

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Other Trauma*



What are ACEs?

They are types of **trauma individuals experience as children** that can have long-term **negative physical and behavioral health outcomes**. Approximately 2 out of 3 adults in Delaware have experienced at least one ACE.^a



Gun Violence

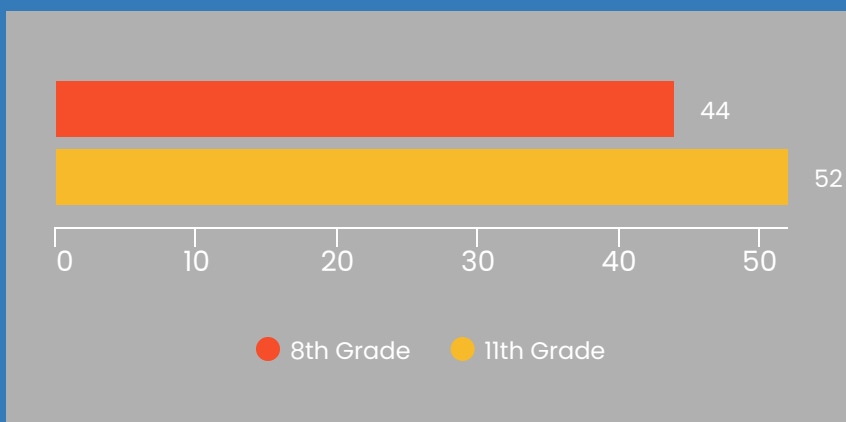
More than 1 in 5 11th grade students in Delaware report that they have either been a **victim or known a victim of gun violence** in their lifetime.^b



Most Common ACE

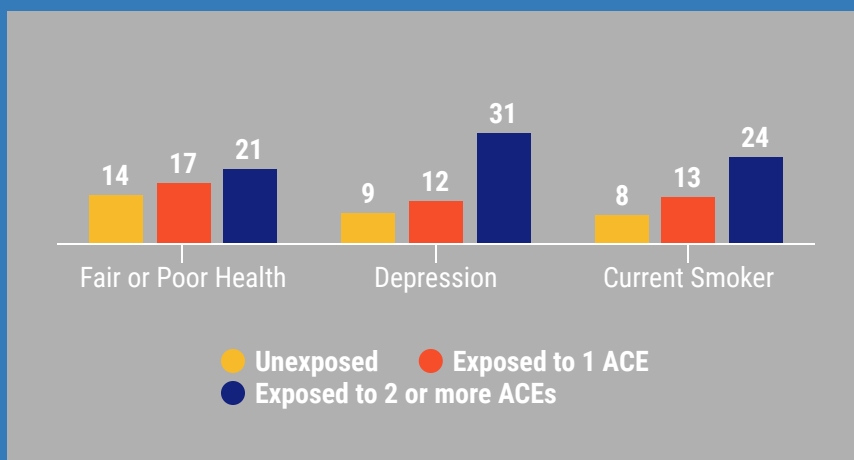
In 2021, the most commonly reported ACE among 8th graders was being **bullied at school**, while among 11th graders, it was **living with someone with a mental illness**.^b

Mental Health Professionals and School Safety (%)



When asked what changes would make their schools safer, **nearly one-half (44%)** of surveyed 8th grade students and **over one-half (52%)** of surveyed 11th grade students asked for additional mental health professionals at their schools.^b

ACEs Exposure and Health among Adults (%)



In 2019, adults who reported exposure to one ACE had slightly higher rates of depression, poor health, and cigarette use. Adults with two or more ACEs smoked and experienced symptoms of depression even more frequently.^a

*Over time, the concept of ACEs has evolved to more broadly capture adversities. Surveys vary in terms of what ACEs are measured, but generally, these may include: abuse, neglect, sexual assault, parental separation, homelessness, an incarcerated family member, and living with someone with a mental health or substance use disorder. Exposure to racism, poverty, and community violence are sometimes included. The 2022 Delaware Epidemiological Profile expands on these survey-specific indicators in the "Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Other Trauma" chapter.

Sources:

^a Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). (2019)

^b Center for Drug & Health Studies. (2021). Delaware School Survey: Secondary [Annual Survey]. University of Delaware.

Note: Delaware School Survey data is unweighted.