

Training Supervisor Guide: ACEs Online Course

Overview

This course focuses on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) which are traumatic events in childhood that may have long lasting effects. These experiences can impact an individual's physical and mental health for one's entire life and influence how they interact with others. This online course gives staff an overview of ACE research, along with tools to support the resilience of participants and tools for self-care.

Guidance for Training Supervisors

- This online course contains information and discussions which may cause people to remember difficult things about their personal lives or professional experiences. As with other potentially sensitive subjects refer staff to available mental health resources.
- Embedded in this course are two (2) questionnaires—an ACEs measurement tool and a resiliency measurement tool. The information collected in this questionnaire is not stored, accessed or shared by any organizations, or employees of Oregon's WIC program at the state or local agency level. These are private surveys intended to give employees an individualized overview of their own ACE and resiliency scores. Please share this information with your staff before they start the course.
- Both measurement tools are available at the end of this document. Note: if you review this module as a group, please print a copy of the ACEs and resiliency questionnaires for each staff member to fill out individually and privately.
- This online course is uploaded onto iLearn in two parts:
 1. OHA - PHD – Online: WIC Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
 2. OHA - PHD – Online: WIC ACEs Post-test
- As with all WIC modules or online courses, staff must pass the post-test with a score of 90% or greater.

Course Objectives

1. Recognize the impact of ACEs on participant behaviors and health outcomes.
2. Use active listening skills to demonstrate empathy and avoid judgement.
3. Support participants with tools to improve resiliency and increase protective factors against ACEs.
4. Identify strategies for self-care to improve job performance and staff resilience.

Course Overview:

1. Module 1: Adverse Childhood Experiences Introduction
2. Module 2: Effects of ACEs
3. Module 3: ACEs and Resilience
4. Module 4: Trauma Informed Care
5. Module 5: More Ways You Can Help
6. Module 6: Practice Scenarios

Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire¹

Prior to your 18th birthday:

	Question	No	Yes
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?		
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?		
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?		
4.	Did you often or very 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?		
5.	Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and 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?		
6.	Were your parents ever separated or divorced?		
7.	Was your mother or stepmother: Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? OR Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? OR Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?		
8.	Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?		
9.	Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?		
10.	Did a household member go to prison?		
	Now add up your "Yes" answers: __ This is your ACE score		

¹ Credit for this modified ACEs questionnaire: [Danny DeBelius/NPR](#)

ACEs Resilience Questionnaire

	Question	Definitely true	Probably true	Not sure	Probably not true	Definitely not true
1.	I believe that my mother loved me when I was little.					
2.	I believe that my father loved me when I was little.					
3.	When I was little, other people helped my mother and father take care of me and they seemed to love me.					
4.	I've heard that when I was an infant someone in my family enjoyed playing with me, and I enjoyed it, too.					
5.	When I was a child, there were relatives in my family who made me feel better if I was sad or worried.					
6.	When I was a child, neighbors or my friends' parents seemed to like me.					
7.	When I was a child, teachers, coaches, youth leaders or ministers were there to help me.					
8.	Someone in my family cared about how I was doing in school.					
9.	My family, neighbors and friends talked often about making our lives better.					
10.	We had rules in our house and were expected to keep them.					
11.	When I felt really bad, I could almost always find someone I trusted to talk to.					
12.	As a youth, people noticed that I was capable and could get things done.					
13.	I was independent and a go-getter.					
14.	I believed that life is what you make it.					

How many of the 14 were circled "Definitely True" or "Probably True"? _____

Note: The factors labeled under "Definitely or Probably True" are referred to as protective factors.
Of these circled, how many are still true for me? _____

Adverse Childhood Experiences Course Posttest

1. Which of the following statements are true? Select ALL that apply.
 - a. Participants in the home visiting program are unlikely to have experienced ACEs.
 - b. **The higher the ACE score, the more likely it affects someone's health.**
 - c. **ACEs happen in clusters. If someone has one ACE, it's likely they have at least one more ACE.**
 - d. ACEs have strong effects on mental health but not on physical health.
 - e. **Risky behaviors such as using alcohol may be ways of temporarily coping with unresolved trauma.**
2. How do ACEs affect children and adolescents? Select ALL that apply.
 - a. **ACEs can cause children to have trouble trusting adults.**
 - b. **Adolescents who experienced ACEs are more likely to drink and smoke.**
 - c. ACEs reduce development in the lower part of the brain where survival instincts are controlled.
 - d. Once children reach adolescence, their brains stop growing. Damage from ACEs becomes irreversible after childhood.
 - e. **ACEs are linked to learning and behavioral problems in children.**
3. Which of the following is an open-ended question?
 - a. You aren't being abused, are you?
 - b. **How do you feel about your safety in your relationship?**
 - c. Are you being abused by your partner?
 - d. Do you feel safe in your home?
4. A participant who is safe in her current relationship sometimes recalls her experience of childhood sexual abuse. What would be a helpful response from a WIC counselor or Home Visitor?
 - a. No one can change the past. It's time to put it behind you.
 - b. It's important to focus on the current situation and not dwell on past experiences.
 - c. I can see that talking about this is upsetting you, so let's talk about something else instead.
 - d. **Recovery from trauma is a process. It takes time, often years.**
5. Anna is a mom in an abusive relationship. She confides in you, "I'm worried I've really messed up my kids. My oldest has so much trouble at school. What if I've ruined their lives forever?" What response is most appropriate according to the principles of trauma-informed care?
 - a. **You can help change your children's lives. Kids are resilient. They can thrive with support even after bad experiences. Would you like to hear about some ways you can help them?**
 - b. I know this is hard to talk about. I'm going to make a call for you to a local group that provides support to women in your situation.
 - c. Traumatic experiences can change how children's brains grow and develop. Exposure to violence can make it harder to learn. That's probably why your oldest is having trouble at school.
 - d. If you really loved your kids, you'd move out and leave this bad relationship.

6. Which of the following statements are examples of creating a safe environment as part of trauma-informed care? Check ALL that apply.
- Lauren calmly explains the process and expectations at the beginning of her visit.**
 - Julia firmly maintains her role as the expert in the relationship and is clear that her views on parenting are better than the participant's opinions.
 - Alex asks permission before offering a referral to a participant.**
 - Destiny works to earn the trust of her participants. She is patient when they are wary of people in position of authority.**
7. Which of these factors provides protection against ACEs and can improve resilience? Check ALL that apply.
- Nurturing relationships with adults**
 - Solving problems alone, without support
 - Social and community connections**
 - Attentive parenting**
 - Avoiding excessive attention to the child to prevent "spoiling"
 - Understanding child development**
 - Knowledge of effective parenting strategies**
8. A participant tells you, "I feel kind of guilty that my kids always see me and my boyfriend fighting. When he's not around, I let the kids get away with almost anything. I feel like I owe it to them for all the times when things are bad." What is the most appropriate response, according to the principles explained in the course?
- Many moms feel the way you do. Did you know that being consistent with rules actually helps protect your kids? They'll feel safer if they know what to expect all the time.**
 - That's understandable. No mom is perfect.
 - You should be consistent with your rules. Consistent, fair discipline provides protection against ACEs.
 - You're helping your children become stronger by letting them get away with bad behavior because you feel guilty about the fighting.
9. What is the most appropriate way to offer a warm referral to participant, according to the principles of trauma-informed care?
- I can see that you're really struggling. You should really call this local support group for help. Many moms have found this group helpful.
 - If you really loved your kids, you'd call this local support group and get yourself some help.
 - I know this is hard to talk about. I'll give you the number for a local support group so you can get some more help.
 - There's a program here in town that many moms have found helpful. I could call them for you to help you get started. Would that be OK?**
10. Which of these statements is true?
- Secondary trauma is very rare among people who work with trauma survivors.
 - Empathy is a liability when working with trauma survivors and should be avoided.
 - Self-care strategies such as engaging in wellness activities are important to reduce the effects of secondary trauma for WIC Counselors and Home Visitors.**
 - Only people who directly experience trauma are at risk. Providers who help trauma survivors don't need any help.

All WIC Staff must pass this quiz with 90% or above. 90% is 9/10 questions.