

>60 percent of adults report adverse childhood experiences

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(HealthDay)—More than 60 percent of adults report having had at least

one adverse childhood experience (ACE), and almost 25 percent report three or more, according to a study published online Sept. 17 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Melissa T. Merrick, Ph.D., from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and colleagues collected data through the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System to provide an updated prevalence estimate of ACEs in the United States. Data were included for a diverse and representative sample of 214,157 respondents older than 18 years.

The researchers found that 61.55 percent of respondents had at least one ACE and 24.64 percent reported three or more ACEs. Participants who identified as black, Hispanic, or multiracial reported significantly higher ACE exposures (mean scores, 1.69, 1.8, and 2.52, respectively), as did those with less than a [high school education](#) (mean [score](#), 1.97), those with income of less than \$15,000 per year (mean score, 2.16), those who were unemployed or unable to work (mean scores, 2.3 and 2.33, respectively), and those identifying as gay/lesbian or bisexual (mean scores, 2.19, and 3.14, respectively). The most prevalent ACEs were emotional abuse, parental separation or divorce, and household substance abuse (34.42, 27.63, and 27.56 percent, respectively).

"Although identifying and treating ACE exposure is important, prioritizing primary prevention of ACEs is critical to improve health and life outcomes throughout the lifespan and across generations," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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