

Disseminating Evidence about ACEs: The ACE Evidence Survey

In order to cultivate support for **adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)** prevention policies, this research identified effective messages for communicating about ACEs.

The Impact

This research resulted in *community, economic, and policy* benefits.

The project identified effective messages for communicating about ACEs, which have been used by child advocacy organizations in public and policymaker-focused communication campaigns. For example, messages about the economic impacts of ACEs and ACEs as risk factors for mental health conditions, substance use, and suicide were potentially effective at cultivating public support for policies that address ACEs. Including economic evidence also increased legislators' engagement with dissemination materials. Disseminating scientific evidence can increase policy advocacy, which may ultimately lead to the adoption of more evidence-based public health policies.

The Challenge

ACEs are risk factors for mental health problems and poor health later in life. Public policies that improve economic and social security of families, scale up evidence-based prevention programs, and increase access to behavioral health services can help prevent ACEs and lessen their consequences. Understanding how to package and disseminate evidence about ACEs is important to create public and policymaker support for these policies.

The Approach

Researchers tested different messages about ACEs with U.S. and state legislators. The study assessed:

- Support for evidence-based ACE policies
- Likelihood of engagement in ACE policy advocacy
- Perceptions of government responsibility to address ACEs
- Beliefs about parental blame and stigma

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

The ACE Evidence Survey project resulted in:

- Nearly **50** legislative offices requested consultation or additional information from the research team
- Dissemination materials directly informed one legislator's advocacy effort to spend **\$4 billion** in federal COVID-19 relief on nurse-family partnerships

Key TSBM Impacts



COMMUNITY

Identified effective messages for communicating about ACEs, which were used by child advocacy organizations



COMMUNITY

Improving support for, and ultimately adoption of, policies focused on ACEs could prevent and reduce many chronic diseases



ECONOMIC

Adopting policies to prevent and reduce ACEs could lead to cost savings for society



POLICY

Provided expert consultation on evidence-based policy approaches for addressing ACEs to state legislative offices



POLICY

The project increased legislators' engagement with ACEs evidence and advocacy for ACE policies, which may lead to policy adoption

The team:

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Find out more:

[Visit the full case study](#)

[Listen to a podcast about the project](#)

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