Shaping A Two-generational Approach For Reducing Poverty:

Identifying and Addressing the Missing Pieces

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Adverse Childhood Experiences
“The ACE Study”

- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Social, Emotional, and Cognitive Impairment
- Adoption of Health-Risk Behaviors
- Disease, Disability, and Social Problems
- Early Death
ACE Categories Considered

Indicators of Family Dysfunction
- 1. Mentally ill, depressed or suicidal person in home
- 2. Drug addicted or alcoholic family member
- 3. Parental discord – indicated by divorce, separation, abandonment
- 4. Witnessing domestic violence against the mother
- 5. Incarceration of any family member

Abuse
- 6. Child physical abuse
- 7. Child sexual abuse
- 8. Child emotional abuse

Neglect
- 9. Physical Neglect
- 10. Emotional Neglect
ACEs are strong predictors of what happens later in life in terms of health behaviors, social problems, disease incidence, and early death.
Family Employment Program (FEP) Study

• **Purpose:**
  • To better understand the demographics, childhood experiences, work and education histories, employment challenges, attitudes toward programs of new (2 – 9 months) TANF recipients.

• **Design and methods:**
  • Longitudinal, exploratory study of randomly selected FEP participants
  • Annual in-person interviews generally conducted in person’s home 3 times starting 2012

• **Sample:**
  • Wave 3 participants w/ ACE questions included: N = 671
  • No significant non-respondent bias from Wave 1
Searching for Missing Pieces

Research Question:

What is the relationship between a TANF recipient’s adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and the challenges they face in adulthood relative to achieving self-sufficiency?
FEP Recipients vs General Population

- Utah 2010 BRFSS (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System) data included ACE questions.
- Results show FEP population far from “typical”
Employment Challenges

- Mental Health
- Transportation
- Physical Health
- Lack of ed./training
- Lack of child care
- Learning Disability
- Criminal Record
- Spouse/partner Objects
- Choose to stay home
- Dependent child's needs

Percent
Employment Challenges and ACEs

- Human Capital Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>0 ACEs</th>
<th>1 - 4 ACEs</th>
<th>5+ ACEs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent
Employment Challenges and ACEs

- Hire and Retention Challenges:

![Bar chart showing the percentage of different employment challenges for Child Care, Transportation, and Criminal Record across different ACE categories (0 ACEs, 1-4 ACEs, 5+ ACEs).]
Employment Challenges and ACEs

- **Outside Challenges:**
  - **Intimate Partner Issue**
  - **Housing Problems**
  - **Choose to Stay at Home**

![Bar chart showing employment challenges and ACEs](chart.png)

- **0 ACEs**
- **1 - 4 ACEs**
- **5+ ACEs**
## Increased Impact of High ACEs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevalence of Issue as barrier to work in past year:</th>
<th>All FEP Sample</th>
<th>5+ ACEs</th>
<th>↑ Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>+ 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Child Care</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>+ 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>+ 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Education/training</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>+ 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Health</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>+ 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>+ 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse/ Partner Objects</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>+ 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Record</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>+ 4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Additional Correlated factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevalence of Challenge in respondent’s life:</th>
<th>All FEP Sample</th>
<th>5+ ACEs</th>
<th>↑ Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Witnessed abuse of others as an adult</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>+ 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents “not at all” involved in education as child</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>+ 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grew up in non-two parent home</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>+ 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remembers public assistance as a child</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>+ 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless as an adult</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>+ 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of domestic violence as adult</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless as a child</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>+ 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In resource or special education classes</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>+ 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mom was a teen when her first child was born</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>+ 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not married when first child was born</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>+ 5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Areas of No significant difference

- **Self perception:**
  - View their situation as similar to others receiving benefits (48%)

- **Attitude toward work:**
  - Prefer to work outside home vs be stay at home parent (42%)

- **Preparation for work:**
  - Ready and available for full time work (65%)
Areas of No significant difference

**Employment:**
- Strong work history (64% worked ¾ of adult life or more)
- HOWEVER - those with 5+ ACEs:
  - Were more likely to work at low skill jobs
  - Reported lower wages on average

**Education:**
- Basic education levels high (74% have HSD/GED)
- HOWEVER – those with 5+ ACEs were:
  - more likely to have no post secondary education (5+ = 75%; all FEP = 67%)
  - Less likely to have graduated from traditional HS (5+ = 42%; all FEP = 48%)
  - Less likely to have been engaged in HS educational experiences
Data Based Conclusions

• High ACE scores are significantly higher in the TANF population vs general population

• Within TANF population, high ACE scores are correlated to a wide variety of employment barriers and challenges in the activities of daily living

• TANF recipients with high ACE scores are engaged in work and work activities at the same rate as other TANF recipients however they are not achieving the same level of benefit from employment

• Lower level of benefit from employment increases the likelihood of the family remaining in poverty for a longer time
Returning to ACEs

- ACEs are common in general population, but much more common in TANF population
- This suggests a missing piece: So, How do we use the ACE science to better serve TANF recipients?
Limitations

- ACE Histories instead of ACE scores
Trauma-Informed Case Management

1. Exposure
   - ACE history = Level of Exposure
   - Not label or Diagnosis

2. Response
   - Varies by individual
   - May or may not need attention

3. Impact
   - What challenges TANF recipients face today
   - Barriers to employment
Mitigate the Impact

1. ACE history informing conversation about impact:

“A lot of people who had difficult experiences growing up find work really challenging, I’m wondering if you’ve had the same experience?”

OR

“A lot of people who had difficult experiences growing up find work really challenging, how have you managed to do so well?”

2. Modify case plans to build capacity:

- Address impacts that makes self-sufficiency challenging
  - E.g. Mental Health, Physical Health, etc.

3. Provide resources and referrals to support well-being

- Flexibility within case plans for long term gain
Next Steps

Two-Generation Approach

Improve Parent Well-Being

Prevent ACEs for Children
References


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