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Understanding adverse childhood experiences in an Ontario context

Public Health Ontario Grand Rounds
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DISCLOSURES

- None of the presenters at this session have received financial support or in-kind support from a commercial sponsor.
- None of the presenters have potential conflicts of interest to declare.

Poll Question

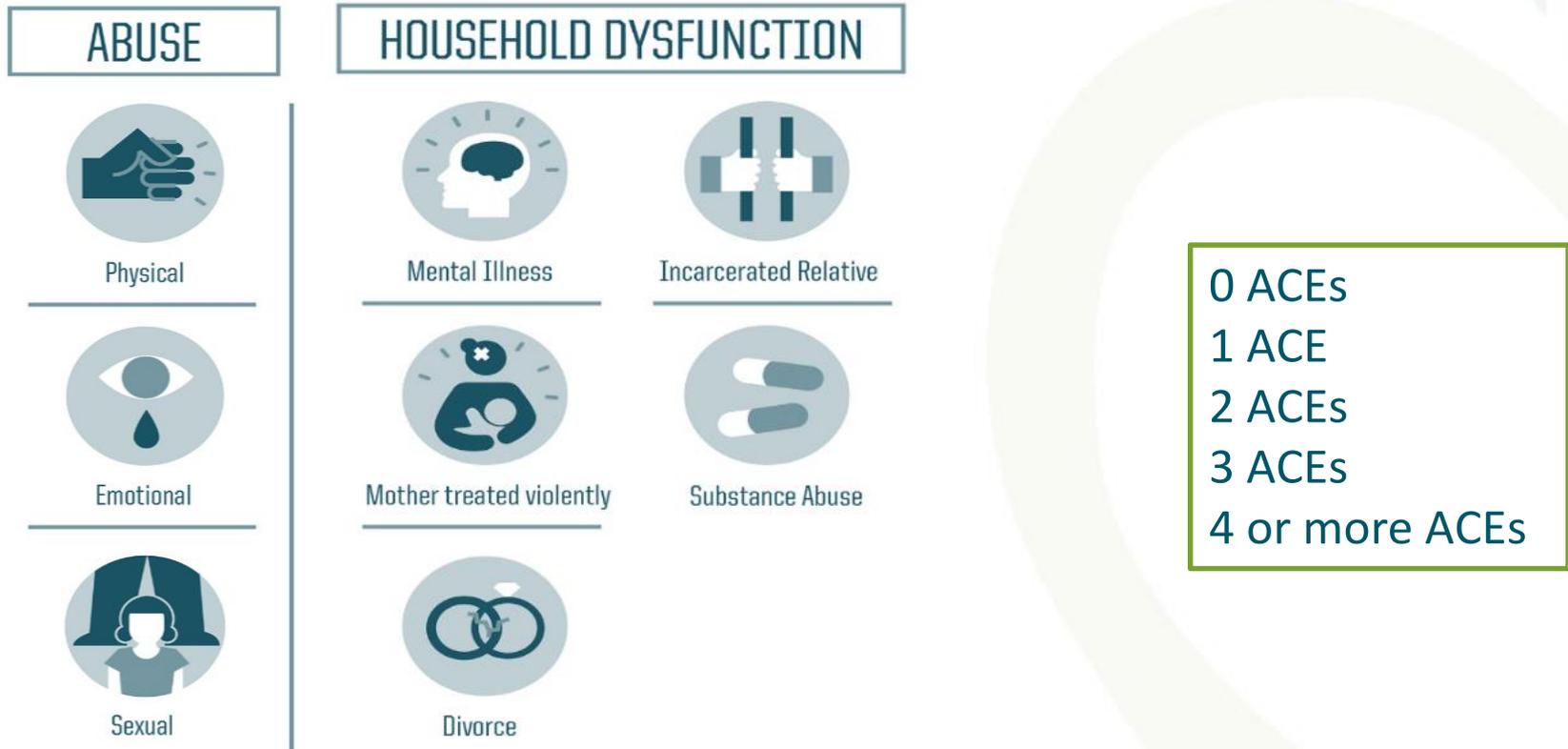
How familiar are you with the science of adverse childhood experiences?

- a) Not at all familiar
- b) Slightly familiar
- c) Somewhat familiar
- d) Moderately familiar
- e) Extremely familiar

Presentation Outline

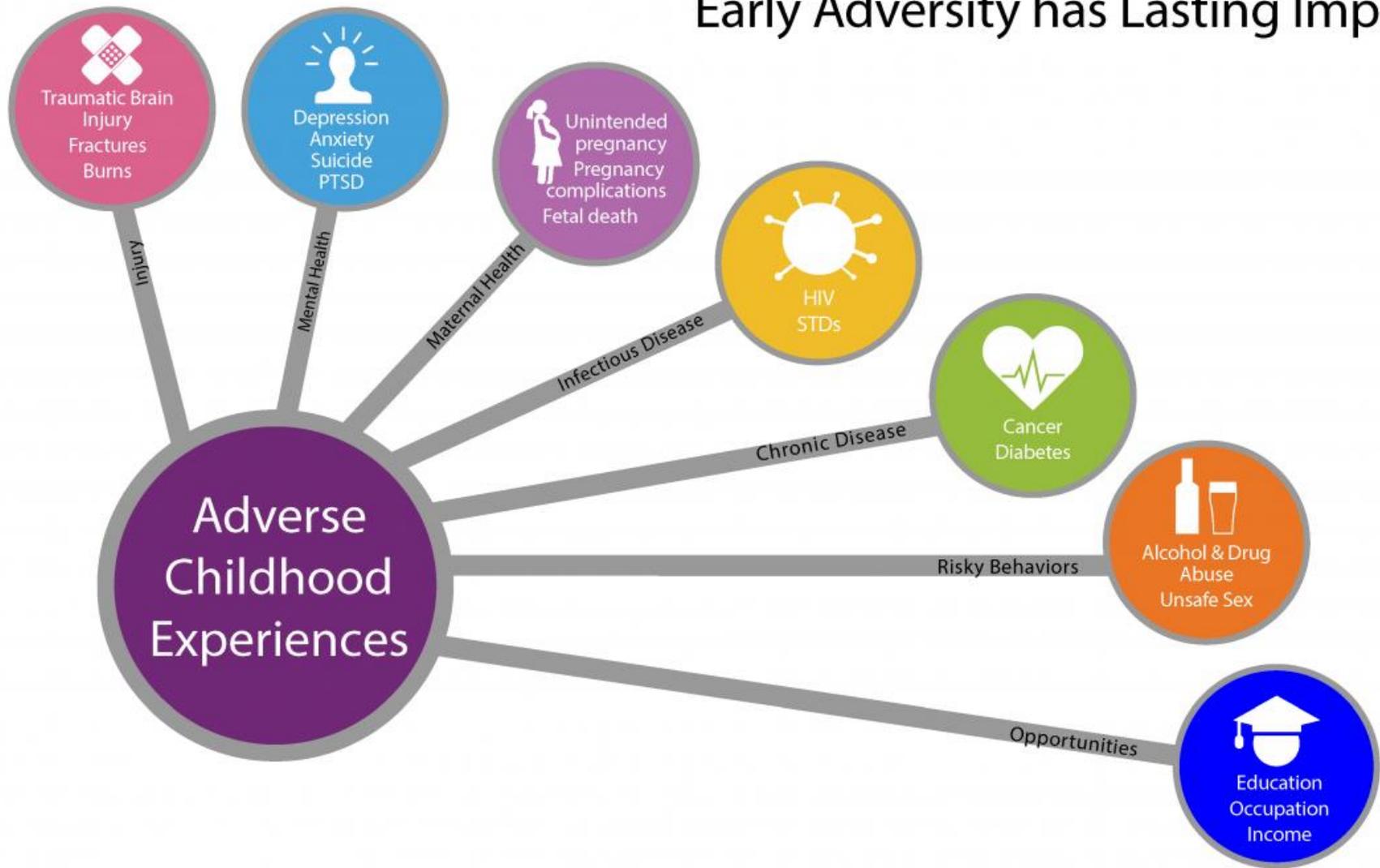
- What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?
- The ACEs Coalition of Guelph and Wellington
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Childhood Experiences Survey
- Key Messages and Next Steps

Adverse Childhood Experiences



Adapted from: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Infographic: The truth about ACEs [Internet]. Princeton, New Jersey; 2017 [cited 2017 May 16]. Available from: <http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/infographics/the-truth-about-aces.html>

Early Adversity has Lasting Impacts



Adapted from: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of violence Prevention [Internet]; 2019 [cited 2019 Jan 20]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/acestudy/ace-graphics.html>

Principles for Sharing ACEs Information

- ACEs are biology, not destiny
- ACEs are universal
- ACEs intersect with other life experiences and conditions
- ACEs intersect with systemic discrimination and oppression
- There are resources available
- Systems can have positive and negative impacts



Adverse Childhood Experiences Coalition

Vision: A resilient community that prevents and reduces the effects of ACEs

Partners:

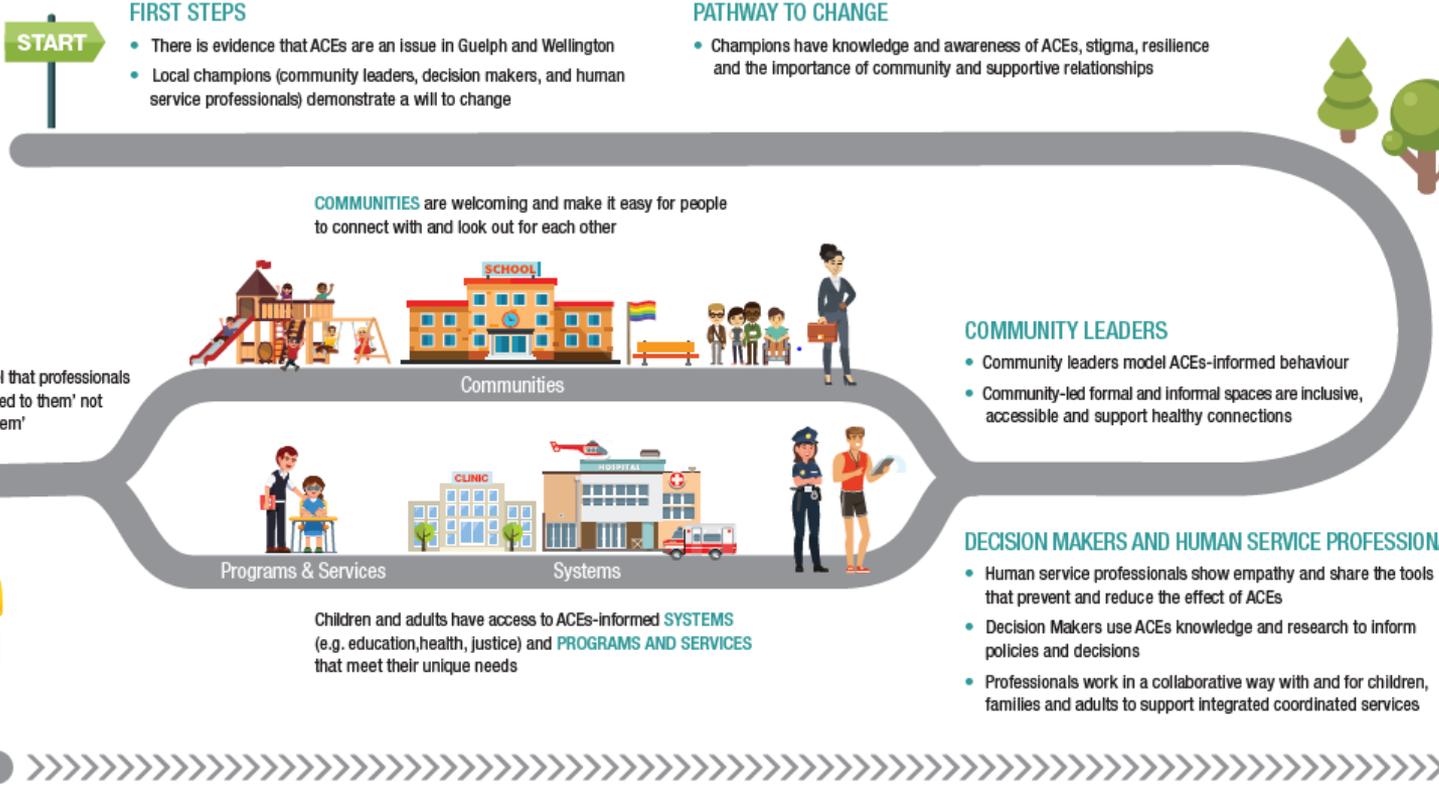
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- County of Wellington Children's Early Years Division
- Family & Children's Service of Guelph and Wellington
- Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington
- Guelph Community Health Centre
- Guelph Family Health Team
- Guelph Neighbourhood Support Coalition
- Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis
- Shelldale Family Gateway
- Toward Common Ground
- Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health



WWW.ACESCOALITION.CA

THEORY OF CHANGE

VISION: A resilient community that prevents and reduces the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)



START

FIRST STEPS

- There is evidence that ACEs are an issue in Guelph and Wellington
- Local champions (community leaders, decision makers, and human service professionals) demonstrate a will to change

PATHWAY TO CHANGE

- Champions have knowledge and awareness of ACEs, stigma, resilience and the importance of community and supportive relationships

COMMUNITIES are welcoming and make it easy for people to connect with and look out for each other



Communities

COMMUNITY LEADERS

- Community leaders model ACEs-informed behaviour
- Community-led formal and informal spaces are inclusive, accessible and support healthy connections

Children and adults feel that professionals focus on 'what happened to them' not 'what is wrong with them'

Programs & Services

Systems



DECISION MAKERS AND HUMAN SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

- Human service professionals show empathy and share the tools that prevent and reduce the effect of ACEs
- Decision Makers use ACEs knowledge and research to inform policies and decisions
- Professionals work in a collaborative way with and for children, families and adults to support integrated coordinated services

Children and adults have access to ACEs-informed **SYSTEMS** (e.g. education, health, justice) and **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES** that meet their unique needs

OUTCOMES

- Adults understand their role in developing protective factors in children's lives
- Children and their parents or primary caregivers have protective factors to **PREVENT** ACEs



- Children and adults have protective factors (e.g. supportive relationships and effective coping skills) that **REDUCE** the effects of ACEs
- Families have knowledge and skills to create a nurturing and health environment for their children
- Children and adults have positive relationships and connections in their naturally-occurring networks



- Children and adults feel a sense of safety
- Children and adults have nurturing and supportive relationships they can rely on
- Children and adults have a sense of belonging

Questions or Comments? Contact us at GWACEsCoalition@gmail.com

Collect Impact - Collective Action

Current initiatives from the ACEs Coalition:

- Population health research
- Training modules (online and in-person) for practitioners
- Toolkit for local champions
- *Mentally Healthy School* Pilot Project
- Website development (www.acescoalition.ca)
- Resources targeting parents



BE PART OF OUR

CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES SURVEY

Experiences from your childhood shape your health today. Tell us about yours.

WDGPUBLICHEALTH.CA/CHILDHOOD

Survey Purpose

1. Examine the prevalence and distribution of ACEs in WDG in order to inform future program priorities and planning
2. Examine differences in ACE distribution among priority populations/socio-demographic variables in order to inform potential targeted interventions
3. Support the collective impact activities of the Guelph-Wellington ACEs Coalition and other community groups
4. Raise awareness about ACEs in the general population of WDG
5. Support public health's work within a broader health system

Survey Outline

Format:

- Online (through Qualtrics)

Target Audience:

- Adults in WDG (18+)

Recruitment:

- WDG Public Health website
- Postcards sent out through community partners
- Social media

Survey Content

Section 1

- Consent and inclusion criteria

Section 2

- ACEs Tool

Section 3

- Resilience Tool

Section 4

- Demographics

Section 5

- Health Outcomes and Behaviours

Childhood Experiences Survey

RESULTS



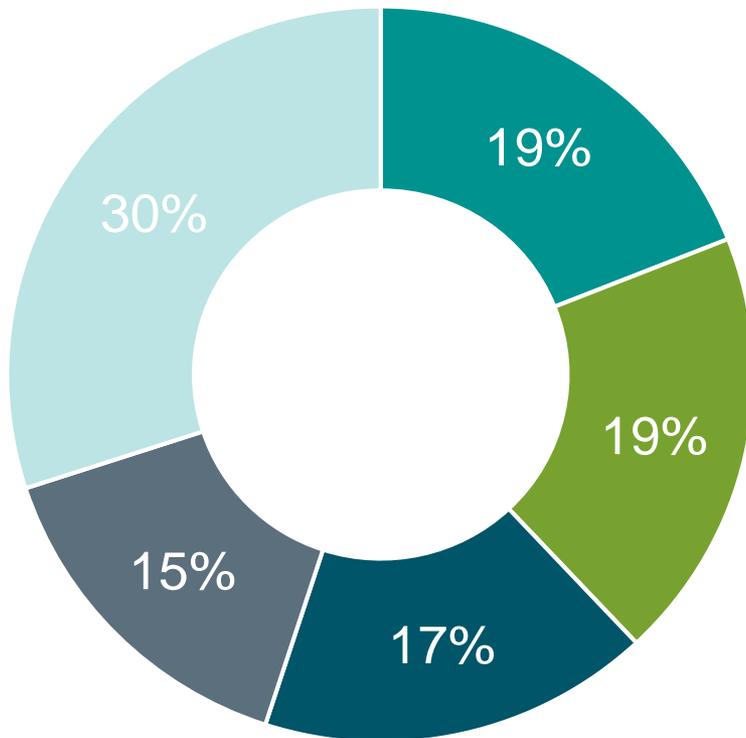
Who participated in the survey?

990 participants

- Participants ranged from 18 to 87 years of age
 - 40% 18-34 years of age vs. 31% 15-34 in WDG
- Female
 - 75% vs. 51% in WDG
- Highly educated
 - 76% post-secondary degree or diploma vs. 67% in WDG
- Middle to low income
 - 36% with a household income \$80,000+ vs. 51% in WDG
- Heterosexual (83%)
- Born in Canada
 - 85% vs. 83% in WDG

ACEs Score

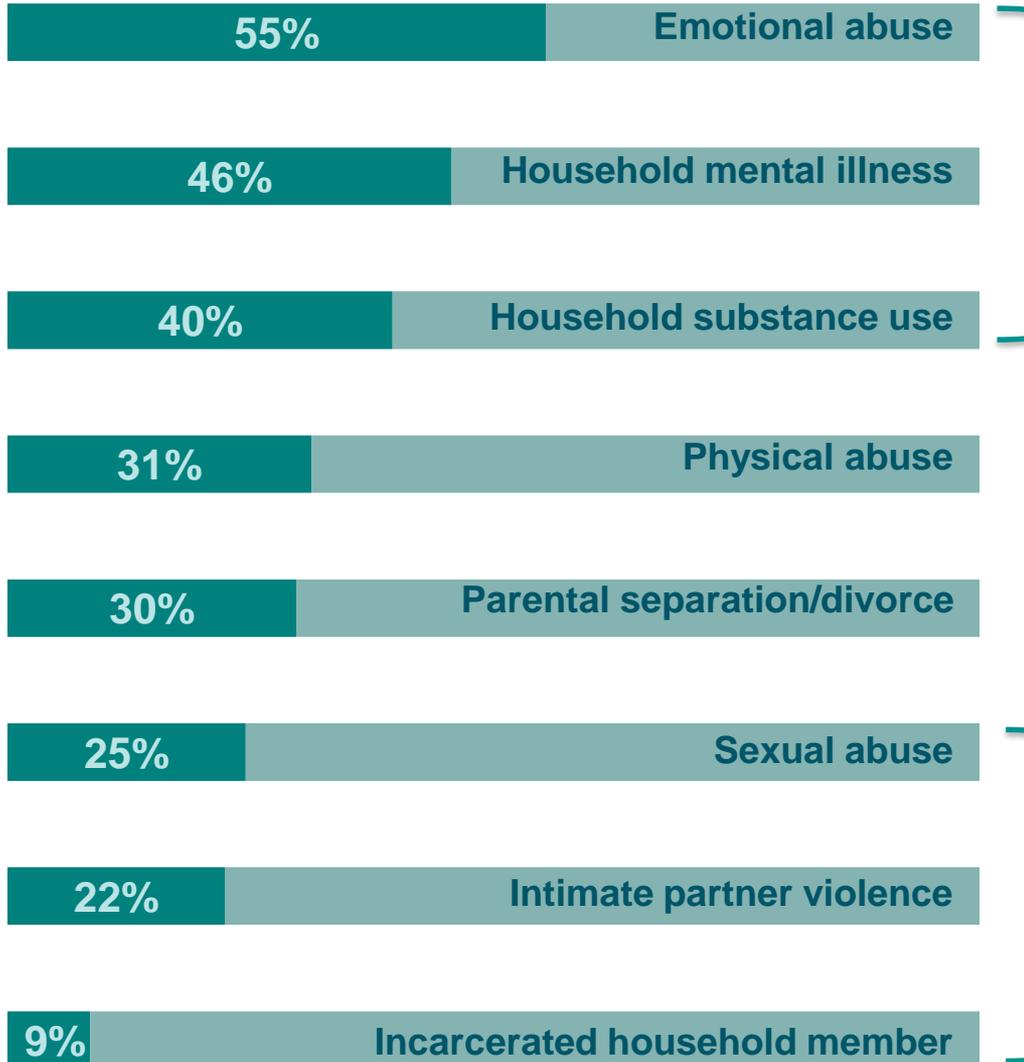
■ 0 ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 or more



80% of participants reported experiencing 1 or more ACEs

30% report experiencing 4 or more ACEs

ACEs Score



Bullying



Emotional Neglect

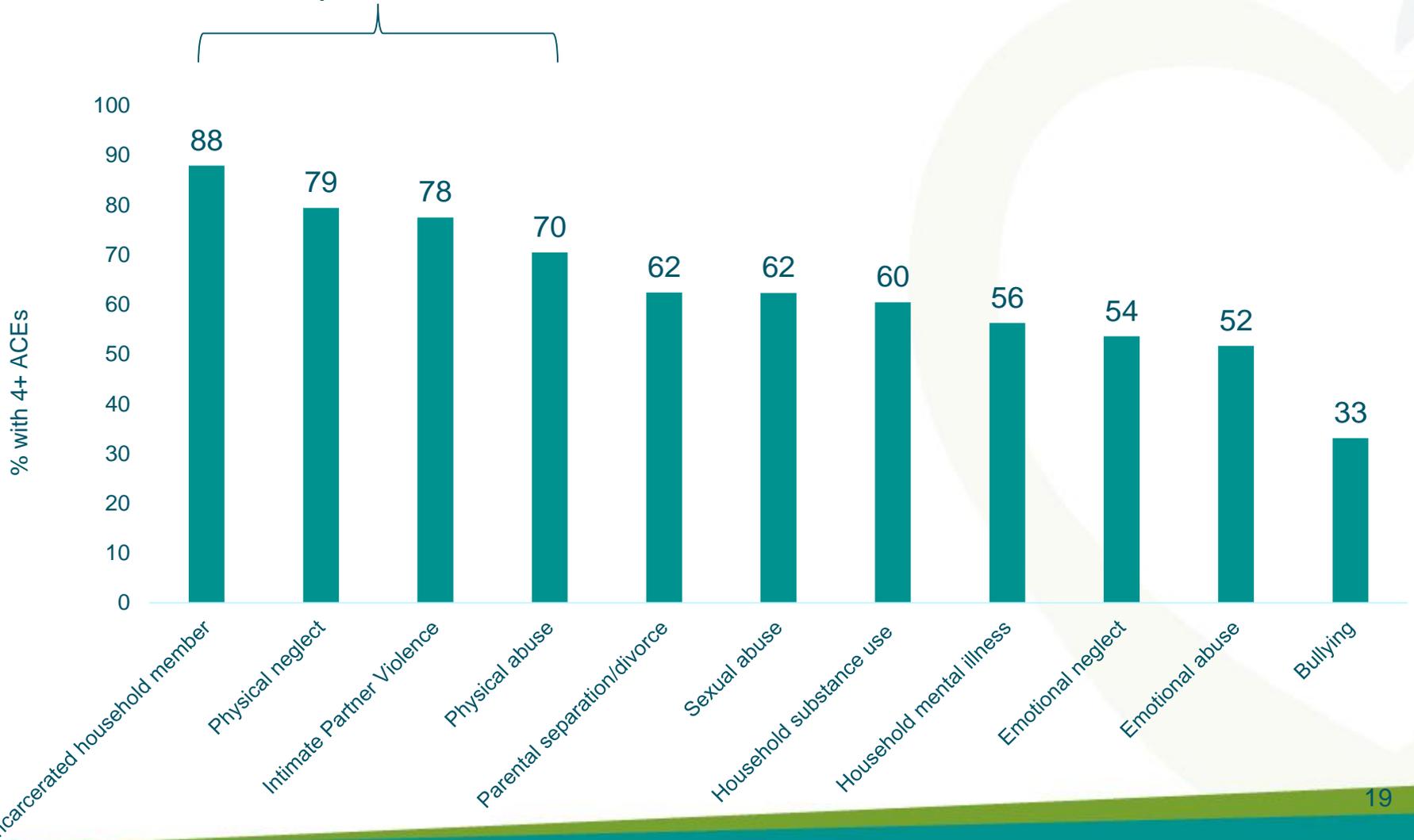


Physical Neglect

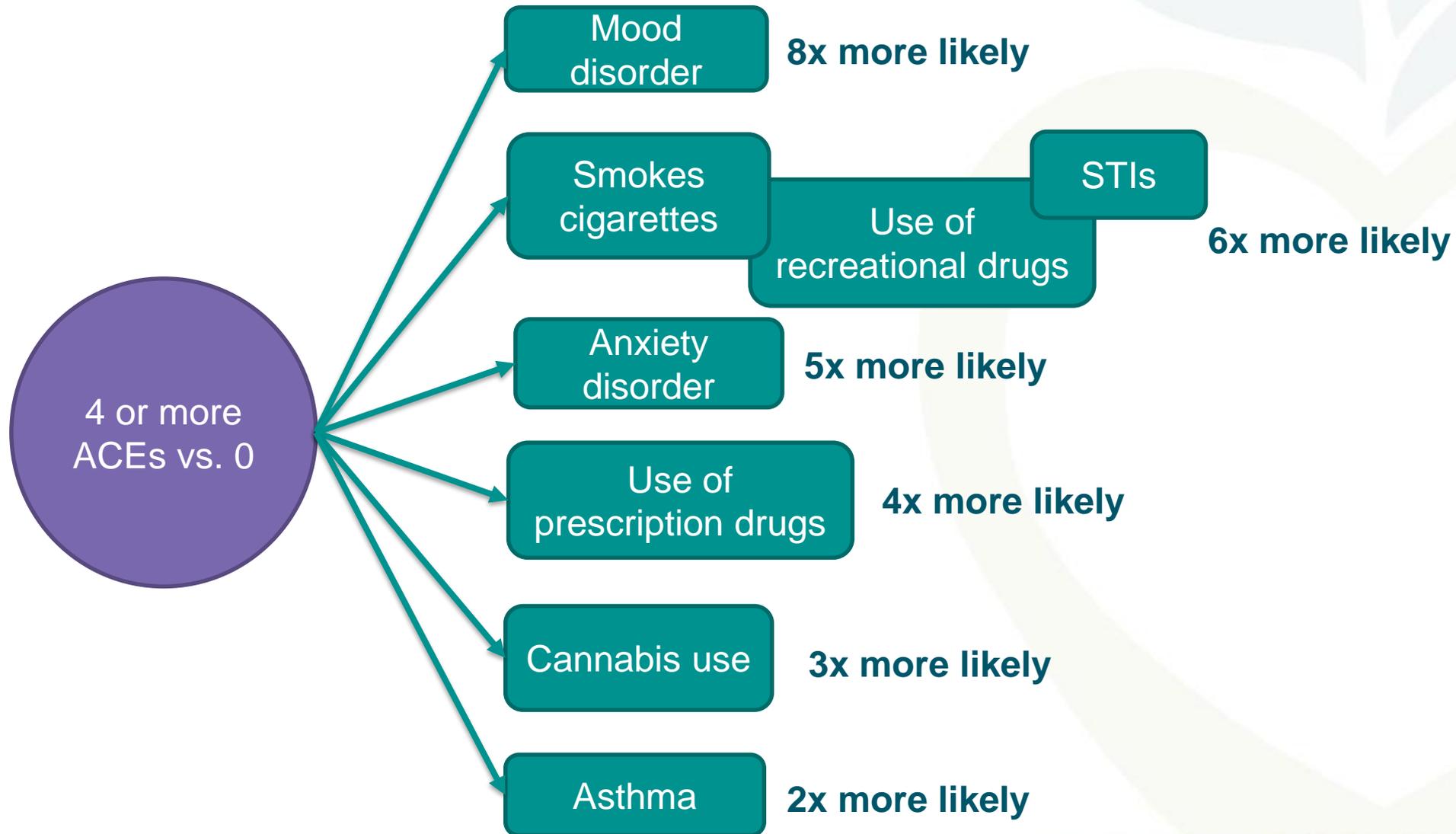


Clustering of ACEs

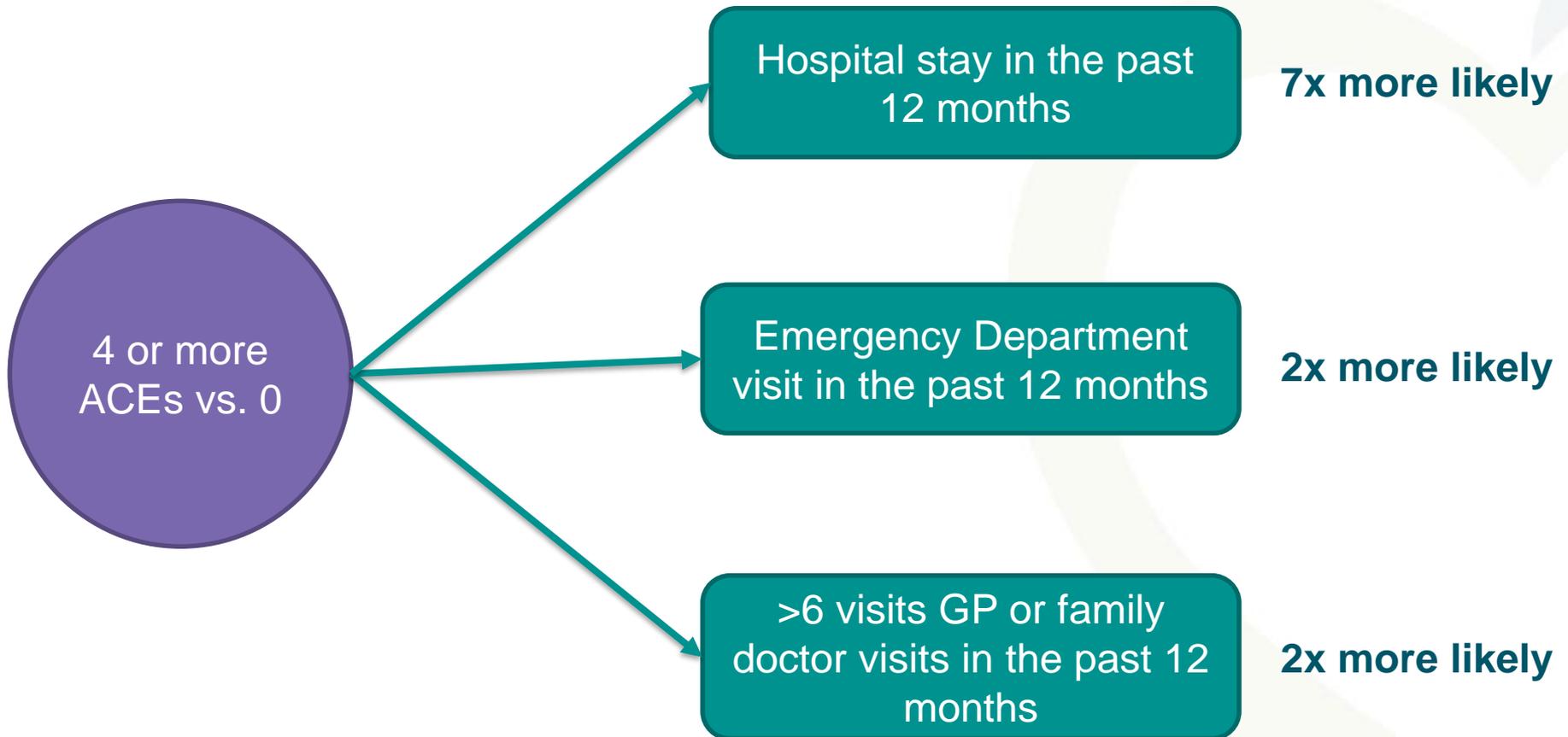
Over 70% experience 4 + ACEs



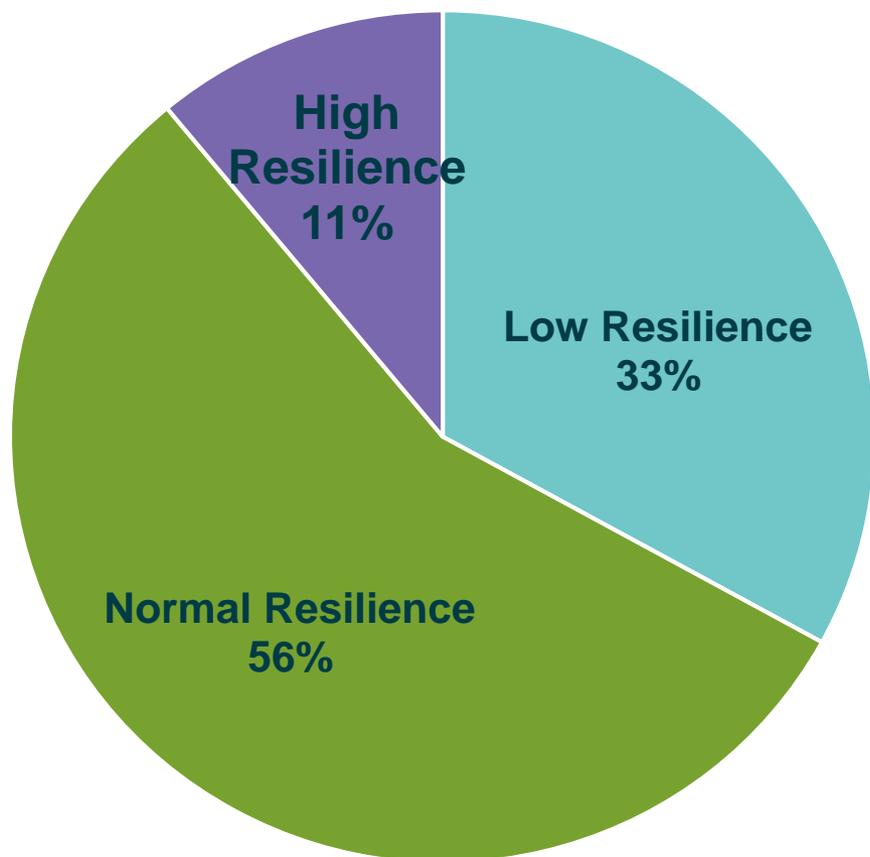
ACEs and Health Outcomes



ACEs and Health Service Use



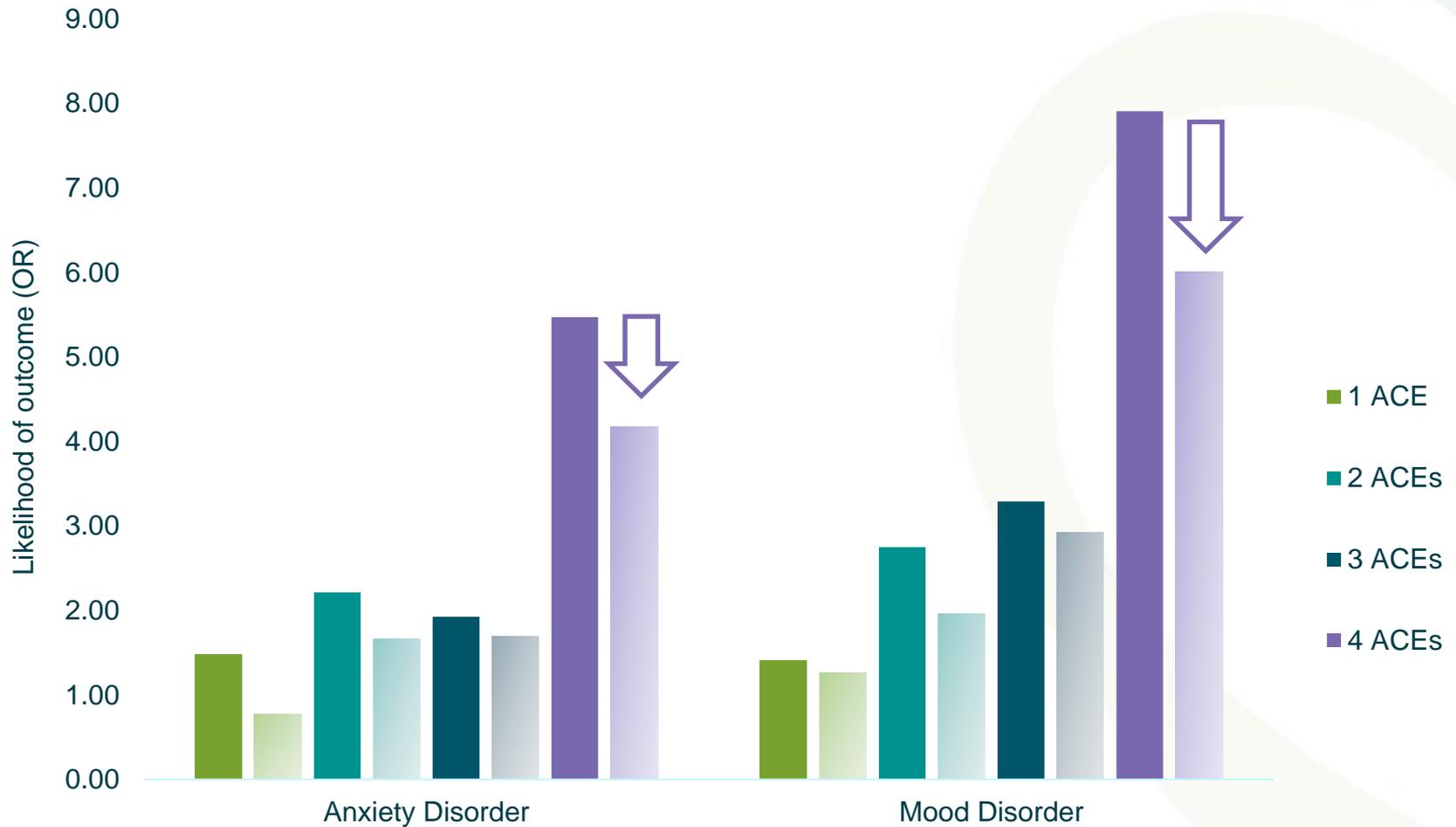
Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)



- Low Resilience (1.00-2.99)
- Normal Resilience (3.00-4.30)
- High Resilience (4.31-5.00)

- Increasing trend of low resilience scores observed as educational attainment and household income decreased

The protective role of resilience



Take Away Messages

1. High ACEs scores are associated with a variety of negative health outcomes and health behaviours which are important to the work of public health
2. There is an intergenerational effect of ACEs on mental illness and substance use.
 - Mental illness and substance use in the household are the top two most common ACEs experienced.
 - Individuals with high ACEs scores are also most likely to develop mental illness and substance use behaviours in adulthood.
3. High resilience has a protective effect on long term health outcomes, particularly on the development of anxiety and mood disorders

Next Steps

Results of this survey strongly support:

- Continued efforts of the Guelph-Wellington ACEs coalition and other community groups working in this area
- Implementing resilience promoting programs and services in WDG to buffer the negative impact of toxic stress



Project Contributors

- Lindsay Favotto, Health Promotion Specialist, Health Promotion Team
- Lauren Alonso, Health Promotion Specialist, Health Analytics Team
- Karen Wood, Communications Specialist, Communications Team
- Jill Davies, Communications Specialist, Communications Team
- Liz Robson, Manager, Healthy Growth and Development Team
- Amy Estill, Manager, Health Promotion Team
- Our supportive community partners! (In particular those at the ACEs Coalition of Guelph and Wellington)

Questions?

THANK YOU!

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