



Defense Health Agency (DHA) Clinical Communities Speaker Series

APR 2023 CCSS: Targeted Interventions Focused on the Whole Health and Wellbeing of the Military Child

S03: Promoting Positive Childhood Experiences in Military Children

Resource List

The study [Parental warmth and flourishing in mid-life](#) (2019) examined the longitudinal association between parental warmth and offspring flourishing in mid-life. The results suggest that parental warmth was positively associated with the continuous score of flourishing. The association was not specific to any particular component (emotional, psychological, or social well-being) or subdomain of flourishing. Parental warmth was also inversely associated with several adverse health behavior outcomes such as drug use and smoking. Parental warmth in childhood may help promote offspring functioning across multiple domains of well-being in mid-life. These findings help to strengthen the call for a public health focus on the importance of parenting for outcomes beyond childhood and well into adulthood and suggest the value of targeting parenting practices for prevention and intervention strategies to improve population health and well-being.

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (2022) noted that children and families thrive when they have access to safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments. These relationships and environments are essential to creating positive childhood experiences and preventing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Some adversity and stress exposure are normal and can even be helpful so that children can learn how to react to future challenges. However, if children are repeatedly exposed to adversities like abuse and neglect and unstable relationships or environments, they may experience increased toxic stress. Everyone can help prevent ACEs and promote positive childhood experiences by supporting children and families where you live and work.

The [World Health Organization](#) (2021) estimated that in Europe and North America, a 10% reduction in adverse childhood experiences could equate to annual savings of 3 million Disability Adjusted Life Years or US\$ 105 billion.

The [National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\)](#) (2023) presented evidence-based information developed by the Child and Family Center at the University of Oregon. The authors highlighted parenting skills that are important in preventing the initiation and progression of drug use among youth. The publication also provides access to video clips that can help others practice positive parenting skills.

Numerous studies over the past two decades have found a link between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and worse adult health outcomes. Less well understood is how advantageous childhood experiences (counter-ACEs) may lead to better adult health, especially in the presence of adversity. The article, [ACEs and counter-ACEs: How positive and negative childhood experiences influence adult health](#) (2019) concluded that corresponding to the Compensatory Model of Resiliency Theory, higher counter-ACEs scores were associated with improved adult health and that counter-ACEs neutralized the negative impact of ACEs on adult health. Contrary to the Protective Factors Model, there was a stronger relationship between ACEs and worse adult health among those with above average counter-ACEs scores compared to those with below average counter-ACEs scores. Consistent with the Challenge Model, counter-ACEs had a reduced positive effect on adult health among those with four or more ACEs compared to those with fewer than four ACEs.



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