



# ACE Screenings Resource Guide



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**HEALTHY PEOPLE. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.**

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## Acknowledgement

The Central California Alliance for Health (Alliance), the Health Improvement Partnership of Santa Cruz (HIP) and Trudy Bearden, President of Bearden Consulting have curated a list of resources to support primary care practices that are implementing, adopting or sustaining an ACE screening program that provides a trauma-informed care approach. The Alliance and HIP thank Trudy Bearden, President of Bearden Consulting for serving as an advisor for this content.

California's [ACEs Aware website](#) includes several valuable resources for your clinic. This resource guide was designed to organize the ACEs Aware materials and incorporate additional informational sources into one location for clinics to reference related to ACE screening, treatment and healing.

## ACEs Overview

- [How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime](#). Motivating 15-minute TED talk by Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, making the case that everyone needs to know about and understand the impacts of ACE. Great for all staff to hear!
- [ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care Roadmap](#). ACEs Aware. This is a comprehensive guide or roadmap for implementing and fully adopting ACE screening in California among health care providers, clinics, community-based organizations, and social service agencies. This is a must-have resource that outlines how communities can expand local networks of care and improve coordination across services.
- [California's Mandated Reporting Requirements and ACE Screening](#). ACEs Aware. It is possible that responses to an ACE screening can reveal child abuse and/or neglect. In this instance, it may indicate the need for a mandated report to Child Protective Services (CPS).
- [The Science of ACEs and Toxic Stress](#). ACEs Aware. Explains the impact of ACE and toxic stress on health.
- [The Science of ACEs and Toxic Stress \(Part 2\)](#). ACEs Aware. Explores the impacts of ACEs on lifelong health and stress-mitigation strategies.
- [The Science of ACEs and Toxic Stress \(Part 3\)](#). ACEs Aware. Demonstrates how providers can develop their treatment and follow up plans in response to ACEs and toxic stress.

## Central California Alliance for Health

- [Cultural and Linguistic Services](#). The Alliance Cultural and Linguistic (C&L) Services Program strives to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate health care and services for our members regardless of race, color, national origin, ethnic group identification, creed, ancestry, religion, language, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, health status, physical or mental disability, or identification with any other persons or groups. This includes providing language assistance materials and interpreting services.
- [Care-Based Incentive \(CBI\) Program](#). The Alliance has added an ACE screening Exploratory (non-paid) measure in the 2022 CBI Program. This measure will give providers an opportunity to operationalize the implementation of ACE screenings in the clinic in preparation for when ACE screenings become a paid measure. Clinics will receive a quarterly performance report as part of their CBI Practice Profile. For additional information on the CBI measure, contact [CBI@ccah-alliance.org](mailto:CBI@ccah-alliance.org).

## Trauma-Informed Care

"Trauma-informed care recognizes and responds to the signs, symptoms, and potential consequences of trauma to support the health needs of patients who have experienced ACEs and other risk factors for toxic stress." [ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care Roadmap](#) p. 17

- [Fostering Resilience and Recovery: A Change Package for Advancing Trauma-Informed Primary Care](#). *National Council for Behavioral Health*. This is an excellent guidance document with helpful checklists and change concepts for organizations seeking to implement a trauma-informed approach to patient care.
- [Trauma-Informed Care Overview](#). *ACEs Aware*. Reviews information on the framework and principles of trauma-informed care - succinct with a five-page fact sheet.
- [Trauma-Informed Care Champions: From Treaters to Healers](#). *Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center*. Series of videos to help build awareness and generate buy-in toward becoming a trauma-informed organization.

## Clinicians/Providers

- [Becoming ACEs Aware in California Training](#). *ACEs Aware*. Certified two-hour case-based training for providers to learn about ACE and evidence-based care to effectively intervene on toxic stress - must have an NPI number to access and take the training.
- [About the CDC-Kaiser ACE Study](#). *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. Detailed information about the original ACE Study conducted at Kaiser Permanente from 1995 to 1997.
- [Rationale for ACEs Screening](#). *Center for Youth Wellness*. Explains how screening can improve clinical decision-making and prevent negative health outcomes. This three-page guide includes ACE screening statistics (prior to 2018).

## Clinical & Non-Clinical Staff

- [What is Toxic Stress?](#) *Center for Youth Wellness*. Describes the differences among positive, tolerable and toxic stress responses; clarifies how toxic stress affects children's bodies and provides short guidance on how adults can protect children from toxic stress. Short two-pager - good for non-clinical staff and possibly for patients.
- [ACE Training for Non-Clinical Staff \(Pilot\)](#). *recorded by Trudy Bearden*. This pilot training was filmed in April 2021 in response to supporting a clinic cohort in implementing ACE screening in their practices.
- [ACE Screening Sample Scripts for Pediatric Clinical Teams](#). *ACEs Aware*. This guide outlines best practices for introducing ACEs screening to your patients and conducting a successful screening.

## ACE Screening Implementation

- [ACE Screening Implementation How-To Guide](#). *ACEs Aware*. This guide breaks down screening integration in four stages to help organizations
- [ACE Screening, Clinical Assessment, and Treatment Planning for Toxic Stress](#). *ACEs Aware*. ACE Screenings are not a diagnosis, rather they are an indication to build trust and further investigate your patient's ACEs to develop a functional mutually agreed treatment plan. This guide provides strategies on making a clinical assessment and treatment plan.

- [Putting It All Together — Your ACE Screening & Clinical Response Approach](#). *ACEs Aware*. This guide supports clinic teams in identifying their approach and response to ACE screenings.

## Screening and Scripting tools for ACE Screening - for Clinical and Non-Clinical Staff

- [Providing Anticipatory Guidance for ACEs Screening](#). *Center for Youth Wellness*. Scripting guidance and tips for introducing ACE screening to families - use for clinical and non-clinical staff.
- [Communicating About ACEs](#). *Center for Youth Wellness*. Scripting guidance and tips to build trust with families when screening for ACE - use for clinical and non-clinical staff.
- [Conducting Sensitive Screenings](#). *EM Consulting*. Download this excellent resource that includes several scripting examples. We encourage your teams to roleplay conducting screenings as part of your practice's implementation and onboarding procedures.
- [PEARLS Resilience De-Identified, Positive and Negative](#). *EM Consulting*. Excellent 11-min video of an MA conducting an ACE screening on a video visit, using "actors".
- [ACEs Screening Tools](#). *Screening Tools*. Tools for conducting ACE screening for children and adults- use is for clinical and non-clinical staff. Screening tools are available in 17 languages.
- **Screening Tools for Children and Adolescent Screening**
  - [Child \(Parent-Caregiver Report\) – De-Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
  - [Child \(Parent-Caregiver Report\) – Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
  - [Child \(Parent-Caregiver Report\) – Part 1 De-Identified, Part 2 Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
  - [Teen \(Parent-Caregiver Report\) – De-Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
  - [Teen \(Parent-Caregiver Report\) – Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
  - [Teen \(Parent-Caregiver Report\) – Part 1 De-Identified, Part 2 Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
  - [Teen \(Self-Report\) – De-Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
  - [Teen \(Self-Report\) – Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
  - [Teen \(Self-Report\) – Part 1 De-Identified, Part 2 Identified](#). *Center for Youth Wellness, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital*
- **Screening Tools for Adult Screening**
  - [Adverse Childhood Experience Questionnaire for Adults - Identified](#). *California Surgeon General's Clinical Advisory Committee*
  - [Adverse Childhood Experience Questionnaire for Adults - De-identified](#). *California Surgeon General's Clinical Advisory Committee*

## Self-Care for Staff | Addressing Vicarious Trauma

Staff involved in ACE screening and treatment of toxic stress may be triggered or experience vicarious trauma. Systems need to be in place to support staff if either of these occur.

- [The Journey Toward a Healing Organization](#) *Center for Care Innovations*. 10 Steps to transform a workplace into a healing organization.

## Patient and Family Materials

- [Parenting with ACEs](#) Explains how a parents' ACE can increase risk for ACE in their child.
- [What are ACEs and Why Do They Matter?](#) *Center for Youth Wellness*. Potential parent two-page handout but only if high literacy - provides high-level overview of ACE.
- [To Lower Toxic Stress at Home](#) Things families can do to improve their health and well-being.

## Strategies to Regulate the Stress Response



From the [ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care Roadmap](#)

- **Supportive Relationships**
  - [The Benefit of Supportive Relationships](#) *Center for Youth Wellness*. Explains the importance of maintaining supportive relationships and tips to do so.
- **Quality Sleep**
  - [Good Sleep Habits](#) *Center for Youth Wellness*. Tips to help children get a good night's sleep.
- **Balanced Nutrition**
  - [Tips for Good Nutrition](#). *Center for Youth Wellness*. Tips to improve healthy routines and nutritional food consumption.



- **Physical Activity**
  - [Promoting Exercise](#) *Center for Youth Wellness*. Ideas to encourage children to get enough exercise.
- **Mindfulness Practices**
  - [Using Mindfulness](#) *Center for Youth Wellness*. Introduction to mindfulness as a tool to reduce toxic stress.
- **Access to Nature**
  - Merced County
    - [Lake Yosemite County Park](#)
    - [San Luis State Recreation Area](#)
    - [Turlock Lake State Recreation Area](#)
    - [Yosemite National Park](#)
  - Monterey County
    - [Fremont Peak State Park](#)
    - [Lake San Antonio Lake](#)
    - [Lake Nacimiento](#)
    - [Pinnacles National Park](#)
    - [Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park](#)
    - [San Lorenzo County Park](#)
  - Santa Cruz County
    - [Ano Nuevo State Park](#)
    - [Big Basin Redwoods State Park](#)
    - [Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park](#)
    - [Pinto Lake Park](#)
- **Mental Health Care**
  - [Improving Mental Health](#) *Center for Youth Wellness*. When to seek professional support in protecting your child from the effects of toxic stress.
  - [ACEs Aware Self-Care Tool for Adults](#) *ACEs Aware*. Self-guided checklist for adults to set goals that help decrease stress and improve health.
  - [ACEs Aware Self-Care Tool for Pediatrics](#) *ACEs Aware*. Self-guided checklist for families to set goals that help decrease stress and improve health.

## Workflows

- [ACE Screening Clinical Workflows, Risk Assessment Algorithm, and Associated Health Conditions: For Pediatrics and Adults](#) *ACEs Aware*. Template workflows, risk algorithms, and list of health conditions.
- [ACEs Screening Implementation Plan Template, Sample Workflow and Starter PDSA HIP](#). These three resources were created during a pilot program with three health care organizations. The implementation plan is modifiable for months and includes most of the actions required to implement ACEs screening. The sample workflow is just one example of how the screening workflow may be executed. The starter PDSA is for organizations or teams that want to have an organized plan for piloting screening with one care team. The starter PDSA form includes relevant prompts and space for the Do, Study and Act portions of the pilot (or test of change).
  - *To download and adapt:* Press on the three dots in the upper right-hand corner and select Download. This will then become editable using Microsoft PowerPoint.

## Policies and Procedures

- [ACEs Screening Policy and Procedure DRAFT](#). *HIP*. This resource was created at the request of the three health care organizations that participated in a pilot program. It can be downloaded as a modifiable Word document from Google docs.

## Billing and Reimbursement

- [Reminders for ACEs and Childhood Developmental Screening Billing](#) Medi-Cal publication aggregating communications about ACE screenings and summarizing billing guidelines.
- [Medi-Cal Certification and Payment](#) Alliance network providers will need to complete ACEs training and attestation of completion to receive payment. This link explains how Medi-Cal providers can receive payment for screening for ACEs. ACE screenings will need to be billed for on a separate claim from the well-visit or sick visit to receive payment. Contact your Provider Relations Representative with any questions.

## Quality Improvement

- [Screening for Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) in Pediatric Practices](#) *Center for Community Health and Evaluation*. Insights based on learning from evaluations of two programs.

## Potential process and outcome measures to track

### Process measures

- % ages 21-64 screened within lifetime and/or ages < 21 screened annually
- % missed opportunities (i.e., we saw a patient but did not screen for ACEs)
- % closed-loop referrals that were successful (e.g., using new closed-loop definition: appointment made and kept AND confirmation that individual's needs were met)

### Outcome measures

- % that screen positive and % of those who were connected with resources or successfully engaged in one of the seven toxic stress busters (nutrition, activity, sleep, supportive relationships, mental health care, nature, mindfulness)
- % with positive ACEs screen with improvement in PHQ9 score (or anxiety using a validated instrument), health confidence (and/or lower stress and/or feeling more supported at follow-up), A1C, blood pressure or other disease-related measure of control or improvement
- % with positive ACEs screen with emergency department visit, admission or readmission (could compare to case-matched control without positive ACEs screen)
- % with positive ACEs screen who report higher health confidence