Trauma & Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adoption Competent Mental Health · https://bridges4mentalhealth.org/hub/adoption-competence/trauma-adverse-childhood-experiences-aces-2/

Most children experience at least one traumatic event before age 16, and some face repeated traumas, known as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). These events can have lasting physical, emotional, and mental health effects, including conditions like anxiety, depression, PTSD, and toxic stress-related illnesses such as heart disease or diabetes. Examples of ACEs include abuse, neglect, witnessing violence, discrimination, and household challenges like parental separation or mental illness.

Signs a child may need support include persistent sadness, anxiety, anger, difficulty concentrating, nightmares, or physical symptoms like headaches and stomach pain. Resources are available, such as crisis hotlines, educational materials, and specialized pediatric mental health services, to help children and families address and overcome the impact of ACEs.

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