

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Assessment

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) assessment consists of 10 questions that ask about various forms of childhood adversity. Each "Yes" answer is scored as 1 point, and the total score ranges from 0 to 10, with higher scores indicating a greater level of childhood adversity.

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? Or act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?

Yes No

2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? Or ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

Yes No

3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? Or attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?

Yes No

4. Did you often feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? Or your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?

Yes No

5. Did you often feel that you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had no one to protect you? Or your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?

Yes No

6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?

Yes No

7. Did your parents or adults in your home ever hit, punch, beat, or threaten to harm each other?
 Yes No
8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?
 Yes No
9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?
 Yes No
10. Did a household member go to prison?
 Yes No

Scoring:

The total score is simply the sum of "Yes" answers. A score of 4 or higher is often associated with a significantly higher risk for various health problems in adulthood, both mental and physical.

Developer Reference: Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V., Koss, M. P., & Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 14(4), 245–258. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0749-3797\(98\)00017-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0749-3797(98)00017-8)

The ACEs assessment is used widely in healthcare, public health, and psychology as a tool to help identify individuals who may be at higher risk due to early childhood trauma. However, it's important to note that it doesn't necessarily mean someone will face lifelong challenges or that they can't heal. Many factors—such as resilience, support systems, and intervention—can mitigate the effects of childhood adversity.