime. These may include:

- Experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect
- Witnessing violence in the home or community
- Having a family member attempt or die by suicide
- Substance use problems in the household
- Mental health problems in the household
- Instability due to parental separation or household members being in jail or prison

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES



ADVERSE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS



Adapted from Ellis, W., Dietz, W. (2017) A New framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) Model



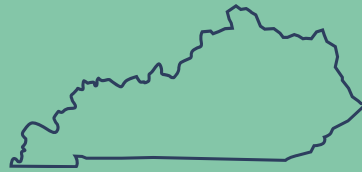
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Bloom Kentucky is supported by a growing list of grantmakers, including: Brown-Forman Foundation, C.E. & S. Foundation, Central Kentucky Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Louisville, Community Foundation of South Central Kentucky, Community Foundation of West Kentucky, Felix E. Martin, Jr. Foundation, Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky, Harshaw Family Foundation, Humana Foundation, Interact for Health, James Graham Brown Foundation, Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Kentucky Foundation for Women, Kosair for Kids, Laura Goad Turner Charitable Foundation, Lawrence & Augusta Hager Educational Foundation, Legacy Foundation of Kentuckiana, Lexington Clinic Foundation, Lift a Life Novak Family Foundation, Marilyn & William Young Charitable Foundation, Inc., Mildred V. Horn Foundation, Nicklies Foundation, Public Life Foundation of Owensboro, Snowy Owl Foundation, The Gheens Foundation, Inc., The Greater Clark Foundation, The V.V. Cooke Foundation, and Wood & Marie C. Hannah Foundation.

Impacts of ACEs



There are steps we can take to reduce the impact of ACEs so that kids grow up healthy and hopeful and contribute to the future prosperity of Kentucky.



ACEs are common.

1 in 5 Kentucky children have already experienced at least two ACEs.¹



While ACEs can have lifelong impacts, the effects are not inevitable.

We can take actions to promote healing, strengthen community ties, and improve public infrastructure are necessary to shape our children's environments for the better.

If not addressed, as children exposed to trauma become adults, toxic stress can increase the risk of*:

- Adolescent pregnancy
- Heart or liver disease
- Substance use
- Intimate partner violence
- Smoking
- Suicide
- Mental illness
- Education and job loss

SCALES OF RESILIENCE



Negative outcomes

Positives outcomes

7 Positive Childhood Experiences proven to boost health and well-being²:

1. The ability to talk with family about feelings.
2. The sense that family is supportive during difficult times.
3. The enjoyment of participation in community traditions.
4. Feeling a sense of belonging in high school.
5. Feeling supported by friends.
6. Having at least two non-parent adults who genuinely cared.
7. Feeling safe and protected by an adult in the home.

Tipping the Scales of Adversity with Positive Childhood Experiences and Resilience

A child's development is like a scale. On one side, life can pile up challenges, like stress, violence, or poverty. But on the other side, we can add positive experiences, such as nurturing relationships, safe environments, and access to health care.

When that positive side gets heavier, kids are more likely to thrive, even in the face of adversity. That's resilience; and resilience isn't built alone. Kentucky can lighten the load of hardship and stack more good on the scale by building strong families, communities, and policies so every child has the chance to flourish.

Policy Change can Improve Health & Well-being Across Kentucky

State level policy and budget decisions shape the environments in which children live, learn, and grow. Policies that expand access to mental health care, support early learning, and strengthen family resources create the conditions to counterbalance adversity so that resilience can take root.



*Please note that this is not a complete list of ACEs.

1. National Survey of Children's Health, 2019-2020.

2. Bethell et al. (2019). Positive childhood experiences and adult mental and relational health. JAMA Pediatrics, 173(11), e193007.