

Positive Communication Across the Lifespan: Early Childhood ACEs to VIAs

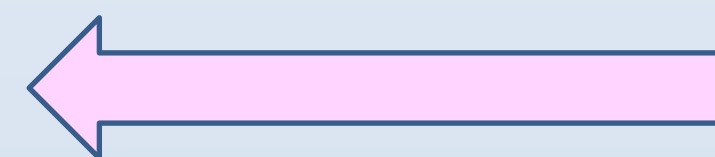
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Abstract

Felitti et al., (1998; 2002) developed the Adverse Childhood Experiences test (ACEs), which now uses “variable” childhood trauma to future negative life choice outcomes (mental illness-suicide, alcoholism-addiction, criminal activity). Peterson and Seligman Values-In-Action (2004; 2011) Values-In-Action (VIA) educators and institutions may influence positive future well-being outcomes and better mental health care for those students with high ACEs scores. It is likely that individual life expectancy may increase for those high ACEs score if implementation of ACEs tests are used throughout students early education.

Detect, Implement & Prevent



- Allow early educators an opportunity to DETECT severe trauma experienced by students before entering 1st grade by use the ACEs Test (or a reverse test to censor harsh terminology associated with mental, physical and sexual abuse)
- IMPLEMENT Positive Communication Education with Virtues-In-Action curriculum
- Gather longitudinal data (20 years) to analyze if the ACEs to VIAs PREVENT those children with scores of 4 or higher from negative health choice outcomes

Proposal

- The following proposal is to study the longitudinal progress of students from 1st grade up through early adulthood though data analysis and positive education curriculum implementation until the 5th grade.
- Using a combination of traditional and positive education approaches, participant students will complete ACEs test (reverse statements) before the start of 1st grade.
- There will need to be two study groups to compare students and all students in the study will complete ACEs.
- Control group receives traditional education curriculum and intervention group receives positive education curriculums.
- Intervention group will have a sub-group which will receive more direct and individualized focus to assess the further study of trauma informed care.

The ACEs Test

Adverse Childhood Experience Survey		
QUESTION	Yes	No
Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?		
Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?		
Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?		
Did you often or very often feel that ... No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?		
Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?		
Were your parents ever separated or divorced?		
Was your mother or stepmother: Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?		
Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?		
Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?		
Did a household member go to prison?		
Add up your "yes" answers - that's your ACEs score		

SCORING

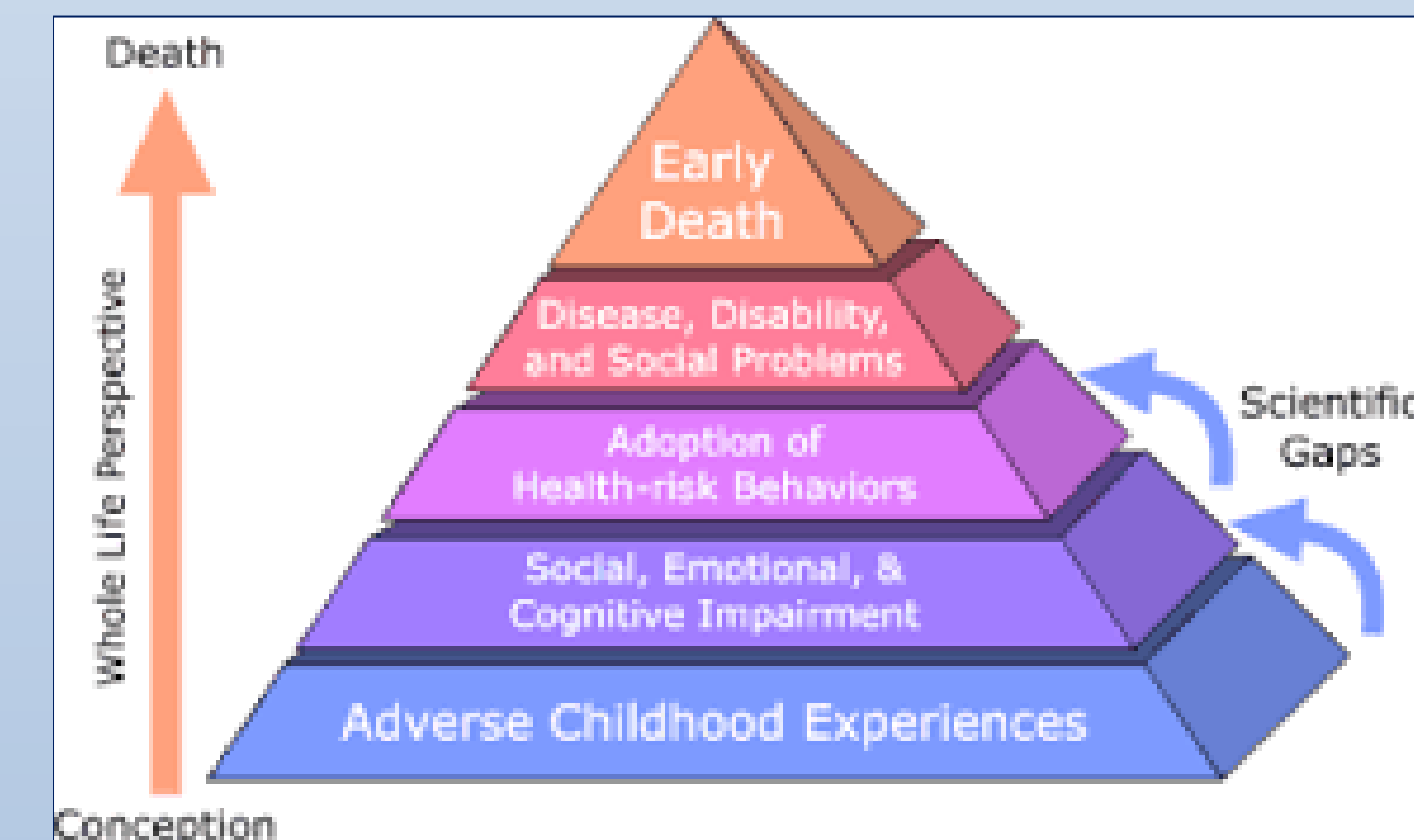
ACEs is a 10-question yes/no statement survey
 Scores range:
 Trauma Experienced (before 18 years old)
 0 - lowest trauma
 10 - highest trauma

Values in Action Inventory
 Peterson and Seligman (2004)



Mixed Methods

- The mixed-methods approach used a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design with an intervention and control group and thematic analysis of focus group data.
- Individual pedagogical practices for the intervention group students who score 4 or higher on the ACEs.
- Peterson and Seligman Values-In-Action (2004; 2011) used to determine specific character strengths to develop.
- Variable character strength Grit (G) and six virtues, wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence will be characteristics to measure to identify commonalities between children who experience extreme trauma.
- Students will be assessed after the ACEs at the start of 1st grade, after 5th grade and finally at age 25 if possible.
- Academic achievement, life satisfaction, mental health care attitude, drug, alcohol and sexual attitudes and practices will be compared from the control and intervention group students who scored ACEs 4 or higher before entering 1st grade.



Conclusion

- This longitudinal study may enable educators to:
- Identify those already traumatized before 1st grade, after 5th grade positive communication interventions and education curriculums can begin reforming the child’s patterns of thinking.
 - Peterson and Seligman’s Virtues-In-Action Character Strengths (2004; 2011) may increase interpersonal growth of traumatized children, expelling negative high risk behaviors which plague their future well-being outcomes.
 - Prevent inflated risks factors which remain leading causes of death in adults (Felitti, 1998).

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