

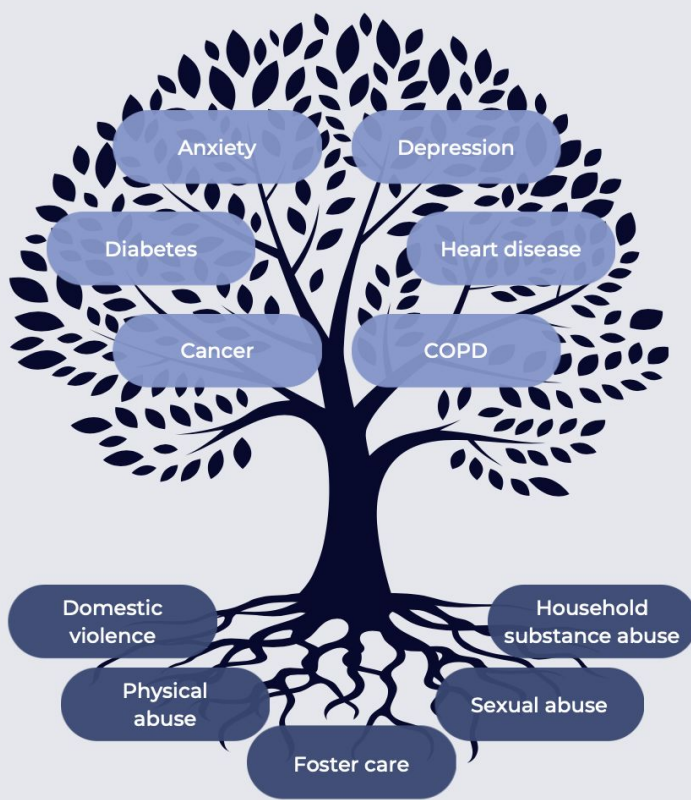


Adverse Childhood Experiences in Rhode Island: A Closer Look



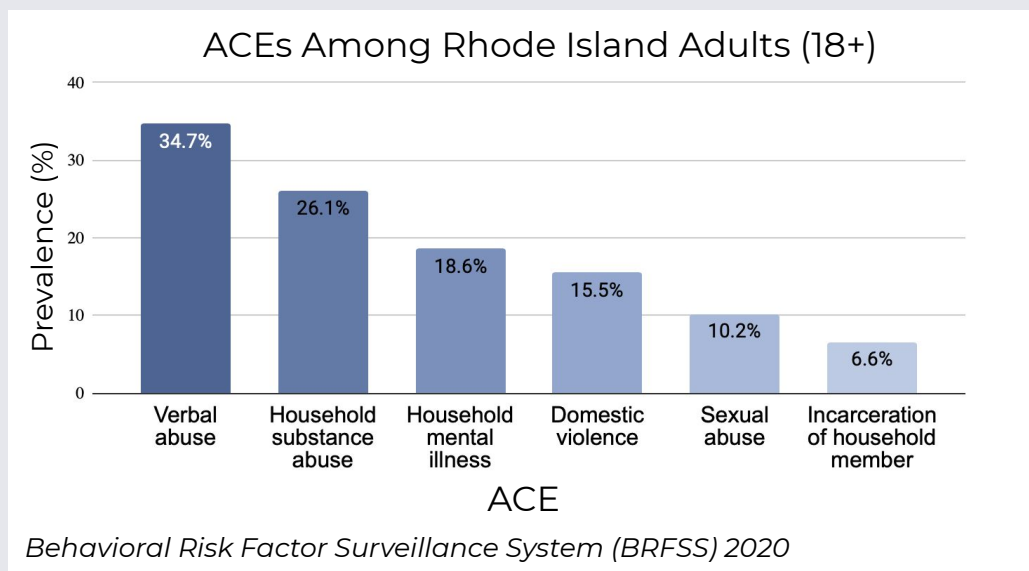
Defining the Problem: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Around 57.8% of US adults have experienced an adverse experience during their childhood.¹ When a child is exposed to adversity, the expression of their genes can change and put them at a higher risk for psychiatric disorders, chronic illness, and socioeconomic challenges later in life.² The epigenetic effects of trauma can be passed down through generations, taking the form of depressive symptoms, anxiety, altered stress response, and more.³



*“...childhood adversity literally gets **under our skin**, changing people in ways that can endure in their bodies for **decades**”.*⁴

-Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, MD, MPH, California Surgeon General

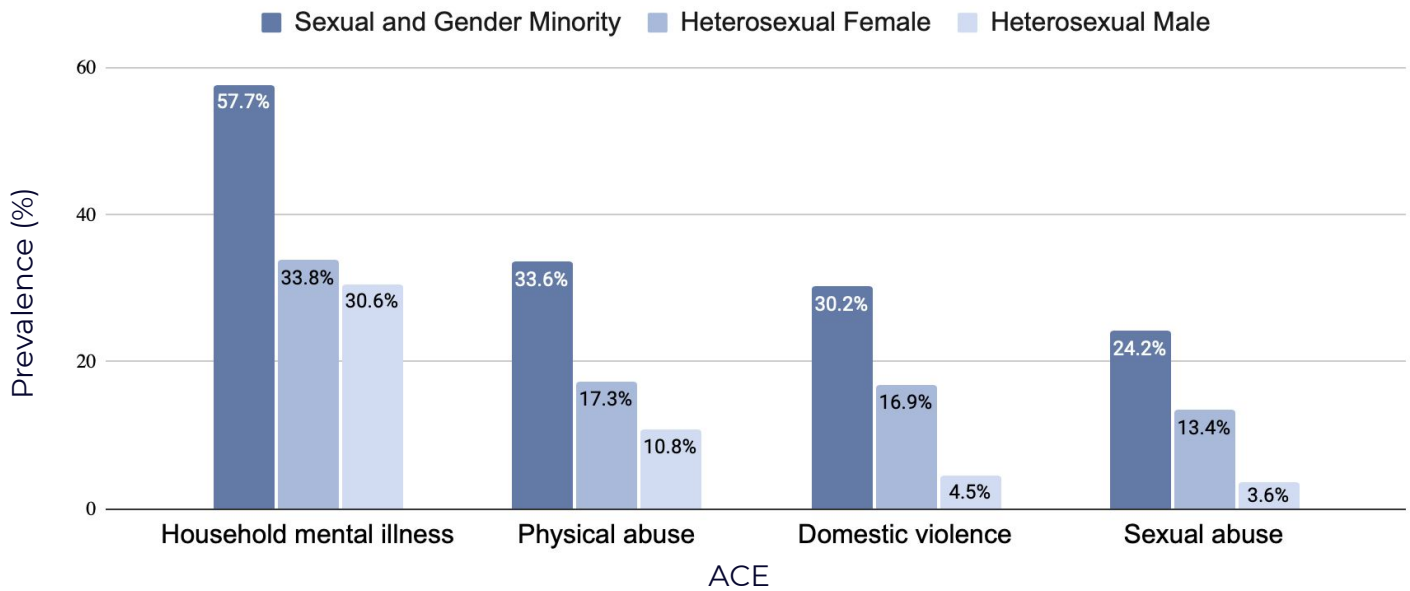


Almost 1 in 4 Rhode Island Adults Experienced Physical Abuse as a Child.

BRFSS 2020

ACEs Do Not Affect Everyone Equally

ACEs by Sexual and Gender Subgroups in Rhode Island Young Adults (18-25)



This sample may not be representative of all Rhode Island young adults.

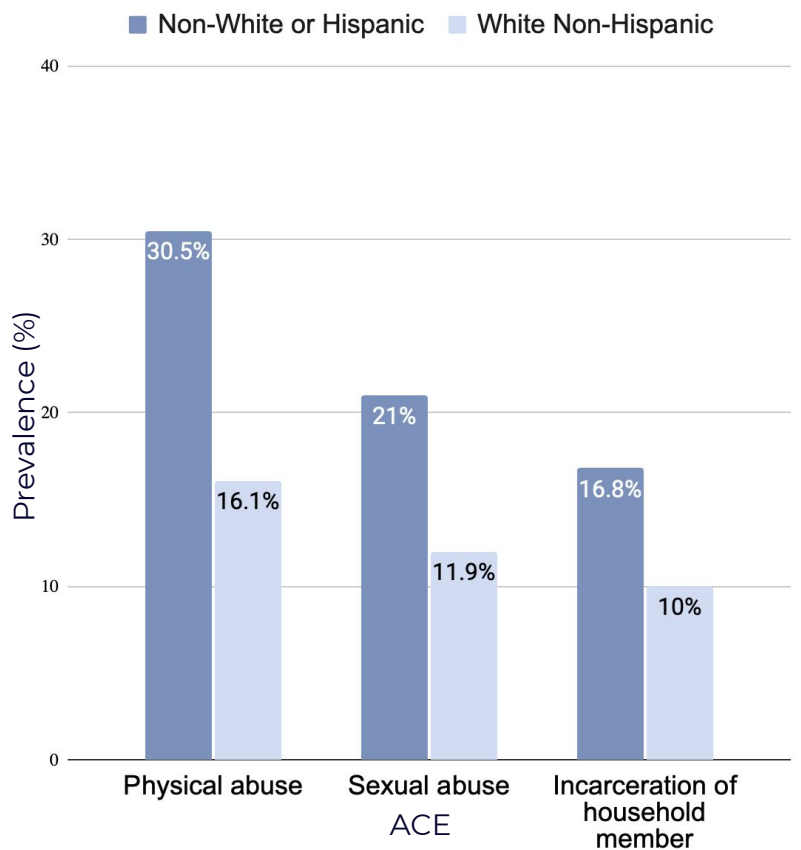
Rhode Island Young Adult Survey (RIYAS) 2020

A Disproportionate Burden

→ Sexual and gender minorities were more likely to experience household mental illness, domestic violence, physical abuse, and mental abuse.

→ Racial and ethnic minorities were more likely to have an incarcerated household member and experience physical and sexual abuse.

ACEs by Racial and Ethnic Subgroups in Rhode Island Young Adults (18-25)



This sample may not be representative of all Rhode Island young adults.

RIYAS 2020

Sexual and Gender Minorities (SGMs) were



as likely to experience sexual abuse as a child compared to heterosexual males.

RIYAS 2020

A Different Perspective: ACEs in Rhode Island Among Pregnant Women

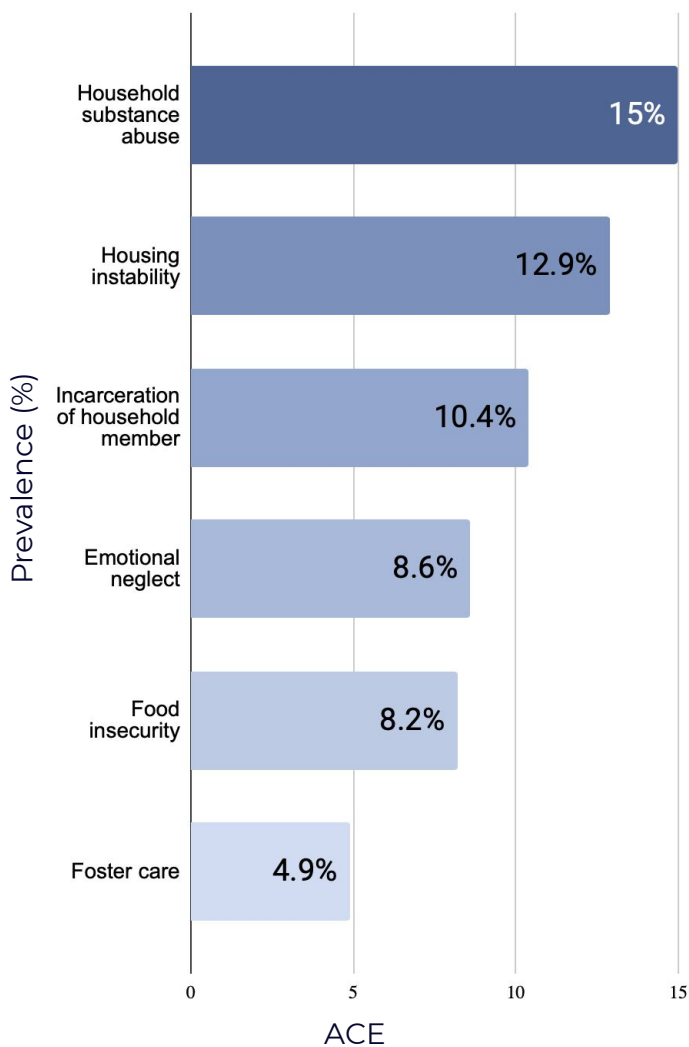
Rhode Island Women with Live Births

→ Racial and ethnic minority women were more likely than white women to experience ACEs.

→ White women were more likely during childhood to have lived with someone with a serious substance abuse problem.

→ Racial and ethnic minority women were significantly more likely to experience emotional neglect and food insecurity as children.

Prevalence of ACEs in Rhode Island Women with Live Births



PRAMS 2016-2019

More than



as many Black and Hispanic women reported food insecurity as white women.

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) 2016-2019

In Rhode Island, pregnant women with live births who have experienced ACEs were significantly more likely to:



Receive WIC during pregnancy



Have a preterm birth (<37 weeks)



Earn lower annual incomes



Receive less than a college education

What Can Be Done?

01	Support parents and caregivers⁴	Facilitate access to programs equipped to handle ACEs
02	Provide training in trauma-centered care⁴	Implement training programs on recognizing and addressing ACEs
03	Promote community awareness⁴	Increase public understanding of ACEs
04	Advance policies and practices that help children and families thrive⁴	Educate legislators about ACEs and opportunities for funding
05	Collect, analyze, and share data and findings from research and practice⁴	Support research, data collection, and data-sharing initiatives

BRFSS: The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System is population-based data of non-institutionalized adults (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

RIYAS: The Rhode Island Young Adult Survey is a large convenience sample of 18-25 year olds residing in Rhode Island.

PRAMS: The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System is population-based data of women with live births in Rhode Island (Rhode Island Department of Health/CDC).



Rhode Island Young Adult Survey

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2. Lang, J., McKie, J., Smith, H. et al. Adverse childhood experiences, epigenetics and telomere length variation in childhood and beyond: a systematic review of the literature. *Eur Child Adolesc Psychiatry* 29, 1329–1338 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00787-019-01329-1>
3. Franklin T. B., Russig H., Weiss I. C., Gräff J., Linder N., Michalon A., et al. (2010). Epigenetic transmission of the impact of early stress across generations. *Biol. Psychiatry* 68, 408–415. 10.1016/j.biopsych.2010.05.036
4. *Adverse Childhood Experiences: Opportunities to Prevent, Protect Against, and Heal from the Effects of ACEs in New Jersey*. NJ Funders ACEs Collaborative, July 2019.

Created by the State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) on behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH)

