

We Should Become a Trauma-Sensitive School

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Trauma-Sensitive School

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

- Definition & Impact
- Effects
- Response

1 District's Response

What's Our Response?



ACEs: Definition & Impact

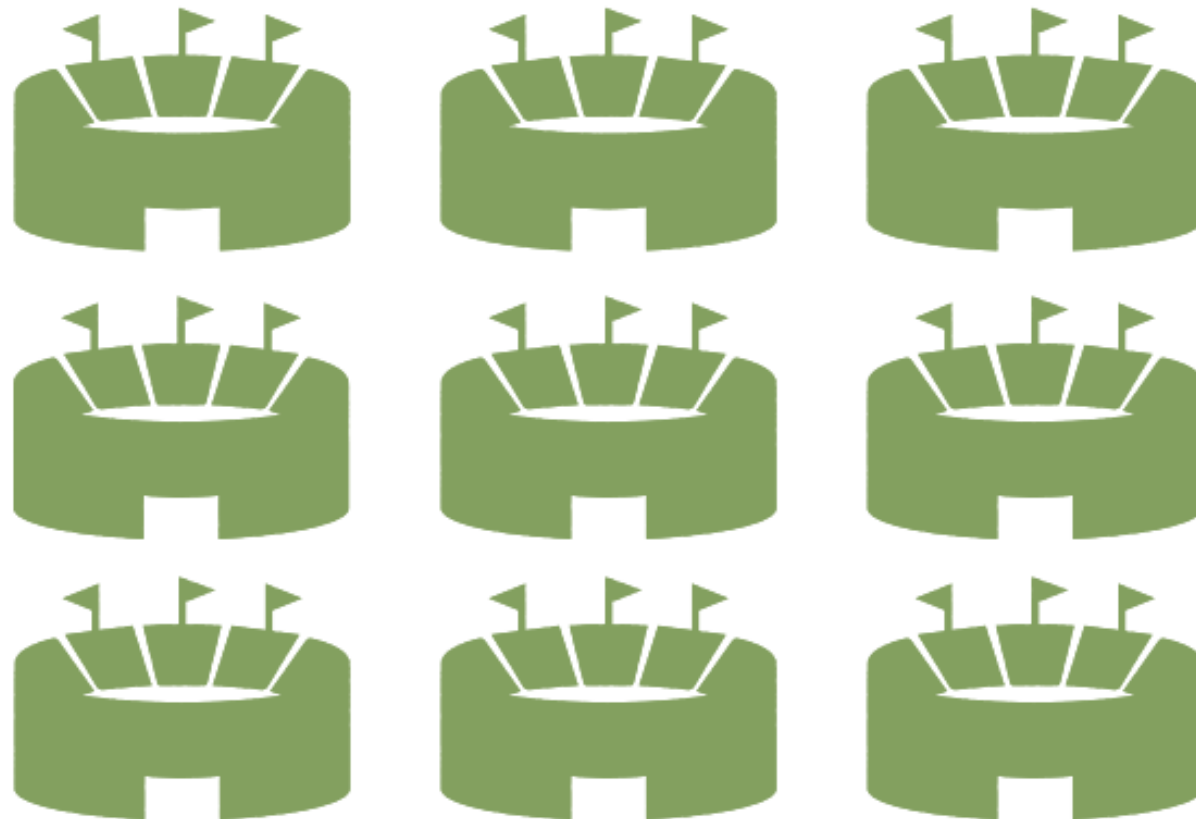
Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and well-being

- Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse
- Physical and emotional neglect
- Divorce
- Domestic violence
- Parental incarceration
- Parental death
- Parental substance abuse
- Witnessing violence
- Food insecurity
- Racism and bullying
- Mental illness in family
- Chronic poverty



ACEs: Definition & Impact

Each year, the number of youth requiring hospital treatment for physical assault-related injuries would fill **EVERY SEAT IN 9 STADIUMS.**³



Source: Substance Abuse
and Mental Health
Service Administration

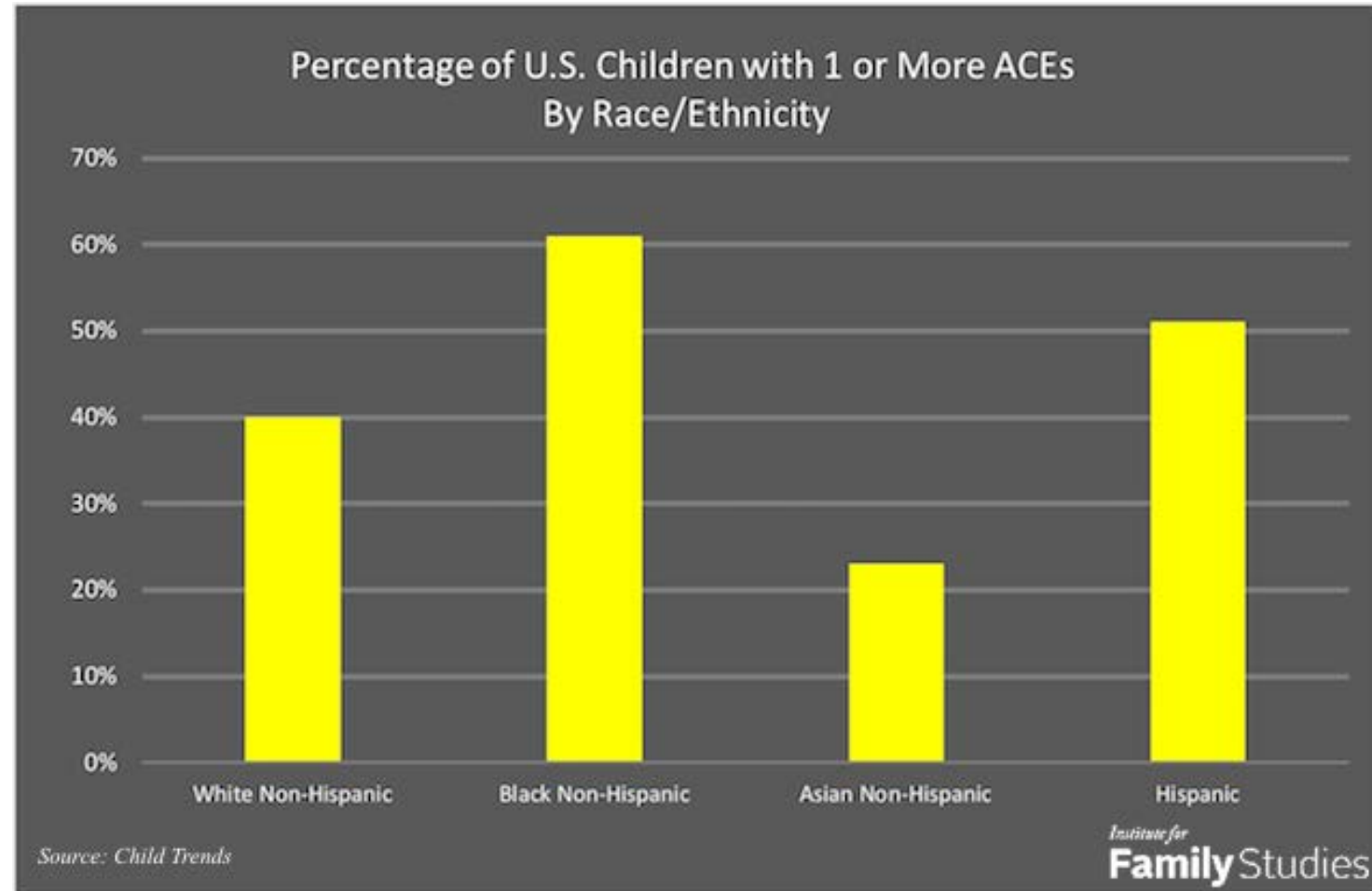


ACEs: Definition & Impact

National study of 5,117 Latinos ages 18-74 found 77.8% experienced at least one ACE in childhood (in contrast to the 46% of youth in general who are currently exposed to ACEs).

The same study found that 28.7% of Latinos experienced four ACEs or more.

Learn more: *Salud America!*
Research Review, 2017,
<http://salud.to/latinochild>





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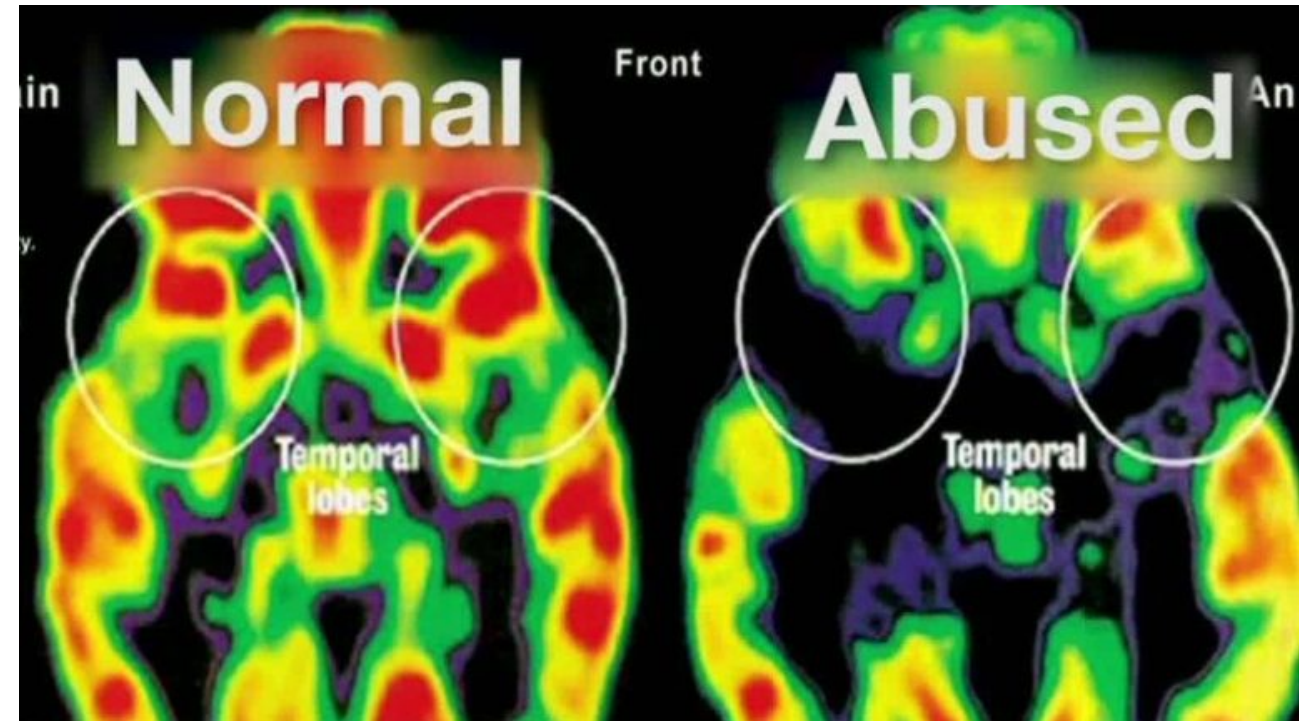
1 District's Response

What's Our Response?

ACEs: Effects

Changes a child's brain:

- Repeated/chronic activation of stress hormones bypass thinking part of brain and activate survival part of brain, aka fight, flight, or freeze
- Strengthens fight, flight, or freeze neural pathways then become efficient and predominant
- Interrupts normal development and impairs complex thought and learning





ACEs: Effects

Changes a child's behavior:

- Aggression, irritable, whiny, clingy, moody
- More headaches, stomachaches, and overreaction to minor bumps and bruises
- Difficulty identifying or labeling feelings, communicating needs and controlling impulses
- Problems with focus, easily startled, and over-reacts to sounds, touch, and sirens
- Distrust of others, authority
- Dissociation, checking out, and under-reaction





ACEs: Effects

Causes long-term problems:

- Chronic absenteeism, attention problems, suspension, and expulsion
- Smoking, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, dropping out of high school, failed relationships, domestic violence, and involvement in criminal justice system
- Anxiety, depression, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, stroke, asthma, lupus, multiple sclerosis, osteoporosis, viral infections and autoimmune diseases.





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ACEs: Response



“Many of these children are not at-risk anymore.

They are wounded.

Their deep scars of emotional, physical, and mental pain are stuffed deep inside because, as a society, we are led to believe that they will go away.”

-Joe Hendershott
Author, “Reaching the Wounded Student”



ACEs: Response

Good news: Resiliency!

Many changes can be reversed if the trauma is interrupted AND the child is nurtured in a safe environment:

- Provide stable, consistent, predictable relationships
- Recognize trauma-related behaviors in children so your reaction to their behavior does not further traumatize the child
- Help kids feel safe, first, then teach skills for self-regulation





ACEs: Response

Good news: Resiliency!

- Extend empathy, mercy, grace
- Alternative discipline, like community service
- Give wounded students different avenues to express themselves (music, art, etc.)
- Build self-esteem, find redeeming qualities
- Understand/work on student's emotional intelligence
- Self care





ACEs: Response

Two big questions...

**“What’s
wrong with
you?”**

**“What
happened to
you?”**



ACEs: Response

...with two schools of thought:

“What’s wrong with you?”

You can point the finger at parents and wait for them to change. Counseling would help, but they’d have to agree to participate. Free or low-cost counseling for people who can’t afford it isn’t a given in these days of social service budgets stripped to the bone. And counseling would take months, if not years to change the family dynamics. In the meantime, the boy continues to suffer and his behavior grows more belligerent.

“What happened to you?”

Change the schools to become safe and nurturing, so that kids can learn no matter what’s going on at home...or in their neighborhoods...or in their extended families. The reality is, a school’s traditional response – suspending, expelling or putting a child like Sam into special education classes – further traumatizes already traumatized children. That’s the tried and true road to prison or dropping out of school, and a life damaged for no good reason.



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What's Our Response?



East Central ISD

East Central ISD in San Antonio is taking a “**what happened to you?**” approach with its new Trauma-Informed Care System (EC Cares) thanks to its Student Services Director, John Hernandez

Read *Salud America!* case study on how they did it:
salud.to/ECCares

Watch *Salud America!* video on how they did it:
salud.to/ECCaresVid

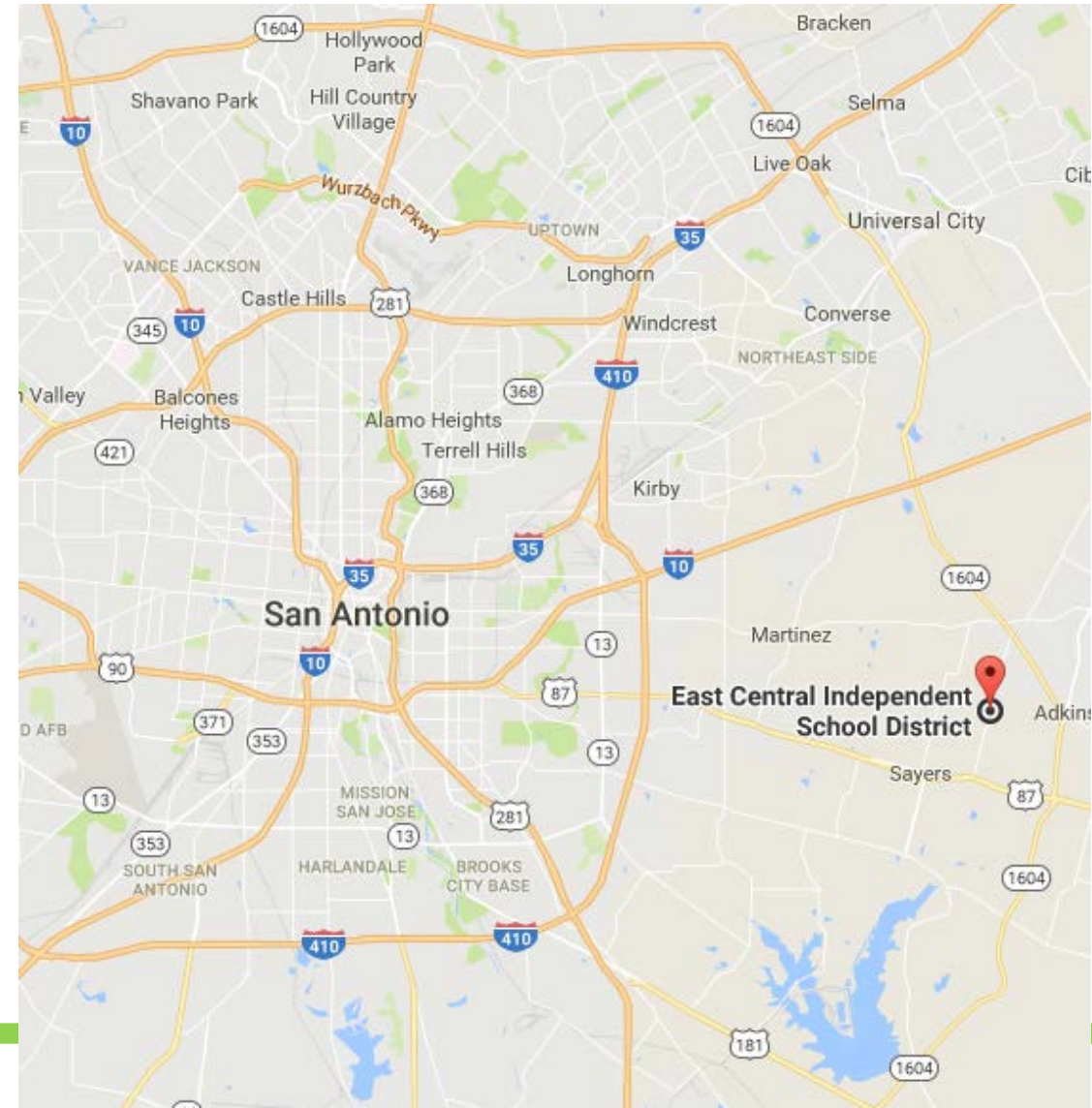




East Central ISD

269 square miles in SE San Antonio

- 10,300 students
- 70% economically disadvantaged
- 1 high school, 2 middle schools, 2 intermediate, and 6 PreK-3
- 1,041 with $3 \geq$ unexcused absences
- 656 with $10 \geq$ unexcused absences





Alternative Campus Student Poll

- Polled in Nov. 2015, 35 of 40 (88%) had a traumatic event.
- Polled in April 2016, 28 of 30 (93%) had a traumatic event.

10 had multiple traumatic events



Out of the 70 students, 35 students (50%) have never talked to their counselor or anyone at school about their circumstance.



At-Risk Indicators vs EC Students

Texas Education Agency

13 At-Risk Indicators

- Predicts that you may become a dropout
- Something might happen “if”...
- Student is incarcerated
- Academic driven
- What intervention will you put in place?

Beyond At-Risk (EC Cares)

- Trauma event has already occurred
- Parent/Guardian is incarcerated
- Reasons that support these numbers are post 9/11, high divorce rate, younger parent(s), social media, etc.
- What resource will you connect the family with?



EC Cares Task Force

Introduced idea to EC ISD Superintendent, got approval

- Started a Task Force w/ representative from each campus, social worker, district staff, transportation, athletics, nutrition, grants coordinator, community member
- Build a vision and action plan:
 - Create System to identify, track/monitor, and help kids who face trauma via:
 - Chain of Command
 - Resource guide
 - Tracking System
 - Professional development
 - District awareness
 - Other actions



EC Cares Resource Guide

Community Resource Guide

- Abuse/Domestic Violence
- Alcohol/Substance Abuse
- Counseling
- Food
- Emergency Homeless Service
- Other

Trauma Indicators

- Physical: violence, parent incarcerated, accidents
- Emotional: loss of loved one, stress, immigration, sibling is a teen parent
- Disorder: anxiety, depression, eating
- Social: isolated, withdrawn, neglect, poverty



EC Cares Chain of Command

- Initial responder reports to appropriate staff on their campus or their direct supervisor (AP, nurse, counselor, Coordinator/Director etc.). All cases are reported to the appropriate counselor.



- Counselor meets with the student to determine levels of support (high or low). If necessary, refer to an outside agency.



- Each campus assigns someone to maintain the list (Name and ID number only) and input into WST 0550.



EC Cares Tracking

WST 0550 (Show **Red ALERT Box to input information)**

- **Example, EC Cares-Harmony Elementary-11/18/2009**

Program

School

Date event occurred

*Currently being used for Stay Away, Disciplinary Contract and Host forms.

[Misc Ind Codes](#)[Special Alert](#)[Medical Alert](#)

STUDENT INFORMATION FOUND

Student Identification

Campus: 041 Stu ID: 065040 [Find](#) SSN: Denied SSN: Previous ID:
Last Name: HERNANDEZ First DESTINY Middle MICHELLE Gen Current Grade

Birth Date: 08 31 2006

Entry Date: 08 22 2016

Enrl Code: 1

Elig Code: 1 - Eligible for full day

Sex: Female

Hispanic/Latino: Yes

RACES: American Indian:

Asian:

Black:

Pacific Islander:

Home Lang: 98

Cnty Res: 015

Birth City: SA

Birth State: TX

Immig Ind: 0

Immig Trk:



ITCCS EAST CENTRAL ISD

Change Responsibilities

Reporting Products

Main Menu Registration Menu

Special Alerts

Save Delete Special Alerts Return

STUDENT SPECIAL ALERTS FOUND

Student Identification

Campus: 041 Stu ID: 065040 Find SSN: 0162 Previous ID: 0162 Grade: 05

Last First Middle Gen

Name: HERNANDEZ DESTINY MICHELLE

Comments

EC CARES-OAK CREST-1-12-17***THIS IS A TEST***

Program

School

Date event occurred

- Proactive: Anniversary date of traumatic event
- Each campus can print their entire special alerts
- Each campus can inform every appropriate staff member (and between campuses)
- Can provide deliberate scheduling and programming (counseling support, outside resource support)



EC Cares Professional Development

- Dropout Prevention Conference
- Hope for the Wounded Student Conference
- 16-hour online Hope for the Wounded Student course
- Pathways for Hope Conference
- Bexar Cares Trauma Trainings
- South Texas Trauma-Informed Care Conference





EC Cares District Awareness

Presentation to multiple departments and campuses

- Science behind trauma
- Effects of trauma
- East Central attendance data/trauma indicators
- Resource Guide
- Chain of Command





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Is It Possible for Us?

Oh Yes!

What is our vision? Are these components?

- Create a Trauma-Informed Care System to identify, track, and help traumatized students (i.e., like EC ISD with the help of Salud America!)
- Other actions: continuing education for key school personnel; adopt alternative discipline policies (to include campus police); integrate social-emotional learning into curriculum; improve access to mental and behavioral health services
- More help: Amanda Merck, 210-562-6525, merck@uthscsa.edu

Compassion Fatigue and Burnout



“Never worry about numbers.

Help one person at a time, and
always start with the person
nearest you.”

-Mother Teresa



*Inspiring people to drive community change
for the health of Latino and all kids.*

www.salud-america.org



saludamerica@uthscsa.edu

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