

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) in Fife

Exposures and Outcomes

October 2018



**getting
it right**
for every child

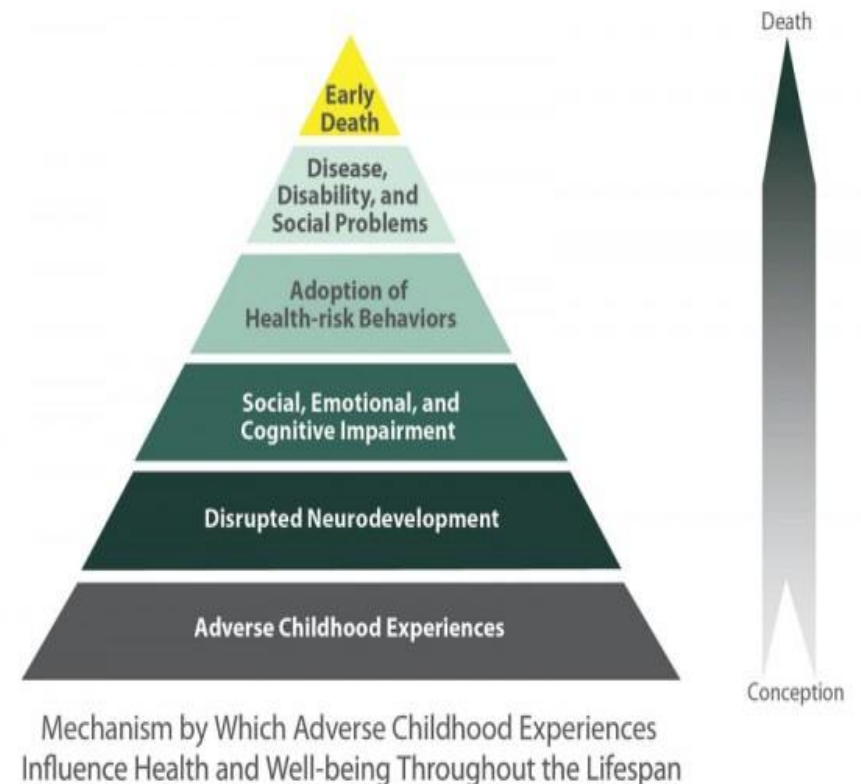
Background

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have been recognised recently as important not only for the immediate impact on children. If cumulative adverse experiences occur, these are associated with significant lasting effects on adult risk behaviours, life circumstances, physical and mental health and premature mortality (Figure 1).¹ ACEs include abuse and neglect, household substance misuse, domestic violence, parental incarceration, household mental illness and loss of a parent (for any reason).²

For example, adults who reported **four or more** ACEs were shown to be three more times likely to smoke, have lower mental wellbeing, have poorer educational outcomes, have greater risk of chronic health conditions, have greater risk of illness and develop illnesses at a younger age than those with no or fewer ACEs.² However, there are protective factors and in particular family and community connectedness and the support of 'one good adult' can help in difficult times and help maintain positive mental health.³

There have been no published studies to date on the prevalence of ACEs in the population of Scotland.² Large scale studies based elsewhere have reported that individual ACEs are common. Results from an English study showed 50% of people reported at least one ACEs and over 8% reported four or more ACEs.² This equates to 153,539 adults in Fife with at least one ACEs and 24,566 with four or more ACEs.

Many ACEs are to some degree preventable and the impact of others can be mitigated, in childhood and also by adult services responding sensitively to people ie 'trauma- informed'. Understanding the scale of current exposure to ACEs is an important part of the work ongoing in Fife focussing on prevention and early intervention in relation to the wellbeing of children.



Exposure to ACEs

At present there are no established indicators for measuring or methods for collecting data on ACEs in Scotland. NHS Ayrshire & Arran have produced profiles to estimate the prevalence of ACEs at a local level compared to Scotland using existing routine data sources as proxy measures for ACEs.⁴ This has been adapted below for Fife and gives a snapshot using data available at October 2018.⁴

These are indicative only, particularly with respect to child protection as there may be differences in recording between local authorities or health boards, and not all instances of parental drug or alcohol misuse for example are at a level to result in formal child protection proceedings, although there may be a wider impact on wellbeing of children and young people.

		Period	Fife		Scotland		
			Number	Measure	Average	Highest LA/HB	Lowest LA/HB
1	Children aged under 18 years; number and percentage of population	2017	72,081	19.4	19	22.6	16.7
2	Looked after children aged less than 18 years; rate per 1,000 children under 18	2017	935	13.1	14.3	25.5	5.5
3	Looked after children aged less than 5 years; rate per 1,000 children under 5	2017	183	9.4	10.3	18.7	*
4	Children on child protection register; rate per 10,000 children under 18	2017	175	2.4	2.5	4.2	1.0
5	Child protection cases with parental drug misuse; 3 year total per 10,000 children under 18	2015-17	205	10	7.1	11	*
6	Child protection cases with parental alcohol misuse; 3 yr total per 10,000 children under 18	2015-17	131	6.4	5.2	11	*
7	Child protection cases with neglect; 3 year total per 10,000 children under 18	2015-17	240	11.7	9.9	19	*
8	Child protection cases with sexual abuse; 3 year total per 10,000 children under 18	2015-17	56	3.0	2.1	5.6	*
9	Child protection cases with physical abuse; 3 year total per 10,000 children under 18	2015-17	140	6.8	5.6	18.8	*
10	Child protection cases with emotional abuse; 3 year total per 10,000 children under 18	2015-17	359	17.5	10.5	25.9	*
11	Child protection cases with domestic abuse; 3 year total per 10,000 children under 18	2015-17	286	13.9	10.2	19.6	*
12	Child protection cases with parental mental health problems; 3 yr total per 10,000 children <18	2015-17	217	10.6	7.3	17.5	*
13	Recorded domestic abuse incidents; rate per 10,000 population	2016/17	4,457	120	109	155	47
14	Population prescribed drugs for anxiety/depression/psychosis; % total population	2016/17	70,960	19.2	18.5	22	14.8
15	Adult prisoner population; rate per 100,000 population	2013/14	402	141	179	322	49
16	Lone parent families; % of all families in households with dependent children	2011	12,497	30	31	46.2	17.3

*Data not shown as small numbers are suppressed so rates cannot be calculated for local authorities where the number of cases is less than five in any year of the three year period.

While these are proxy measures and should be treated as such, the data can be used to highlight the issues being faced and the number of children and young people potentially experiencing ACEs in Fife. These factors can also contribute to levels of child poverty. The **Fife Children's Service Plan 2017-20** identifies prevention of abuse, planning for looked after children, positive emotional wellbeing, reduction of substance use and child poverty as priority areas for partnership action.⁵

Outcomes of ACEs

Studies have shown that as the number of ACEs increases so does the experience of risk behaviours, poorer life circumstances, poorer health outcomes and premature mortality.¹ People with four or more ACEs were much more likely to be a smoker, heavy drinker and to be obese than those with no exposure to ACEs.² Exposure to ACEs has also been shown to increase the risk of developing physical health conditions including cancer and heart disease, developing them at an earlier age and having poorer mental well-being and life satisfaction.² We can use the data we have available in Fife to look at indicators that relate to outcomes of ACEs which can show us for example the percentage of Fife residents who smoke or the rate of premature mortality in Fife but we are at present unable to link these directly to individuals who have been exposed to ACEs.

		Period	Fife		Scotland		
			Number	Measure	Average	Highest Area	Lowest Area
1	% adults who smoke	2014-17	-	20	21	23	17
2	% adults who are obese	2014-17	-	32	29	34	24
3	% adults meeting physical activity guidelines	2014-17	-	63	64	60	68
4	Alcohol-related hospital stays; ASR per 100,000 population	2016/17	2,308	631	681	1335	316
5	Alcohol-related mortality; ASR per 100,000 population	2014-16	63	17.2	22	38	8
6	Drug-related hospital stays; ASR per 100,000 population	14/15-16/17	650	189	150	342	38
7	% population reporting good or very good health	2013-16	-	72	74	82	89
8	% population prescribed drugs for anxiety/depression/psychosis	2016/17	70,960	19.2	18.5	22	14.8
9	% population exhibiting signs of possible psychiatric disorder	2014-17	-	14	16	18	12
10	Deaths from suicide; ASR per 100,000 population	2012-16	53	15.2	13.9	24.2	9.4
11	CHD hospital stays in under 75s; ASR per 100,000 population	2016/17	-	528	698	1025	427
12	COPD patients treated in hospital; ASR per 100,000 population	14/15-16/17	768	209.3	245.7	480.6	92.7
13	Cancer registrations (new); ASR per 100,000 population	2014-16	2,235	614	638	752	494
14	All cause mortality in under 75s; ASR per 100,000 population	2017	1,519	427	425	614	301
15	All cause mortality in 15-44 year olds; ASR per 100,000 population	2015-17	135	108	106	168	65.2
16	CHD mortality in under 75s; ASR per 100,000 population	2014-16	197	57	53	76	33
17	Cancer mortality in under 75s; ASR per 100,000 population	2015-17	574	163	160	207	120
18	Teenage pregnancy (under 18); Rate per 1000 women	2014-16	398	37	33	51.1	14.5
19	Working age population claiming Out of Work benefits	2016	25,960	11.2	10.6	5.6	15.6
20	Working age adults with low or no educational qualifications	2013	21,300	9.2	12.6	6.7	18.6

Responses to ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) were the focus of the Education and Children's Services directorate conference in September 2017.

Following the conference in order to raise awareness of ACEs the American film 'Resilience: Science of Hope' was screened widely across Fife. To date it has been viewed by approximately 4000 people.

A short Fife film has been produced as a follow-on to the American film; it is designed to be viewed across communities and practitioners in Fife to support the concept of 'Be the Person', the person who is compassionate and supportive to young people who have experienced adversity.

A Fife Trauma Awareness cross-partner strategic group has been established to take an overview of Fife's needs and actions around ACEs and trauma awareness and a Fife ACEs network is leading the running of awareness raising events around the topic.

Sources and Notes

This profile was compiled by Public Health Department, NHS Fife with thanks to Arfan Iqbal, NHS Ayrshire & Arran in November 2017 and updated in October 2018.

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html>
2. Scottish Public Health Network (2016) *'Polishing the Diamonds' Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences in Scotland*. Available at: https://www.scotphn.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/2016_05_26-ACE-Report-Final-AF.pdf
3. Dooley, Barbara A.; Fitzgerald, Amanda (2012) My World Survey : National Study of Youth Mental Health in Ireland. Available at: [http://researchrepository.ucd.ie/bitstream/handle/10197/4286/My_World_Survey_2012_Online\(4\).pdf?sequence=1](http://researchrepository.ucd.ie/bitstream/handle/10197/4286/My_World_Survey_2012_Online(4).pdf?sequence=1)
4. NHS Ayrshire & Arran (2017) *The State of Child Health: Ayrshire & Arran's Response to the Challenge*. Ayrshire: NHS Ayrshire & Arran
5. Fifes Children's Services Plan 2017-20 <http://girfec.fife.scot/partnership-working/childrens-services/>
6. Highest and lowest refer to lowest and highest values for data when presented for each of the health boards (HB) or local authorities (LA) in Scotland.

Data Sources

Profile	Indicator	Geography	Reference	Source
EXPOSURES	1,2	Local Authority	NRS; 2017 mid-year population estimates	https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates
	4, 14	Local Authority	ScotPHO; Profiles Tool at Oct 2018	https://scotland.shinyapps.io/ScotPHO_profiles_tool/
	3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	Local Authority	Scot Gov; Children's Social Work Stats as at July 2017 (Data not available for all indicators for every LA)	https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-social-work-statistics-2016-17/pages/9/
	13	Local Authority	Scot Gov; Domestic abuse recorded by Police Scotland	https://www.gov.scot/publications/domestic-abuse-recorded-police-scotland-2016-17/pages/11/
	15	Local Authority	Scot Gov; Prison Statistics Scotland	https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubPrisons
	16	Local Authority	Census; Dependent children by family type (all families in households)	https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/ods-web/standard-outputs.html (Table LC114SC)
Profile	Indicator	Geography	Reference	Source
OUTCOMES	1, 2, 3, 7, 9	Health Board	Scottish Health Survey; health board results	https://www2.gov.scot/Publications/2018/09/5235
	4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20	Local Authority	ScotPHO; Profiles Tool at Oct 2018	https://scotland.shinyapps.io/ScotPHO_profiles_tool/
	11	Health Board	ISD; Heart Disease Statistics	http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Heart-Disease/Publications/data-tables2017.asp?id=2090#2090
	14	Local Authority	NRS; Vital events; Age-standardised all cause death rates in under 75s	https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths/age-standardised-death-rates-calculated-using-the-esp