

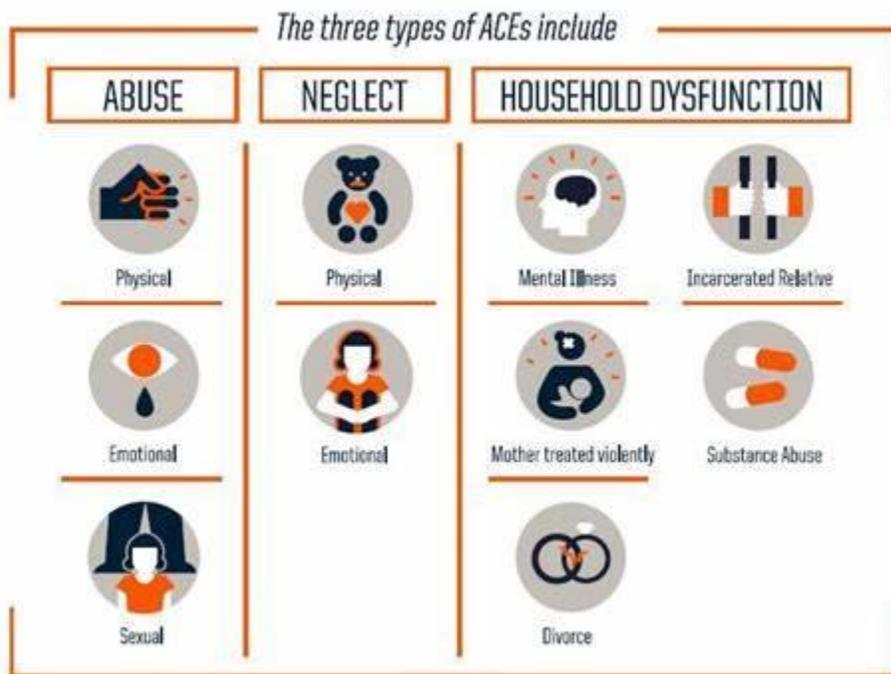


## County of Santa Cruz Public Health is Building a Network of Care to Screen, Treat, and Heal Toxic Stress

The Santa Cruz County Public Health Division is a recipient of grant funds from the Office of the Californian Surgeon General (CA-OSG) and the Department of Healthcare Services (DHCS) to participate in the state’s ACEs Aware initiative. As an ACEs collective, we are following the Building Community Resilience Model (Center for Community Resilience) that looks at ACEs growing out of adverse community environments with a focus on racial equity.

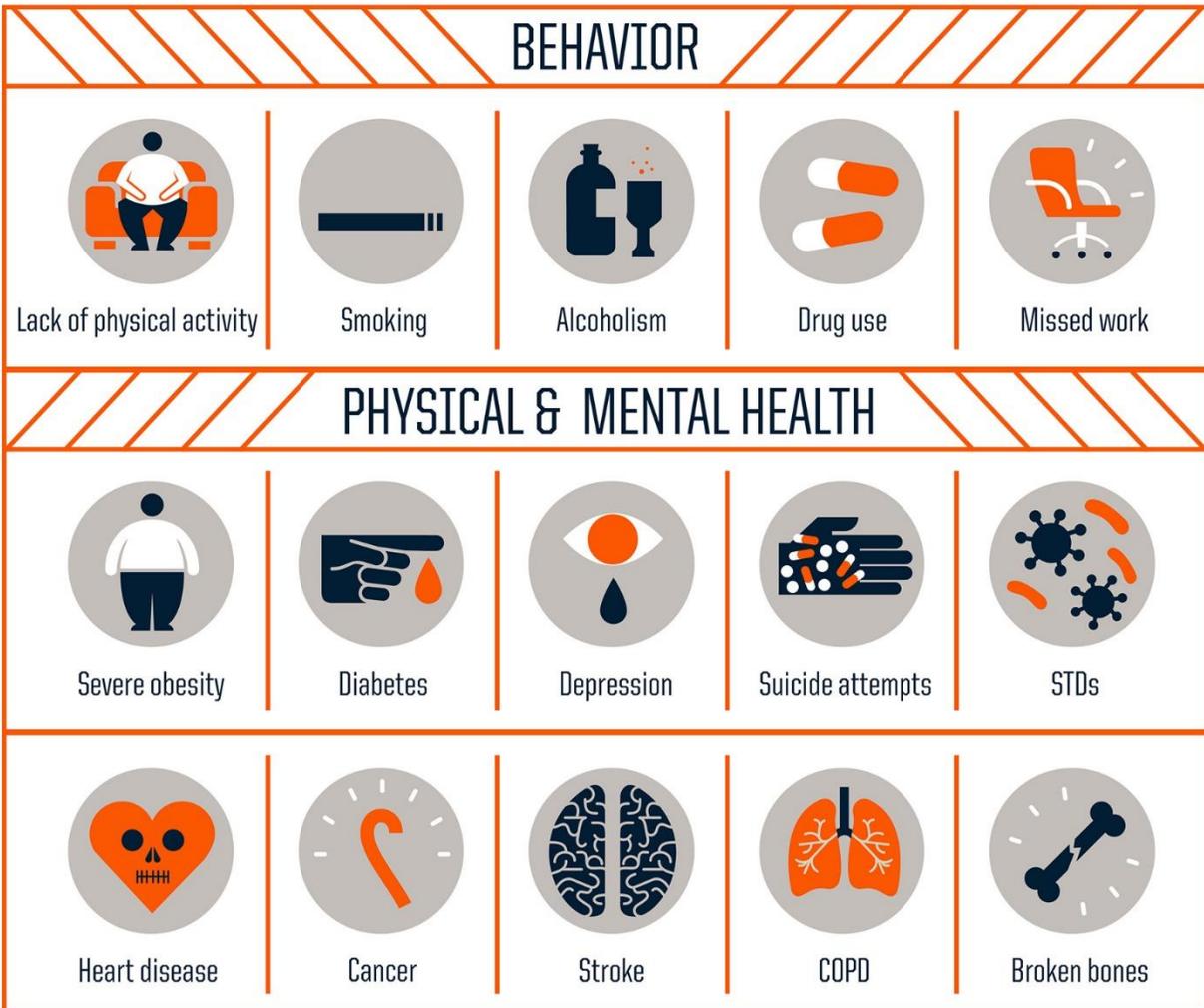
### What are ACEs?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful events in a child or adolescent’s life. They are very common, and most Americans have at least one. ACEs can happen to anyone and may have lasting effects on health.



## Why do ACEs Matter?

Science shows that negative experiences can have long-term effects on children's brains and bodies due to a toxic stress response. Toxic stress from an ACE is different than the everyday stress that all children experience. This type of stress can lead to health problems, and affect behavior, learning, and mental health. **See the chart below for examples.**



## Healing ACEs:

### **The Good News:**

ACEs increase risk, but they do not have to lead to health problems. When adults consistently care for children and offer support, it creates feelings of safety and security. Children trust their caregivers will lovingly meet their needs. This feeling of security is good for developing healthy brains and bodies. The Stress Busters below are proven to help reduce the level of stress and the potential negative effects of ACEs.



For specific “stress busting” strategies for your family, check out [California Surgeon General’s Playbook: Stress Relief during COVID-19](#).

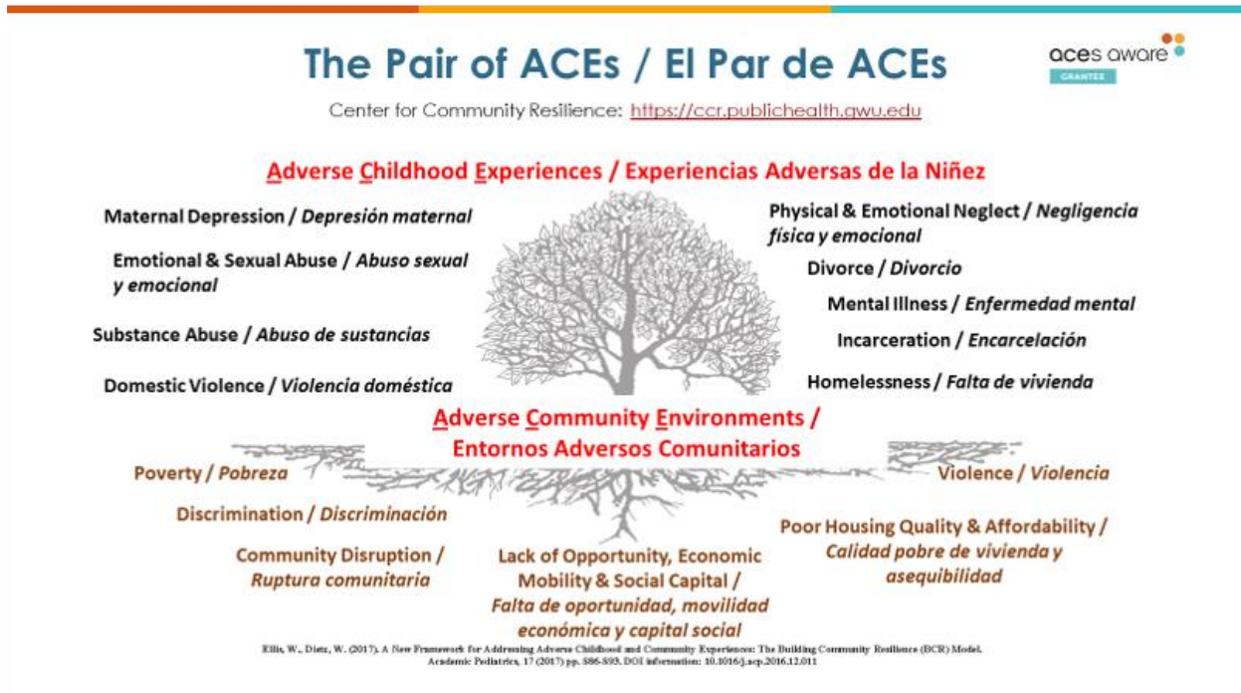
## County of Santa Cruz Public Health is Building a Network of Care to Screen, Treat, and Heal Toxic Stress

Santa Cruz County Health Officer Dr. Gail Newel has declared racism a public health emergency. As an ACEs collective, we have committed to Building Community Resilience Model (Center for Community Resilience) that looks at ACEs growing out of adverse community environments with a focus on racial equity.

### The Pair of ACEs Tree

ACES, in the context of adverse community environments, assault the developing minds of children and negatively impact health across the lifespan. In Building Community Resilience, we understand that many adverse childhood experiences can be linked to policy and systems driven inequities.

The **Pair of ACEs** tree illustrates the relationship between ACEs experienced at the individual level within a family, and adverse community environments. The Pair of ACEs tree shows the issues we aim to address by engaging with diverse stakeholders in developing policy goals to address adversity rooted in systems and communities. By asking the question **“What’s in your soil?”** communities can begin to set goals and implement policy and practice change that builds community resilience (second tree).



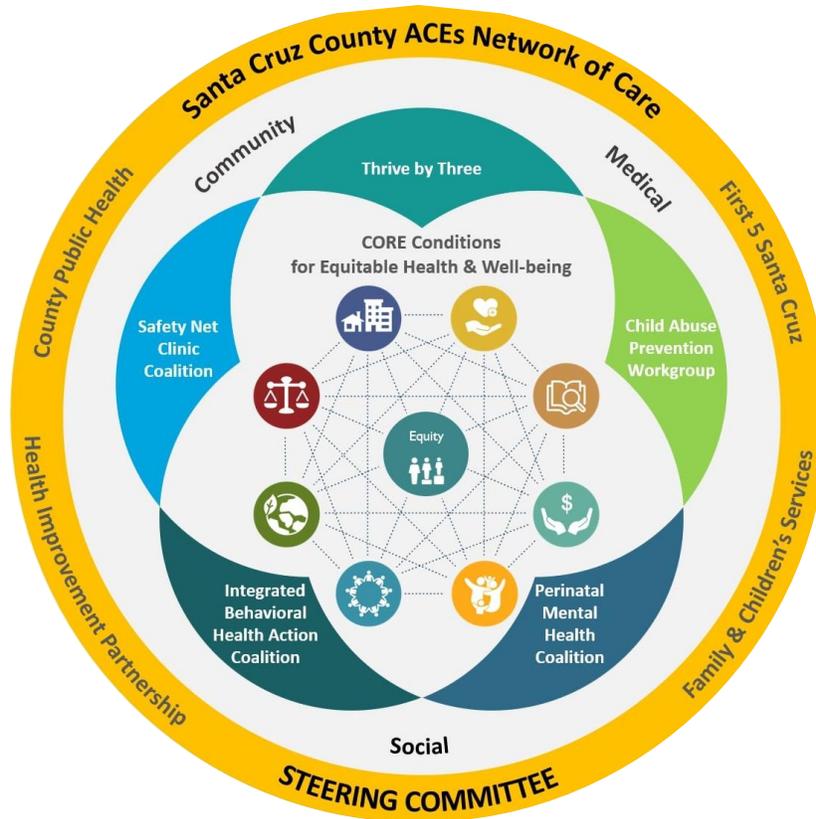
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## Building Community Resilience / Creando la resiliencia comunitaria



### For more information about ACEs:

- [Take the ACEs Quiz - American SPCC](#)
- [Home | ACEs Aware – Take action. Save lives.](#)
- [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- Learn about and read the original groundbreaking CDC-Kaiser ACE study here: [About the CDC-Kaiser ACE Study |Violence Prevention|Injury Center|CDC](#)
- California’s Surgeon General, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris urges all health care providers to join the movement to screen, treat, and heal toxic stress: <https://youtu.be/F8TnhPLxWFY>



To find out more about this work, please visit: [Health Improvement Partnership](#) and [First Five](#).

