Adverse Childhood Experiences and Instability Related to Early Care and Education

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Key issue
Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) pose a serious threat to child & family well-being.

Driving Question
How can Early Care and Education (ECE) help to build resilience for families facing adversity?
Preview of Findings!

1) **Opportunity**
   Families facing ACEs use ECE, often with help of subsidies, and in centers.

2) **Barrier**
   They experience more instability in ECE, and also are more likely to miss or quit work or school due to child care problems.
**Key issue:** Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) pose a serious threat to child & family well-being.

**ACEs:** abuse, neglect, family violence, parental mental illness and substance abuse, incarceration, neglect, and loss of parent.

**Linked to:**
- Adult physical and mental health problems
- Child problems with behavior, academics, health
- Instability at home: financial, housing, routines

Burke et al., 2011; Dong et al., 2005; Dupere et al., 2015; Felitti et al., 1998; Jimenez at al., 2016; Kendler et al., 2013; Marie-Mitchell & O’Connor, 2013; Neger & Prinz, 2015; Smith & Wilson, 2016.
Driving Question
How can Early Care and Education (ECE) help to build resilience for families facing adversity?

ECE is linked with outcomes for families facing ACEs.

Efforts to strengthen ECE for families facing ACEs.

(See Klein, 2016 for a review)

Success may hinge on **sustained connection** with families.

- Building trust takes time.
- Relationships are key (e.g., Lipscomb et al., 2014).
Yet, instability may pose a barrier.

ACES are linked with instability at home (Dong et al., 2005; Dunn et al., 2002; Dupere et al., 2015; Kendler et al., 2013; Neger & Prinz, 2015; Smith & Wilson, 2016).

Families with irregular work schedules, long hours, and/or multiple jobs often have unstable “patchworks” of ECE (Scott et al., 2005).
Research Question

Do families with more ACEs experience more instability related to ECE?

Indicators of instability:
1. multiple ECE arrangements
2. changes in ECE over time
3. unreliability in ECE that creates disruptions in work/school
Fragile Families and Child Well-Being Study

- Longitudinal study of about 5,000 children born in large cities in the U.S. 1998-2000
- Oversampled unmarried mothers
- Baseline & 3-year follow-up

Maternal demographics

- Average age 25.28 yrs.
- Education: 65% high school, 24% some college, 11% degree
- 48% Black, 27% Hispanic, 21% White
- Average income/poverty ratio = 1.94 (below 200% fpl)
Measurement of ACEs (at 3 years)

7 indicators, each coded 0 = no, 1 = yes (Jiminez et al., 2016).

- **Child physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect**: Parent-Child Conflict Tactic Scale (CTS-PC; Straus, et al., 1998).
- **Mother treated violently** by child’s father or current partner (e.g., slapping, kicking, or sexual violence).
- **Parental substance abuse**. Mom, child’s father, or mother’s current partner had problems from drinking or substance use.
- **Maternal mental illness**. Depressive symptoms on Composite International Diagnostic Interview – Short Form (CIDI-SF) Section A (Kessler et al. 1998).
- **Criminal household member**. Mom, child’s father or mother’s current partner spent time in jail in past 2 years.
Findings
ACES at age 3 years

Total # ACEs: 0 (37%), 1 (29%), 2 (18%), 3 or more (16%)

Types:

- Emotional Abuse: 19%
- Physical Abuse: 10%
- Neglect: 11%
- Violence toward mother: 11%
- Substance abuse: 14%
- Maternal depression: 21%
- Incarceration: 27%
ECE at 3 years

59% attended out of home care. Average of 31 hours/week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Center</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family child care</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>42%</td>
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</tbody>
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**Indicators of Instability**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># current care arrangements</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># changes in care since child’s first birthday</td>
<td>0.81</td>
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<tr>
<td># times had to make special arrangements past mo.</td>
<td>0.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># times missed school/work because care fell through past month</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quit work/school due to child care problems in the past 2 years.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Opportunity:
Families facing ACEs use ECE, often with help of subsidies, and in centers

Three-year old children with more ACES had higher rates of:

- out-of-home care (OR =1.11, p< .01)
- eligibility for subsidy (OR =1.18, p< .01)
- center-based care (OR =1.09, p< .05).

They also attended more hours per week of care ($\beta =.08, p< .05$).
**Barrier:** Families in which children experience more ACEs have more instability related to ECE

**Instability in ECE**
- More arrangements ($\beta = .10, p < .05$)
- More changes since child’s 1st birthday ($\beta = .14, p < .01$)
- More special arrangements in the past month ($\beta = .08, p < .01$).

**Life interruptions due to care problems/unreliability**
- Missed work or school b/c child care fell through ($\beta = .07, p < .05$).
- Quit work or school due to care problems (OR =1.36, $p < .01$)

**Specific ACEs driving these associations:** Violence toward mother, maternal depression, neglect
Back to the Driving Question
How can Early Care and Education (ECE) help to build resilience for families facing adversity?

Great potential!
   Families use ECE.
   ECE is linked with outcomes.
   Efforts to strengthen ECE are underway.

Instability presents a barrier.
   ACEs are linked with:
   - instability in ECE.
   - life interruptions due to ECE problems.
**Future Research**

How can Early Care and Education (ECE) help to build resilience for families facing adversity?

What are the key child care “problems” that interrupt work/school lives for these families? What helps to reduce these?

What supports do teachers/providers most need?

How can teachers/providers support families?

What do children facing ACEs most need from teachers/providers?
Purpose
To help early childhood teachers promote resilience for children impacted by trauma

Online Course
Video-Based Coaching

You don’t have to know exactly what’s going on … or be a therapist to help a child develop resilience.