



Nearly 4 in 10 Ohio adults had an Adverse Childhood Experience

The **Ohio Health Issues Poll** is conducted every year to learn more about the health opinions, behaviors and status of Ohio adults. In 2019, OHIP asked Ohio adults whether they had experienced three specific adverse events in their childhood.

Adverse Childhood Experiences are traumatic events that occur during childhood and have the potential to affect the rest of a person's life. ACEs include events such as experiencing or witnessing violence, abuse or substance use, and parental separation, incarceration or death. As the number of ACEs that children experience increases, so does their risk for long-term negative health impacts.¹

WHAT OHIP FOUND

3 in 10 experienced divorce of a parent

OHIP asked Ohio adults whether they had experienced the following situations before the age of 18:

- A parent or guardian getting

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *About Adverse Childhood Experiences*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acesstudy/aboutace.html>

Percentage of adults who before the age of 18 experienced ...

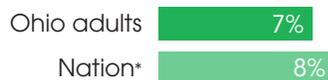
... a parent or guardian getting divorced or separated



... a parent or guardian dying[†]



... a parent or guardian serving time in jail



* National data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2011-2014.

[†] BRFSS did not ask about the death of a parent.

SOURCE: 2019 Ohio Health Issues Poll (released November 2019)

divorced or separated.

- A parent or guardian dying.
- A parent or guardian serving time in jail.

About 3 in 10 Ohio adults (29%) reported that they had experienced the divorce or separation of a parent before the age of 18. About 1 in 10 reported either the death (12%) or incarceration (7%) of a parent.

These results are similar to the nation. Between 2011 and 2014, 28% of respondents to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System survey reported experiencing the divorce of a

parent before the age of 18. Eight percent reported that a parent had served time in jail.² The survey did not ask about the death of a parent.

Most Ohio adults (63%) said they had **not** experienced any of these ACEs. About 3 in 10 (28%) experienced one, 1 in 10 (9%) experienced two and only 1% experienced all three of these events. (See graph on next page.)

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² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System ACE Data – Data and Statistics – ACEs Prevalence*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acesstudy/ace-brfss.html>

Some adults more likely to report having experienced ACEs

Responses varied by age and income. Ohio adults ages 18 to 64 (41%) were more likely than adults ages 65 and older (28%) to have experienced at least one of the ACEs. Those living in poverty³ or just above poverty (43%) were more likely than those with higher income (35%) to have experienced one or more of the ACEs.

Responses also varied by a person's knowledge of substance misuse. Research has shown that exposure to ACEs can lead to substance abuse later in life.⁴ Those who knew someone who had problems because of drug use (44%) were more likely than those who did not (27%) to report having experienced one of the ACEs.

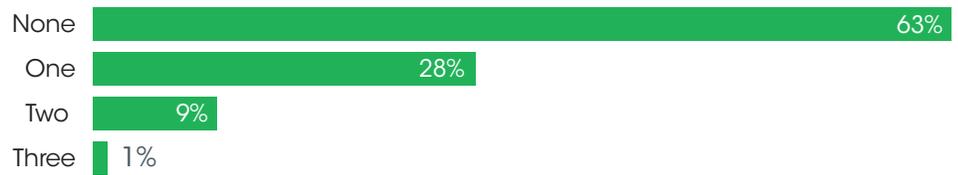
WHY WE ASK THESE QUESTIONS

Adverse Childhood Experiences can affect the immediate and long-term health of those who

³ In 2018, a family of four living in poverty (the equivalent of 100% or less of the Federal Poverty Guidelines) had a household income of \$25,100 or less. A family of four living just above the poverty level (between 100% and 200% FPG) had a household income between \$25,101 and \$50,200. A family of four that had higher income (more than 200% FPG) had a household income greater than \$50,200.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *About Adverse Childhood Experiences*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/aboutace.html>

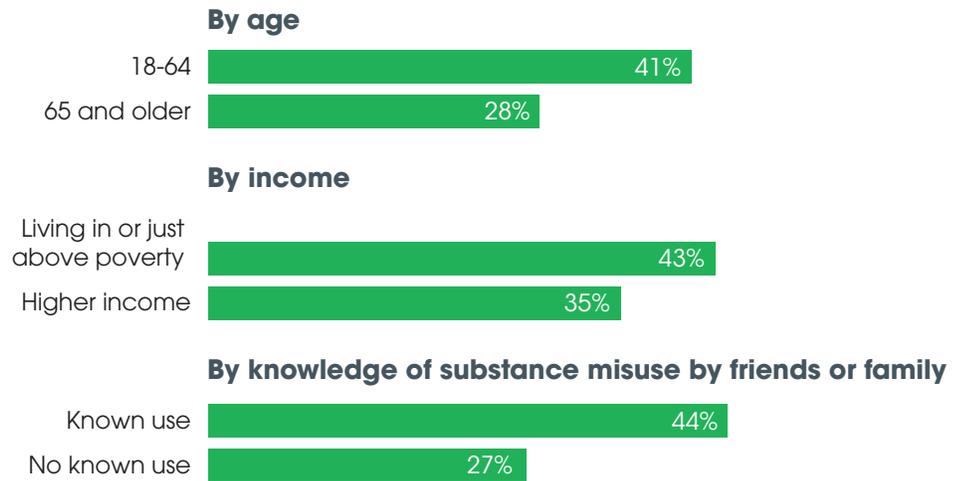
Number of Adverse Childhood Experiences reported by Ohio adults



SOURCE: 2019 Ohio Health Issues Poll (released November 2019)

INTERACT
FOR HEALTH

Percentage of Ohio adults who reported having at least one Adverse Childhood Experience



SOURCE: 2019 Ohio Health Issues Poll (released November 2019)

INTERACT
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experience them. Children who experience ACEs are more likely to be both perpetrators and victims of violence, to suffer from mental health disorders, and to have fewer positive educational and health outcomes. Ultimately, these experiences can lead to a greater burden of disease and early death.⁵

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *Association Between ACEs and Negative Outcomes*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/ace-graphics.html>

The harmful effects of ACEs can be prevented by providing financial support and education to families, providing quality education to children and intervening when necessary.⁶ For more information about ACEs, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/>

⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *ACEs can be Prevented*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/ace-graphics.html>

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

First Step Home is a local organization that aims to empower women to overcome substance abuse disorders so they can achieve self-sufficiency and provide a safe and nurturing environment for their children. While First Step Home has always provided safe housing and child care for the children of mothers with substance use disorder, it has recently begun providing more supports for children through its Child Resiliency Program. The program, partially funded by Interact for Health, provides trauma-informed pediatric mental health services, regular speech therapy and social and emotional learning tools for staff and child care providers. To learn more please visit <https://www.firststephome.org/>.