

## Project Overview

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences in a person's life that occur before the age of 18 and are remembered into adulthood. Exposure to conditions such as physical, sexual, or emotional abuse; alcohol and/or drug abuse in the home; parental or family separation; and domestic violence are considered to be adverse childhood experiences. Scientific research has demonstrated that the long-term negative impact of ACEs and toxic stress resulting from excessive activation of the stress system constitute a public health crisis.

In January 2021, the **California Department of Health Care Services**, in partnership with the **Office of the California Surgeon General**, awarded the **Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE)** a \$3,000,000 grant to build and strengthen a robust network of resources to respond to ACEs and toxic stress. SCOE will lead this multi-agency collaboration to implement the **Sacramento County ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care**.

This project provides the positive supports and strength-based approach required to prevent and address existing negative mental and physical outcomes related to ACEs and toxic stress.

## Project Background

Nearly 20 years ago, the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child at Harvard University introduced the term "toxic stress" to describe the effects of excessive stress on children's developing brains, immune systems, metabolic regulatory systems, and cardiovascular systems. ACEs often result in excessive activation of the stress response and cause toxic stress. Most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic and the reliance on distance learning underscores the need to develop, refine, and maintain trauma-informed networks of care to



mitigate the negative health impacts of ACEs and toxic stress related to the social and economic effects of the pandemic.

Without programs and prevention strategies that buffer the negative effects of toxic stress, children may experience life-long mental and physical health outcomes including changes in brain development, interference with learning, and delays in social-emotional development. Early identification and intervention and the utilization of proven strategies are key factors in mitigating the impact of ACEs.

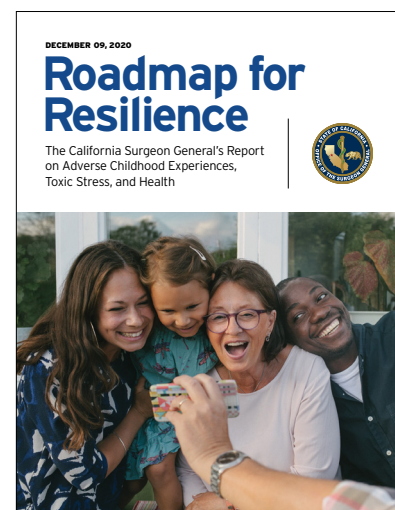


The Sacramento County ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care project is firmly rooted in the California Surgeon General (CA-OSG) Report, *Roadmap for Resilience: The California Surgeon General's Report on Adverse Childhood Experiences, Toxic Stress, and Health*. The *Roadmap for Resilience* provides a blueprint for advancing systemic reforms designed to raise awareness, reduce the impact of ACEs, and strengthen our response networks. The *Roadmap* "provides clear and equitable response solutions, models, and best practices to be replicated or tailored to serve community needs." ([acesaware.org/blog](https://acesaware.org/blog), January 27, 2021).

## Project Goals

The **Sacramento County ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care Collaborative** will achieve the following outcomes:

- Building on recommendations from the Surgeon General's *Roadmap for Resilience*, increase or enhance the availability of resources and supports, to prevent or mitigate toxic stress for families, especially those in Sacramento County's most vulnerable communities.
- Establish and utilize a collaboratively developed Sacramento County ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care aligned with the ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care and the California Surgeon General's *Roadmap for Resilience*.
- Refine and implement the bi-directional referral process and enhance communication procedures between and among all support providers to connect families with appropriate supports and services in a timely manner.
- Provide additional access to trauma-informed training in Sacramento County for community agencies, educators, early learning professionals and others working directly with families.



## Project Summary

The Sacramento County ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care will enhance and expand Sacramento County's existing collaboration between partners. It will also develop, refine, and formalize a robust Trauma-Informed Network of Care which will create, augment, strengthen, and sustain formal connections and shared resources in the community between Medi-Cal providers and community-based health and social supports that meet the needs of children, adults, and families. This project will create a seamless screening, referral, and response process to support families in mitigating toxic stress and preventing further ACEs.

### Key Activities:

- Convene the Sacramento County ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care Collaborative.
- Align Sacramento County's Network of Care with the ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care and *Roadmap for Resilience*.
- Develop a map of trauma-informed and preventative resources in the County.
- Pilot and utilize Enhanced Family Navigation and referral system.
- Provide trauma-informed trainings and other preventative supports to:
  - families experiencing or at high risk of ACEs;
  - health care providers; and
  - community agencies who work directly with families.
- Implement the use of a bi-directional, online referral platform.







To augment, strengthen, and sustain formal connections and shared resources in the community, the following partners will coordinate efforts to create a seamless screening, referral, and response process to support children, adults, and families.

## Early Childhood & Education Partners

- First 5 Sacramento
- SCOE Court & Community Schools
- SCOE Early Learning Department
- SCOE Expanded Learning Programs
- SCOE Foster Youth & Homeless Services
- SCOE Special Education Department
- SCOE School Based Mental Health & Wellness

## Social Services & Community Partners

- 211
- Resilient Sacramento
- Sacramento County Behavioral Health
- Sacramento Food Bank
- Sierra Health Foundation/Black Child Legacy Campaign
- Stanford Sierra Youth and Families
- Warmline Family Resource Center

## Public Health & Healthcare Partners

- Blue Shield of California
- Health Net
- Kaiser Permanente
- River City Medical Group
- Sacramento County Public Health
- Sutter Health
- UC Davis Department of Pediatrics
- Wellspace Health

## Evaluation

- Conduct an initial assessment of the community using the Trauma-Informed Network of Care Continuum of Integration Assessment Tool and utilize the results of the Assessment Tool to inform the work of the Network.
- Utilize the ACEs Aware Trauma-Informed Network of Care Continuum Assessment to measure progress.
- Prepare a report describing the planning efforts and implementation of a collaborative leadership and accountability structure across the Network of Care, including Medi-Cal providers.
- Prepare interim reports and sustainability plan (6-month, 12-month, and final report).

### For More Information

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