

LEARN YOUR SCORE. CONTROL YOUR DESTINY!

Research shows that our childhood experiences have a strong impact on our health and wellness as adults, especially Adverse Childhood Experiences, known as ACEs. This ACEs assessment is a useful tool to show you the impact your childhood experiences can have on your health as an adult.



If at any point you find yourself overwhelmed and needing assistance, please reach out to Crisis at (262) 657-7188. A trained professional will answer your call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Instructions: Below is a list of 10 questions about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Please place a checkmark next to each question that you experienced prior to your 18th birthday. Then, add up the checkmarks and put the total number at the bottom.

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...
a) Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or
b) Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt? ☐
2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...
a) Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or
b) Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured? ☐
3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever...
a) Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or
b) Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you? ☐
4. Did you often or very often feel that ...
a) No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or
b) Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other? ☐
5. Did you often or very often feel that ...
a) You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or
b) Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it? ☐
6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced? ☐
7. Was your mother or stepmother:
a) Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped or had something thrown at her? or
b) Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or
c) Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife? ☐
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs? ☐
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide? ☐
10. Did a household member go to prison? ☐

Your ACE score is the total number of checked responses. Total: _____



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KNOW YOUR SCORE. UNDERSTAND YOUR RESULTS.

SCORE OF 0-1

You're in pretty good shape with your ACEs score about as low as it can be. With zero or one adverse childhood experiences, there may still be some impact on your physical and emotional health.

People who score one ACE will have twice the risk of developing an alcohol use disorder over their lifetime, versus someone with a zero score. Ones are also more likely to have depression, committing domestic violence, and exhibiting impaired worker performance as an adult.

SCORE OF 2-3

Your score falls into the range where your adverse childhood experiences statistically speaking, will play a role in impacting your lifelong health and wellness.

The research shows that people with a two or three score are more likely to have a lifetime history of depression, develop alcohol use disorder, and have liver disease. Individuals in this score range also tend to have problems performing their job functions, and they report a higher rate of serious financial problems than those with a lower score.

SCORE OF 4 OR HIGHER

When you score 4 or higher on your ACEs assessment, the negative impacts on your health and wellness outcomes is serious. Over half of women and more than a third of men in this score range report having faced chronic depression, with nearly a third of all adults in the range reporting at least one suicide attempt.

In addition to the serious mental health challenges you may face, alcohol and other drug use disorders and physical health issues are a significant risk for people who score a four or higher.

Adults who score a four or higher are also at a seriously heightened risk of committing domestic violence at some time in their life.

BUT, there is good news, too! Your brain and your body are designed to heal. You can take control of your destiny by adding protective, Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) to your life. Surrounding yourself with supportive friends who care about you and your wellbeing. Forming strong connections to affirming adults in your community has also been shown to help your brain and your body heal. Affirming adults could include a teacher, a neighbor, a coach, or a religious leader. By adding positive and affirming people in your daily life, you can build resiliency to the adverse experiences you have had. Your brain and your body will literally heal themselves, reducing the likelihood of those negative health and wellness outcomes.

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NOW WHAT? KEEP MOVING FORWARD.

You can take steps now to heal your body, mend your brain, and improve your long-term health outcomes. If you are willing to work hard on it, you can strengthen your resilience and change your life. Many people can overcome adverse childhood experiences by seeking Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs). Studies show that the body can actually heal some of the damage from toxic childhood stress.

The American Psychological Association offers four key areas to focus on as you build up your resilience:



Build Your Connections

- Prioritize relationships
- Join a group



Foster Wellness

- Take care of your body
- Practice mindfulness
- Avoid negative outlets



Find Purpose

- Help others
- Be proactive
- Move toward your goals
- Look for opportunities for self-discovery



Embrace Healthy Thoughts

- Keep things in perspective
- Accept change
- Maintain a hopeful outlook
- Learn from your past

Research shows that the single most important thing you can do to improve your path is to surround yourself with people who will consistently support you, who will listen to you, and who will validate your feelings. Another critical step is to connect with a trained counselor. This could be a school counselor, a licensed therapist, or a mental health clinician. You caught a lucky break because there many excellent resources available to you in our community!

Do you have more questions or just want to read more about your score and what it means? NumberStory.org is a fantastic source of easy-to-understand information by one of the country's leading experts in ACEs, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris.

We encourage you to learn more and control your destiny! We have additional resources, including local mental health care listings, self-care tips, and more at PACEKenosha.org.



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