

# Adverse Childhood Experiences and Instability Related to Early Care and Education

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## Key issue

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) pose a serious threat to child & family well-being.

## Driving Question

How can Early Care and Education (ECE) help to build resilience for families facing adversity?



# Preview of Findings!

## 1) Opportunity

Families facing ACEs use ECE, often with help of subsidies, and in centers.

## 2) Barrier

They experience more instability in ECE, and also are more likely to miss or quit work or school due to child care problems.



**Key issue:** Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) pose a serious threat to child & family well-being.

**ACEs:** abuse, neglect, family violence, parental mental illness and substance abuse, incarceration, neglect, and loss of parent.

**Linked to:**

- Adult physical and mental health problems
- Child problems with behavior, academics, health
- Instability at home: financial, housing, routines

Burke et al., 2011; Dong et al., 2005; Dupere et al., 2015; Felitti et al., 1998; Jimenez et al., 2016; Kendler et al., 2013; Marie-Mitchell & O'Connor, 2013; Neger & Prinz, 2015; Smith & Wilson, 2016.

## Driving Question

**How can Early Care and Education (ECE) help to build resilience for families facing adversity?**

ECE is linked with outcomes for families facing ACEs.

Efforts to strengthen ECE for families facing ACEs.

(See Klein, 2016 for a review)

Success may hinge on sustained connection with families.

- Building trust takes time.
- Relationships are key (e.g., Lipscomb et al., 2014).

## Yet, instability may pose a barrier.

**ACES are linked with instability at home** (Dong et al., 2005; Dunn et al., 2002; Dupere et al., 2015; Kendler et al., 2013; Neger&Prinz, 2015; Smith & Wilson, 2016).

Families with irregular work schedules, long hours, and/or multiple jobs often have unstable “patchworks” of ECE (Scott et al., 2005)



## Research Question

*Do families with more ACEs experience more instability related to ECE?*

### Indicators of instability:

1. multiple ECE arrangements
2. changes in ECE over time
3. unreliability in ECE that creates disruptions in work/school





# Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Study

- Longitudinal study of about 5,000 children born in large cities in the U.S. 1998-2000
- Oversampled unmarried mothers
- Baseline & 3-year follow-up



## Maternal demographics

- Average age 25.28 yrs.
- Education: 65% high school, 24% some college, 11% degree
- 48% Black, 27% Hispanic, 21% White
- Average income/poverty ratio = 1.94 (below 200% fpl)



# Measurement of ACEs (at 3 years)

**7 indicators, each coded 0 = no, 1 = yes** (Jiminez et al., 2016).

- ***Child physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect:*** Parent-Child Conflict Tactic Scale (CTS-PC; Straus, et al., 1998).
- ***Mother treated violently*** by child's father or current partner (e.g., slapping, kicking, or sexual violence).
- ***Parental substance abuse.*** Mom, child's father, or mother's current partner had problems from drinking or substance use.
- ***Maternal mental illness.*** Depressive symptoms on Composite International Diagnostic Interview – Short Form (CIDI-SF) Section A (Kessler et al. 1998).
- ***Criminal household member.*** Mom, child's father or mother's current partner spent time in jail in past 2 years.

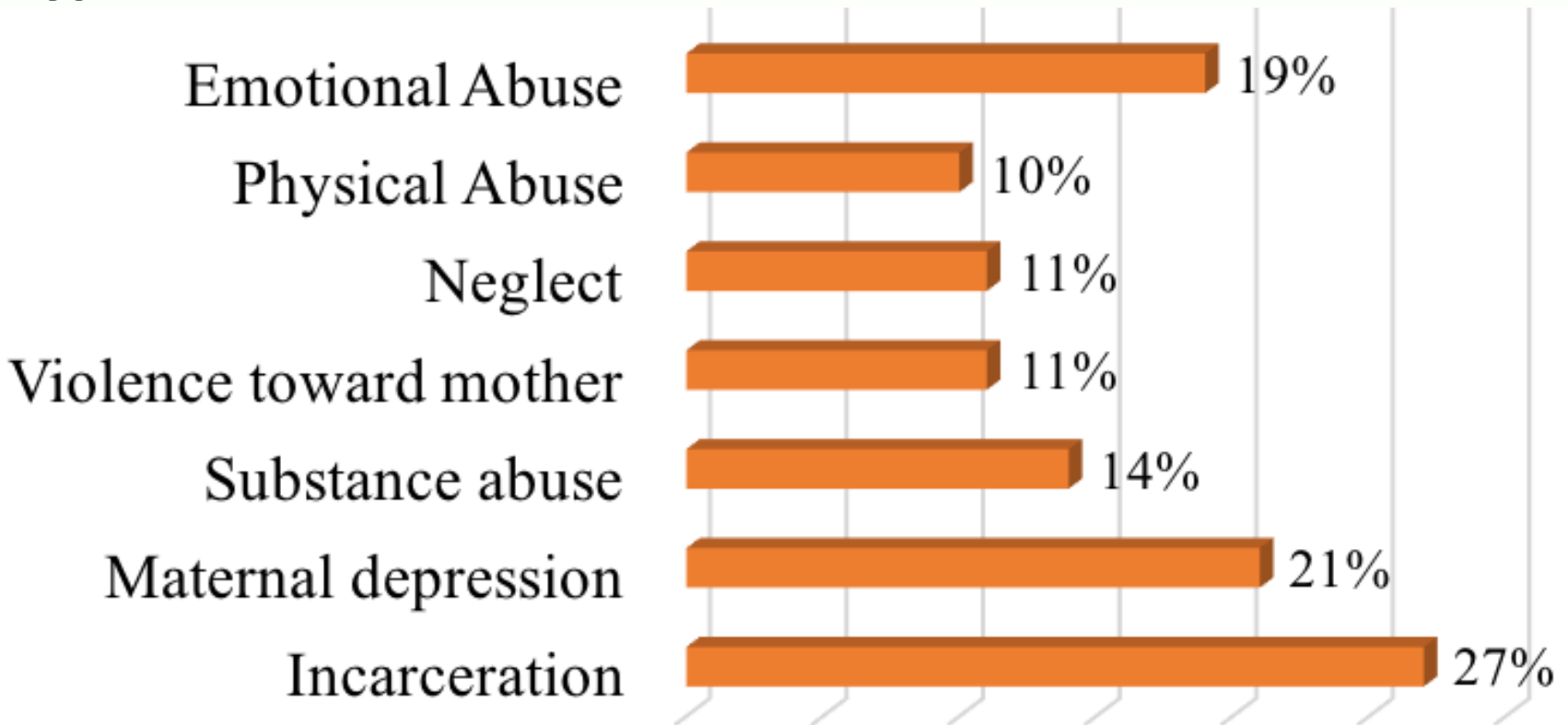
# Findings



## ACES at age 3 years

**Total # ACEs:** 0 (37%), 1 (29%), 2 (18%), 3 or more (16%)

### Types:



## ECE at 3 years

**59% attended out of home care. Average of 31 hours/week**

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Center	51%
Family child care	14%
Relative	42%

## Indicators of Instability

<b># current care arrangements</b>	<b>1.17</b>
# changes in care since child's first birthday	0.81
<b># times had to make special arrangements past mo.</b>	<b>0.61</b>
# times missed school/work because care fell through past month	0.42
<b>Quit work/school due to child care problems in the past 2 years.</b>	<b>13%</b>

## Opportunity:

Families facing ACEs use ECE, often with help of subsidies, and in centers

Three-year old children with more ACES had higher rates of:

- out-of-home care (OR =1.11,  $p < .01$ )
- eligibility for subsidy (OR =1.18,  $p < .01$ )
- center-based care (OR =1.09,  $p < .05$ ).



They also attended more hours per week of care ( $\beta = .08$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

## **Barrier:**

**Families in which children experience more ACEs have more instability related to ECE**

### **Instability in ECE**

- More arrangements ( $\beta = .10, p < .05$ )
- More changes since child's 1st birthday ( $\beta = .14, p < .01$ )
- More special arrangements in the past month ( $\beta = .08, p < .01$ ).

### **Life interruptions due to care problems/unreliability**

- Missed work or school b/c child care fell through ( $\beta = .07, p < .05$ ).
- Quit work or school due to care problems (OR = 1.36,  $p < .01$ )

## **Specific ACEs driving these associations:**

Violence toward mother, maternal depression, neglect

## Back to the Driving Question

**How can Early Care and Education (ECE) help to build resilience for families facing adversity?**

Great potential!

Families use ECE.

ECE is linked with outcomes.

Efforts to strengthen ECE are underway.

**Instability presents a barrier.**

ACEs are linked with:

- instability in ECE.
- life interruptions due to ECE problems.





## Future Research

**How can Early Care and Education (ECE) help to build resilience for families facing adversity?**

What are the key child care “problems” that interrupt work/school lives for these families? What helps to reduce these?



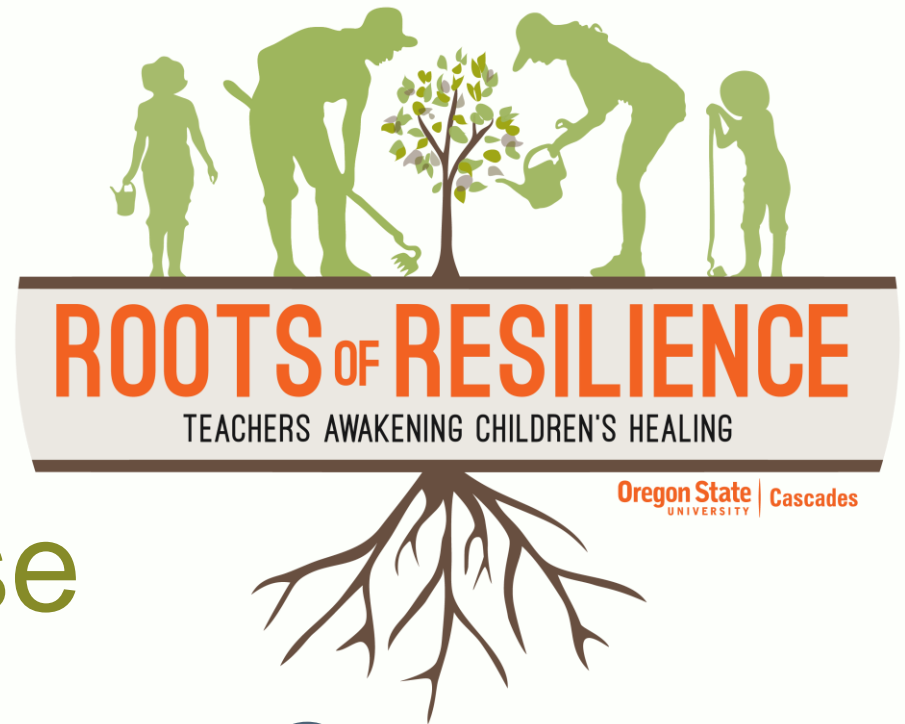
What supports do teachers/providers most need?

How can teachers/providers support families?

What do children facing ACEs most need from teachers/ providers?

## Purpose

To help early childhood teachers promote resilience for children impacted by trauma



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## Online Course

# Video-Based Coaching

You don't have to know exactly what's going on ...  
or be a therapist to help a child develop resilience.