

Education

What does trauma look like in Lenawee County?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic events, including abuse, neglect, or household challenges. The number of ACEs a person has is one way to measure the amount of trauma they have experienced. ACEs are strongly related to the development and prevalence of health problems throughout a person's lifespan.¹

15 %

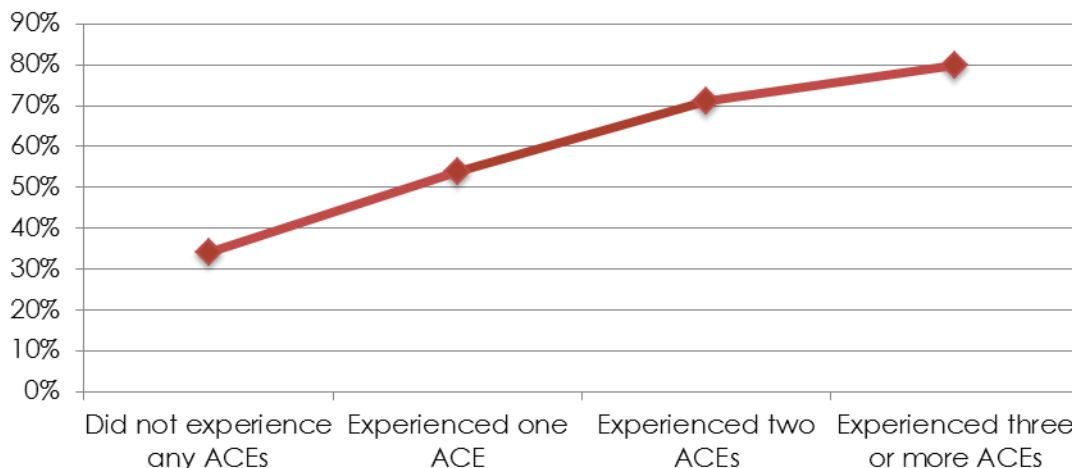
of Lenawee County Adults have 4 or more ACEs²

Lenawee County Adult Behaviors ²	Experienced 4 or more ACEs	Did not experience any ACEs
Classified as overweight or obese by BMI	83%	73%
Current drinker	73%	48%
Binge drinker	35%	32%
Had an income less than \$25000	33%	21%
Current smoker	15%	8%
Used recreational drugs in the past 6 months	11%	2%
Misused medication in the past 6 months	11%	4%
Contemplated suicide in the past 12 months	7%	2%

What does trauma mean for educators?

Trauma changes the way a child's brain develops. These changes impair academic efforts. They affect children's memory systems, their ability to think, to organize multiple priorities (executive function)—in other words their ability to learn, particularly literacy skills. ACEs are often the root cause of serious learning disabilities, health problems, social challenges and behavioral problems that impact a child's ability to learn.

Percent of Students with Academic Problems³



Students with three or more ACEs are **2.5 times** more likely to fail a grade.⁴

How can educators respond to trauma?

Considering trauma when approaching problems requires a significant change in mindset. Being Trauma-Informed is based on six key principles⁵:

- Safety
- Trustworthiness & Transparency
- Peer Support
- Collaboration & Mutuality
- Empowerment, Voice, & Choice
- Cultural, Historical, & Gender Issues

In a school setting, this means being able to recognize and respond to those who have been impacted by trauma. The goal is not only to provide students with the tools to cope with trauma, but to facilitate learning by creating an underlying culture of respect, safety, and support.⁶ By becoming Trauma-Informed, an educator can interrupt the connection between past trauma and current behavior.

How can a school become Trauma-Informed?⁷

1. Conduct an organizational assessment.
It is important to conduct a baseline assessment and reassess periodically, using the feedback to improve.
2. Work towards a paradigm shift
Becoming Trauma-Informed requires a significant shift from "How we've always done things." It's not a one-and-done implementation.
3. Emphasize safety
The foundation of becoming Trauma-Informed is creating a safe environment for everyone who is served by or works for your business.
4. Create a culture of wellness and self-care
The organizational culture must reflect the values of wellness and self-care for employees, supervisors, and customers.
5. Include everyone
Becoming Trauma-Informed is an organization-wide approach that should impact every element of your business and involve all staff.

How can I learn more about becoming Trauma-Informed?

The Lenawee Collective Impact Core is committed to building a Trauma-Informed Lenawee County. They can provide assessment support, technical assistance, and other resources to businesses interested in becoming Trauma-Informed.

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References

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- ³ Adverse Childhood Experiences and Developmental Risk in Elementary School Children. (2010). Blodgett, C., et al.
- ⁴ Anda, Robert. Government of Indiana. (n.d.). Adverse Childhood Experiences: Connecting a Developmental Lens to the Health of Society.
- ⁵ A Treatment Improvement Protocol: Trauma Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services. (2014). SAMHSA.
- ⁶ What is a Trauma-Informed School?(n.d.) Treatment and Services Adaptation Center.
- ⁷ Five Key Elements to Trauma Informed Care. (2018). Relias.