

PEER SUPPORT: A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

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CENTER FOR
**RESILIENT SCHOOLS
AND COMMUNITIES**

The Center for Resilient Schools and Communities works with Spartanburg County families, schools, and communities to build supports and systems that increase children's success, particularly in neighborhoods where educational disparities exist.

We believe that every person can achieve success when provided with the necessary resources and support to overcome challenges. Together we can make the impossible achievable.

learnwithsam.org/programs/crsc



What is your earliest childhood memory?



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The memories of our experiences are stored in our bodies.

01/12/14

NEWS

Early Adversity Increases Physical, Mental, Behavioral Problems, Scientists Report



Dr. Robert Anda & Dr. Vincent Felitti
Investigators

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention,
Kaiser Permanente Study

Over 17,000 study participants

The ACE Study confirms, with scientific evidence, that adversity early in life increases physical, mental and behavioral problems later in life.

ACEs QUESTIONNAIRE

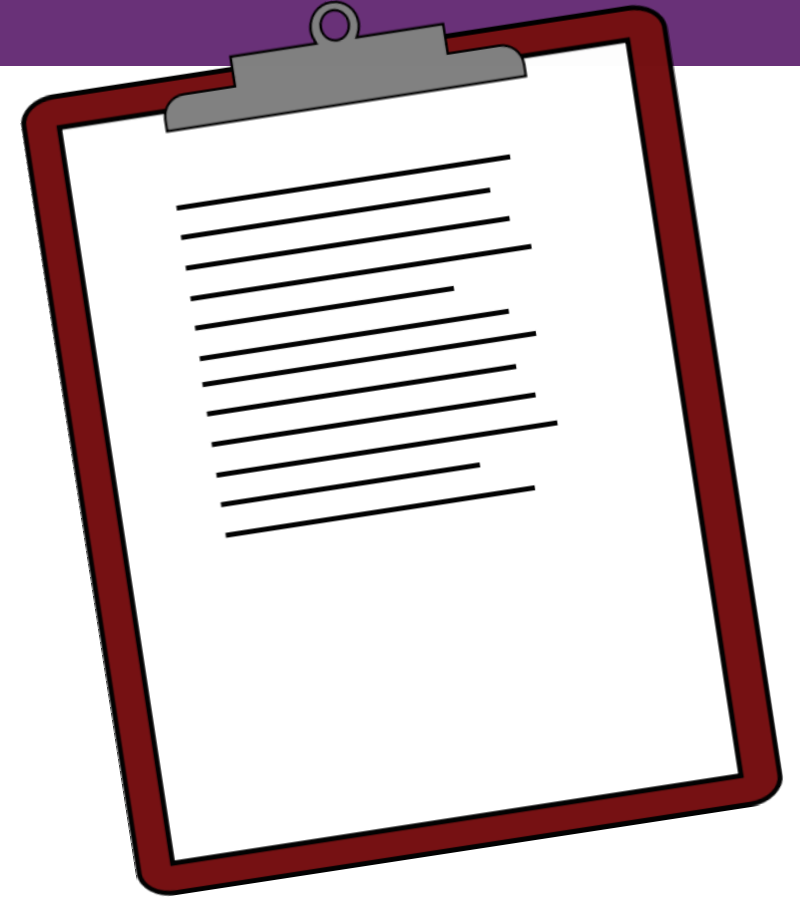
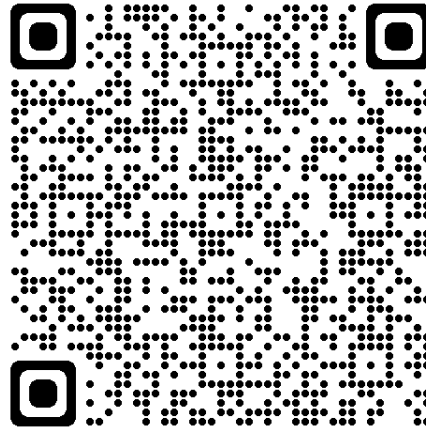
Assessed 10 ACEs

5 – Household Dysfunction

3 – Abuse

2 – Neglect

Self-assessment



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ACADEMIC MOVEMENT**

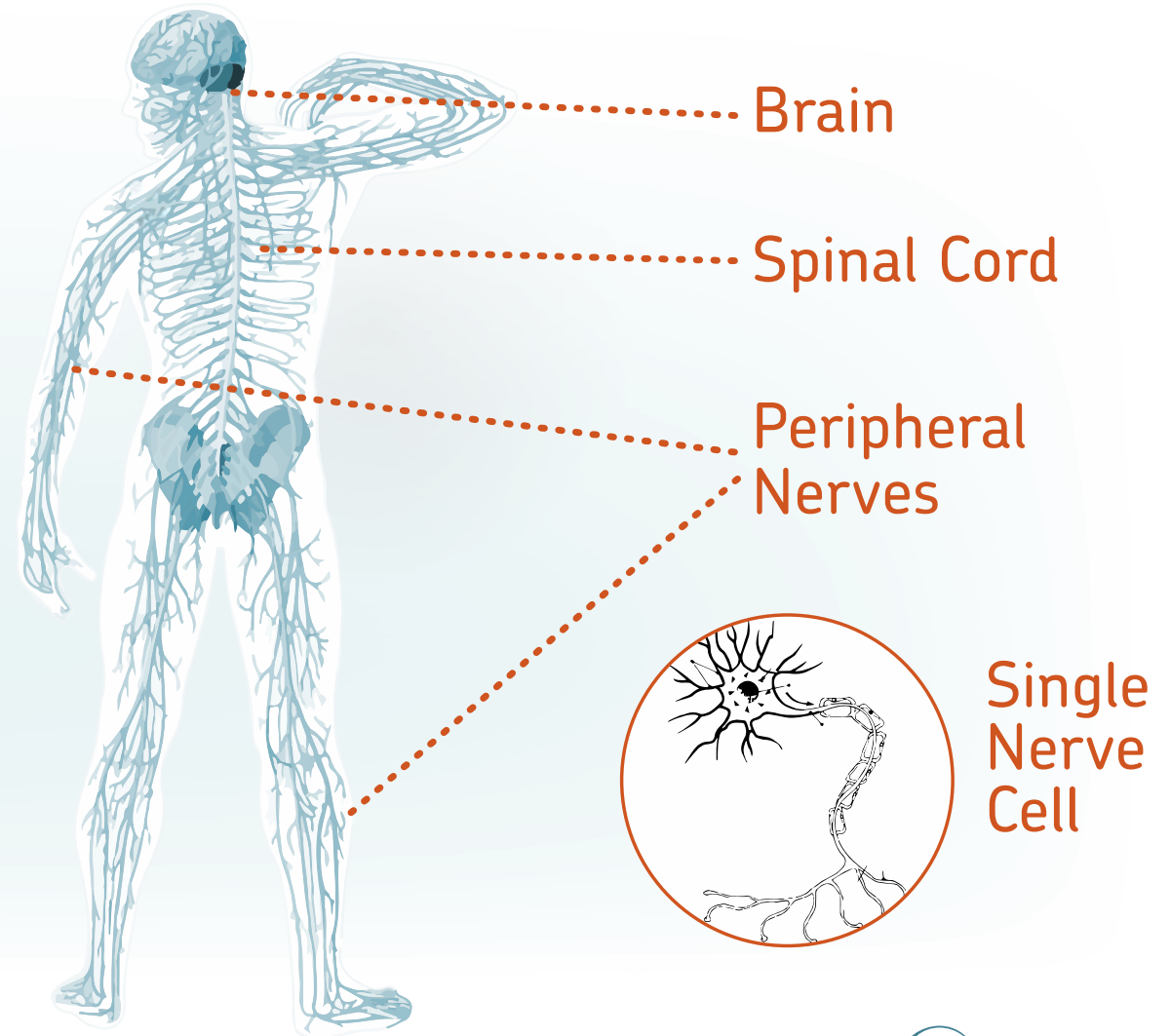
EVERYONE HAS AN ACE SCORE

- **It is important to understand our own experience**
- **ACE score is NOT diagnostic**

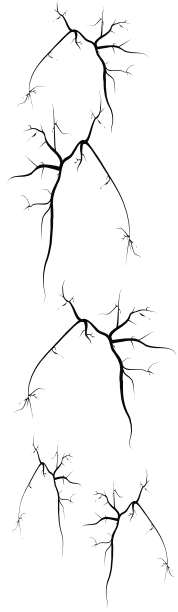
HUMAN NERVOUS SYSTEM

Nervous system
ORCHESTRATES BODY
FUNCTIONS & PERCEPTIONS

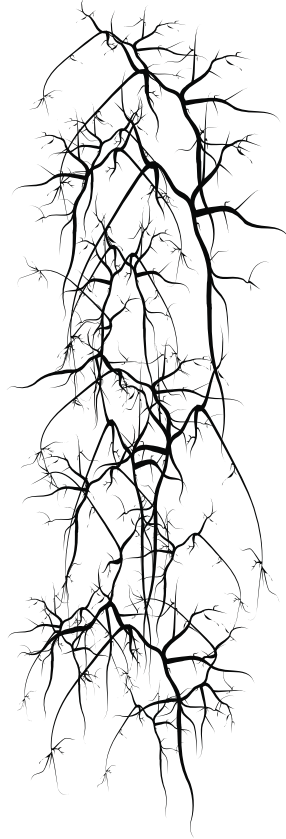
Neuroscience
HELPS US UNDERSTAND WHY
A C E s
ARE SO POWERFUL



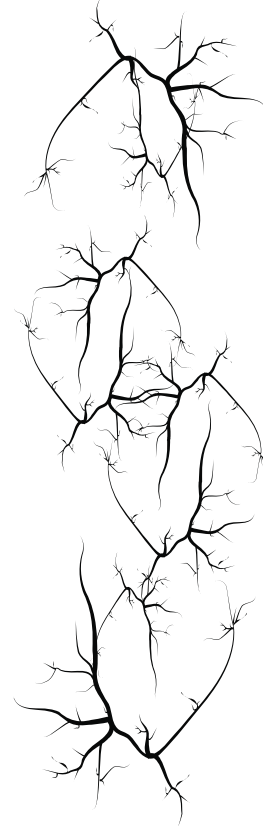
SYNAPTIC DENSITY



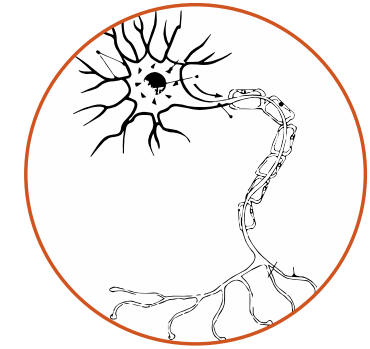
At Birth



Elementary Age

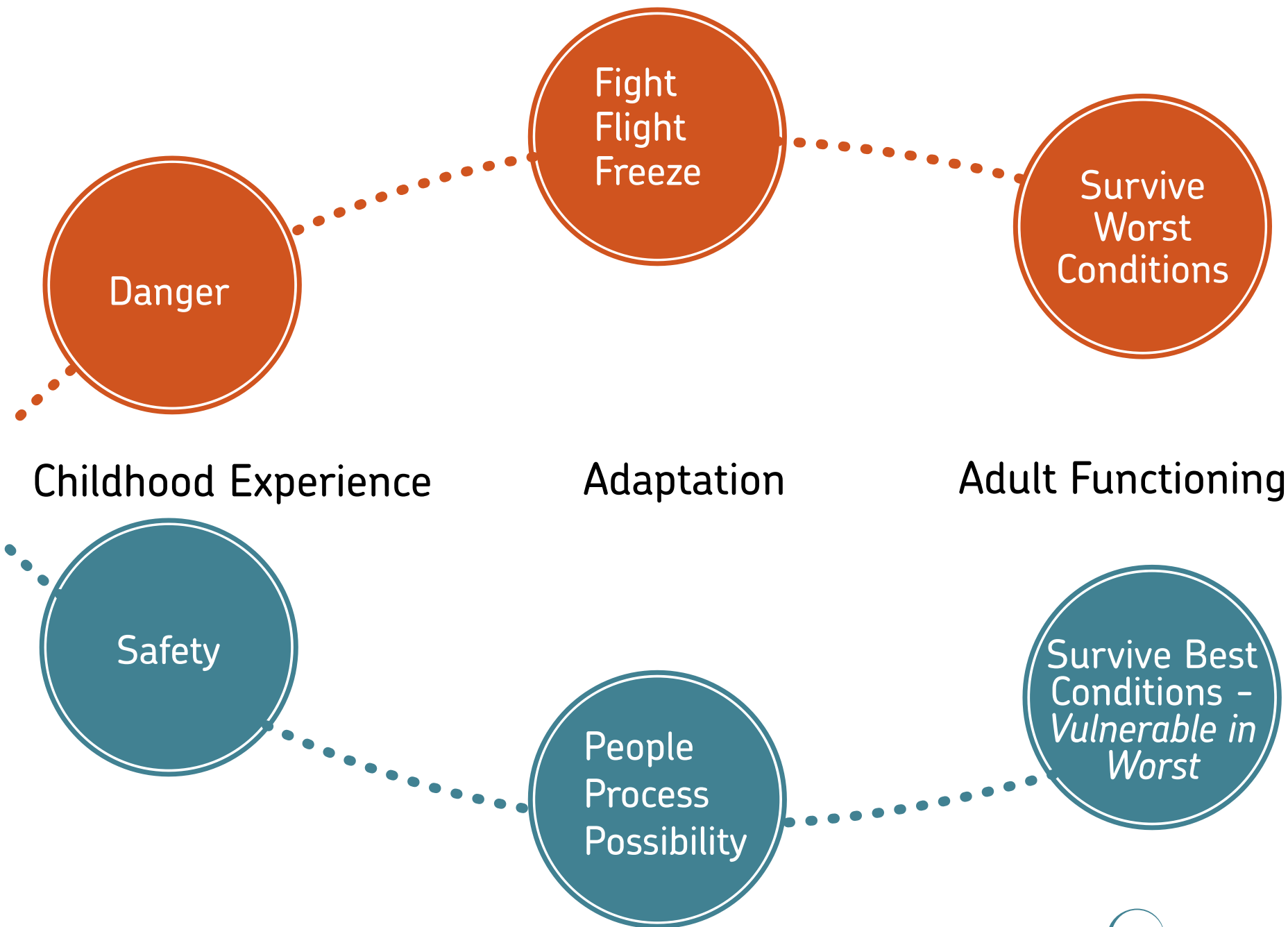


Puberty



Single
Neuron

CONCEPTION



3 TYPES OF CHILDHOOD STRESS RESPONSES

POSITIVE

*Promotes growth
and resilience*

TOLERABLE

*Short-lived adversity
that can be remedied*

**TOXIC
(ACEs)**

*Extreme, long-lasting
stress in the absence of
supportive relationships
to buffer the effect*

- Shonkoff, 2012

ADAPTATIONS VS EXPECTATIONS

WHEN BIOLOGY
collides
WITH SOCIAL
EXPECTATIONS
we run into
TROUBLE





The effects of
maltreatment
vary by:

Type
Gender
Age
Genetics

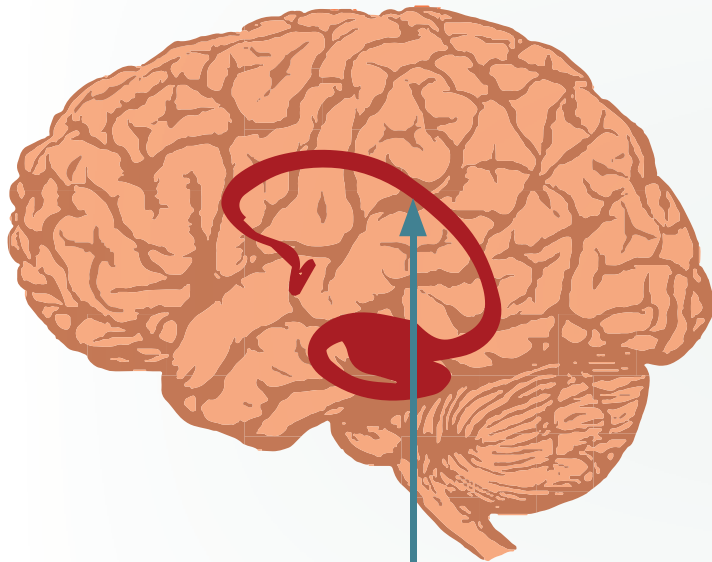


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-Martin Teicher, MD, PhD and Team

McLean Hospital, Director, Developmental Biopsychiatry Harvard
Medical School, Associate Professor of Psychiatry

THE LIMBIC SYSTEM



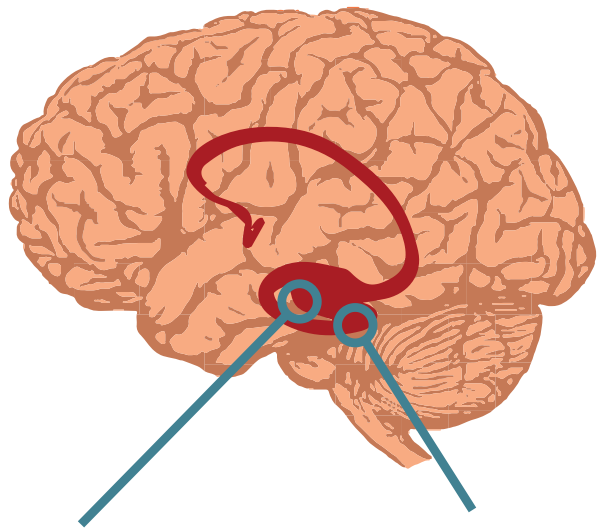
LIMBIC SYSTEM

**FIGHT
or
FLIGHT**

vital for
LEARNING
MEMORY
REWARD
REINFORCEMENT

regulates
HORMONES
MOOD
HEARTBEAT
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

THE HIPPOCAMPUS AND AMYGDALA



Amygdala

Hippocampus

**VITAL
for
RELATIONSHIPS**

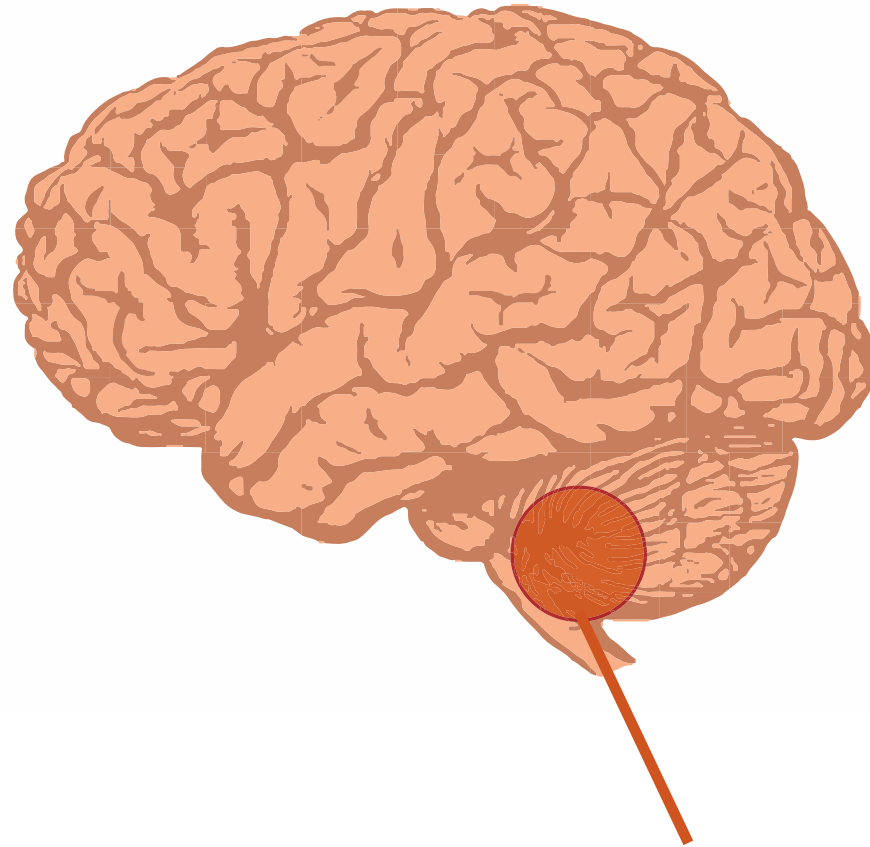


Panic & Fear | Attention | Memory | Social Cues

POSITIVE FEELINGS

Perception

Attention



ADDICTION

Attention Problems

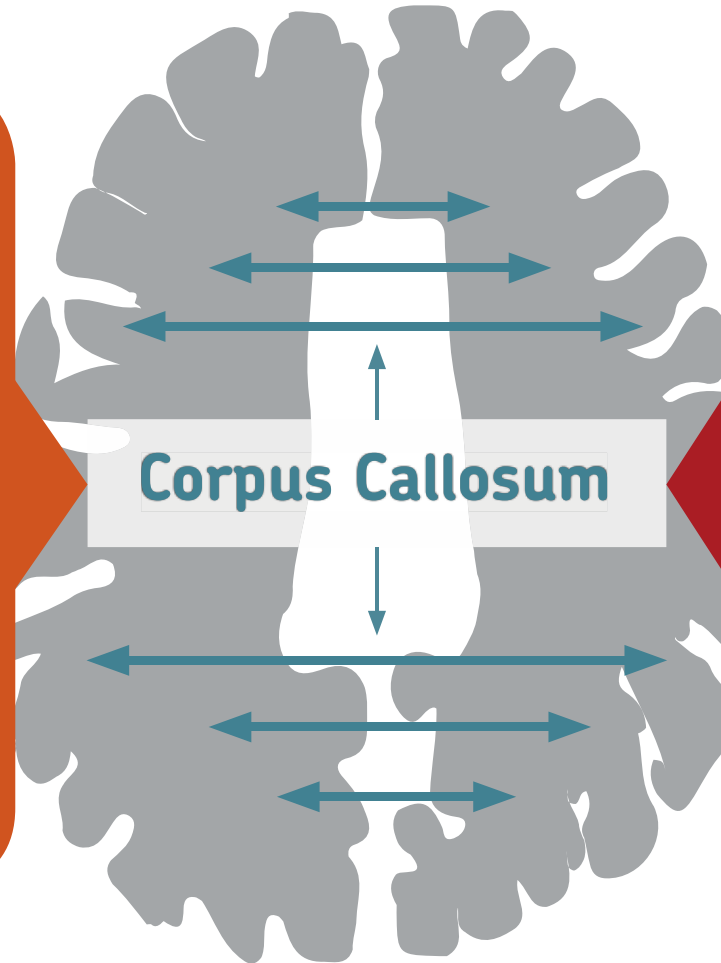
Mental Illness

Cerebellar Vermis

The Corpus Callosum

LEFT HEMISPHERE

Spatial Patterns
Math Calculation
& Fact Retrieval
Grammar &
Vocabulary
Processing Routine
Situations



RIGHT HEMISPHERE

Visual & Auditory
Processing
Prosaic Language
Facial Perception
Processing Novel
Situations

STRESS

Interpretations Can Differ

set points in place by
EARLY ADULTHOOD



At Birth

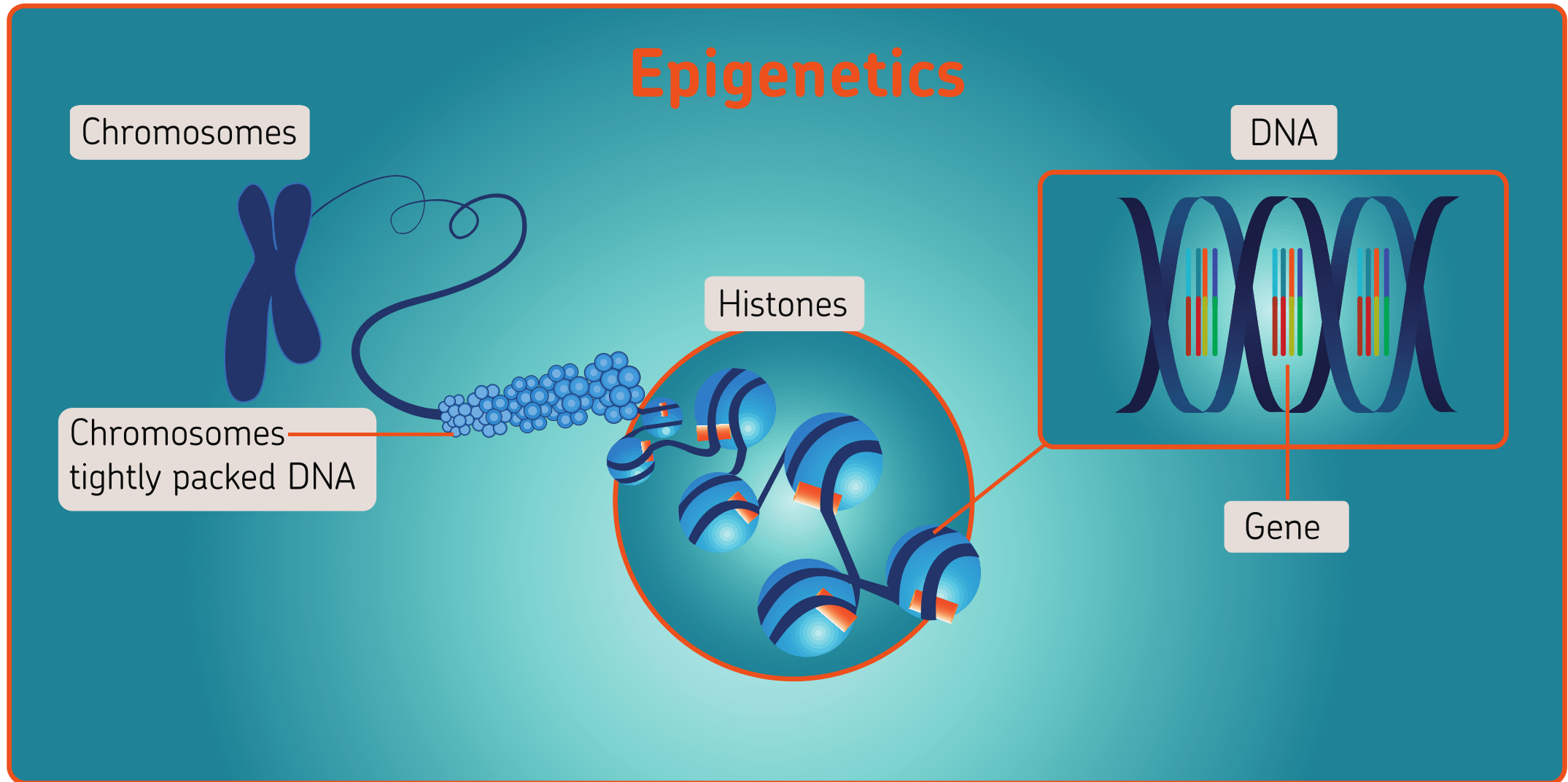
SYNAPTIC DENSITY



Elementary Age



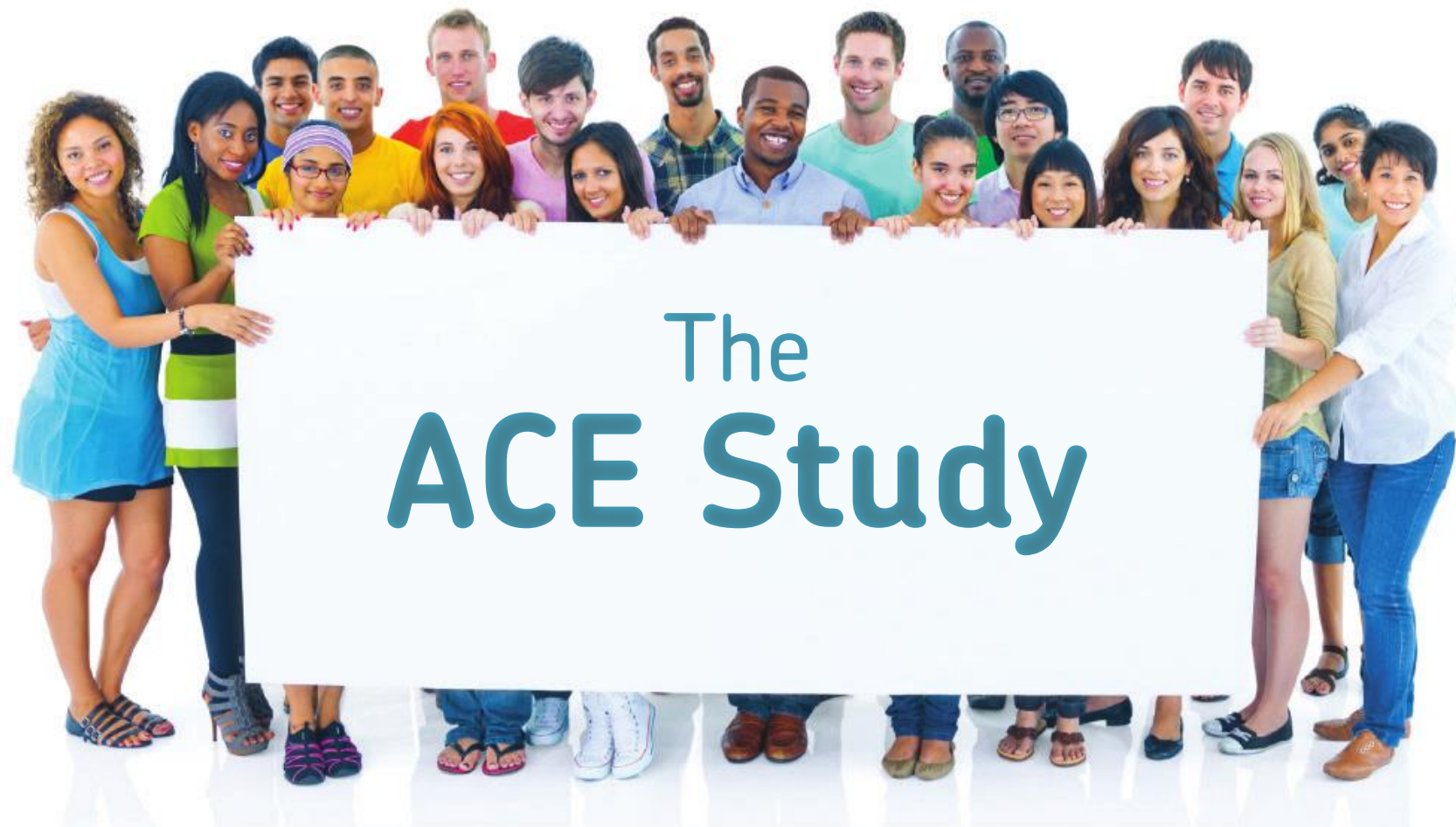
ACEs Influence Gene Expression

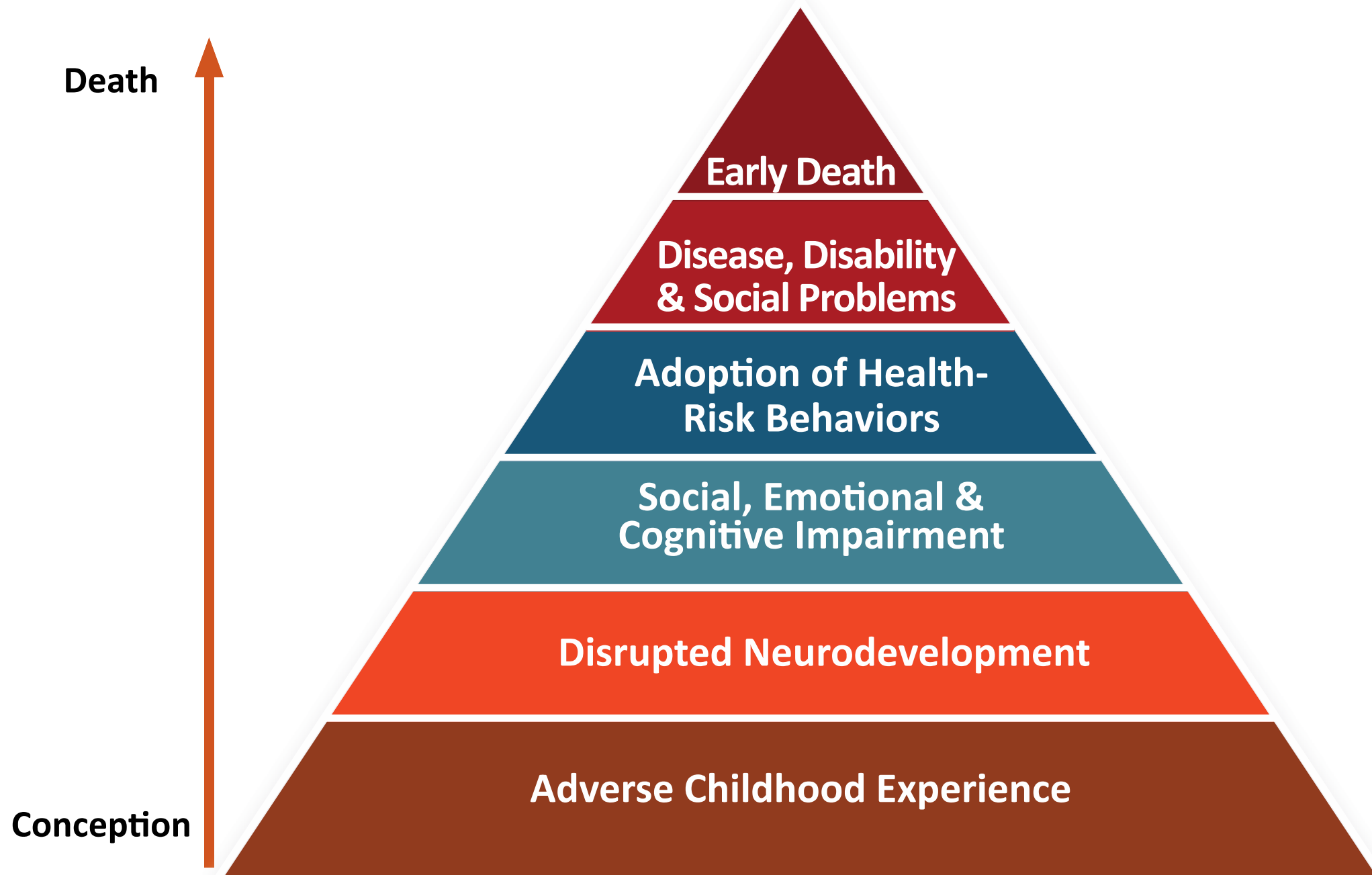




have a collective
CHOICE







Adverse Childhood Experiences **ARE COMMON**

Household Dysfunction

Substance Abuse	27%
Parental Sep/Divorce	23%
Mental Illness	17%
Battered Mothers	13%
Criminal Behavior	6%

Neglect

Emotional	15%
Physical	10%

Abuse

Emotional	11%
Physical	28%
Sexual	21%

5

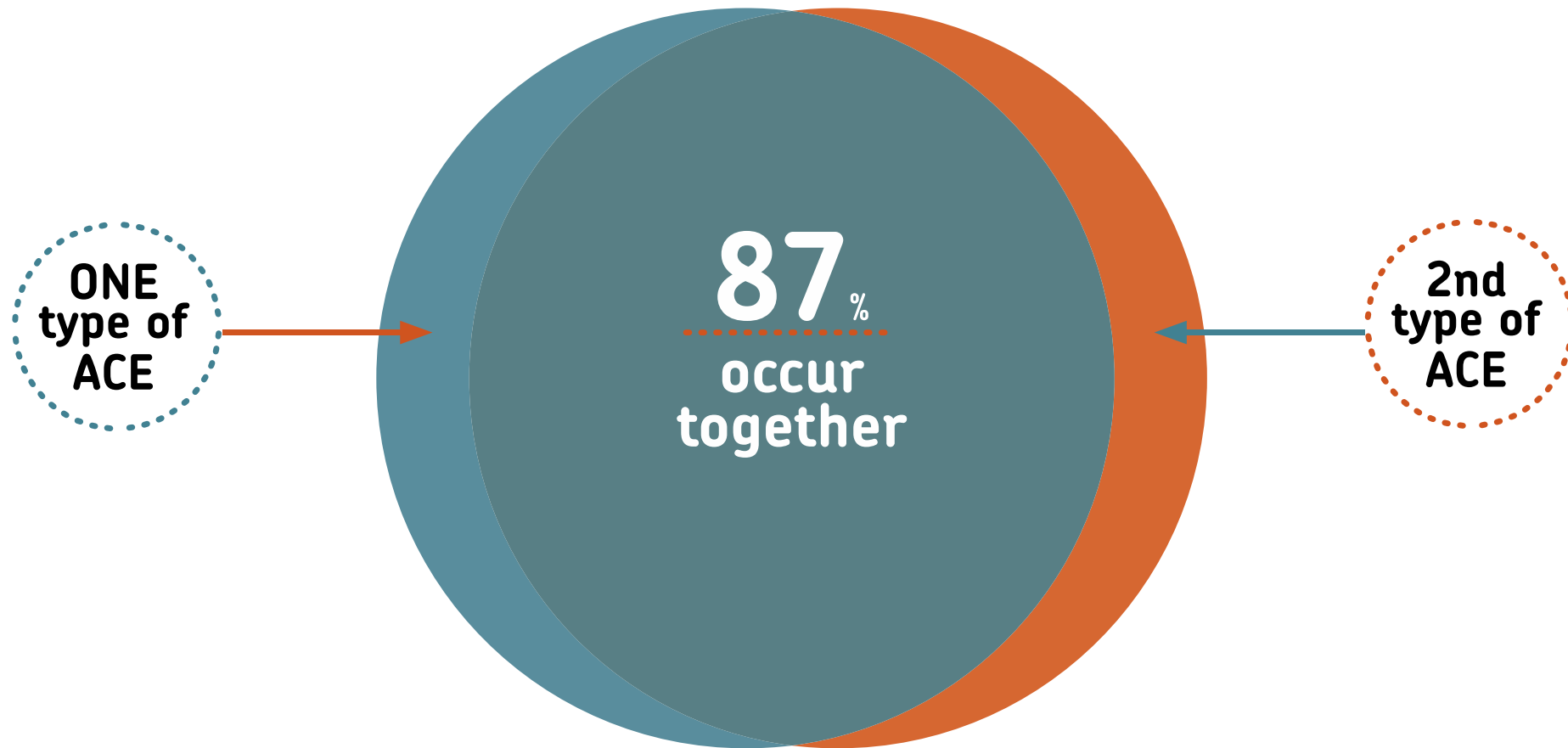
2

3

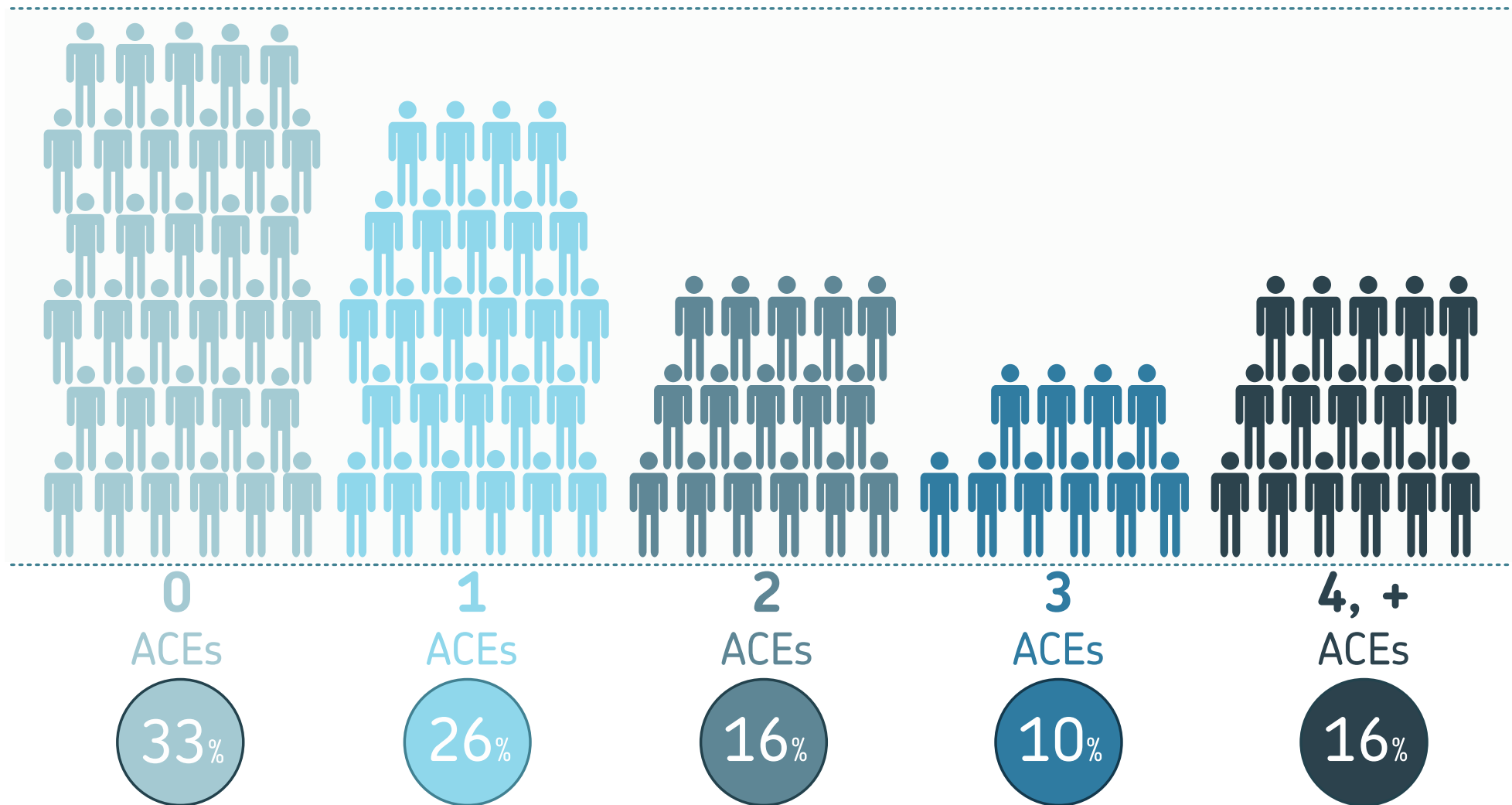
TOTAL 10 ACEs

ACEs are Highly Interrelated:

Where One ACE Occurs,
There are Usually Others

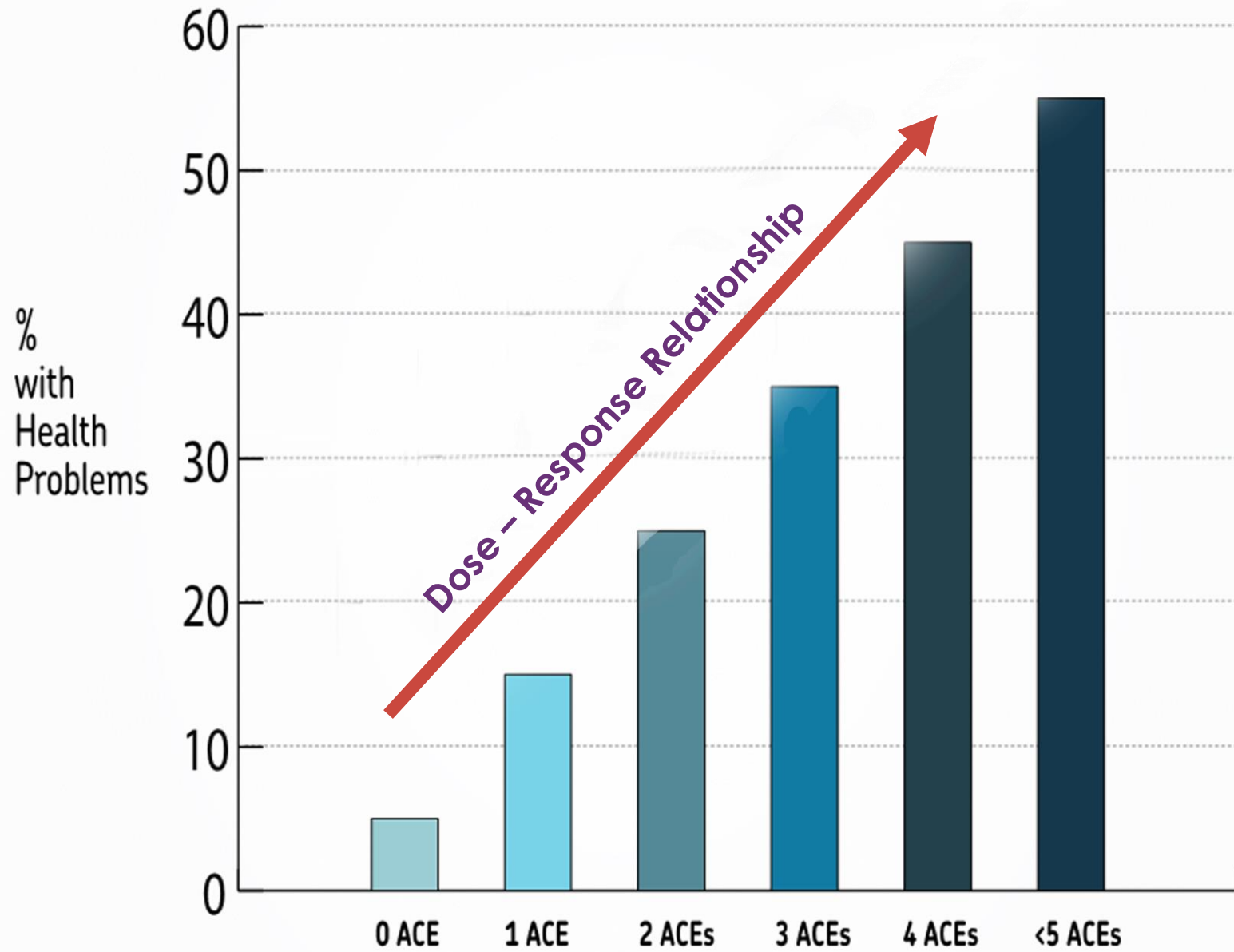


ACE Score = Number of ACE Categories

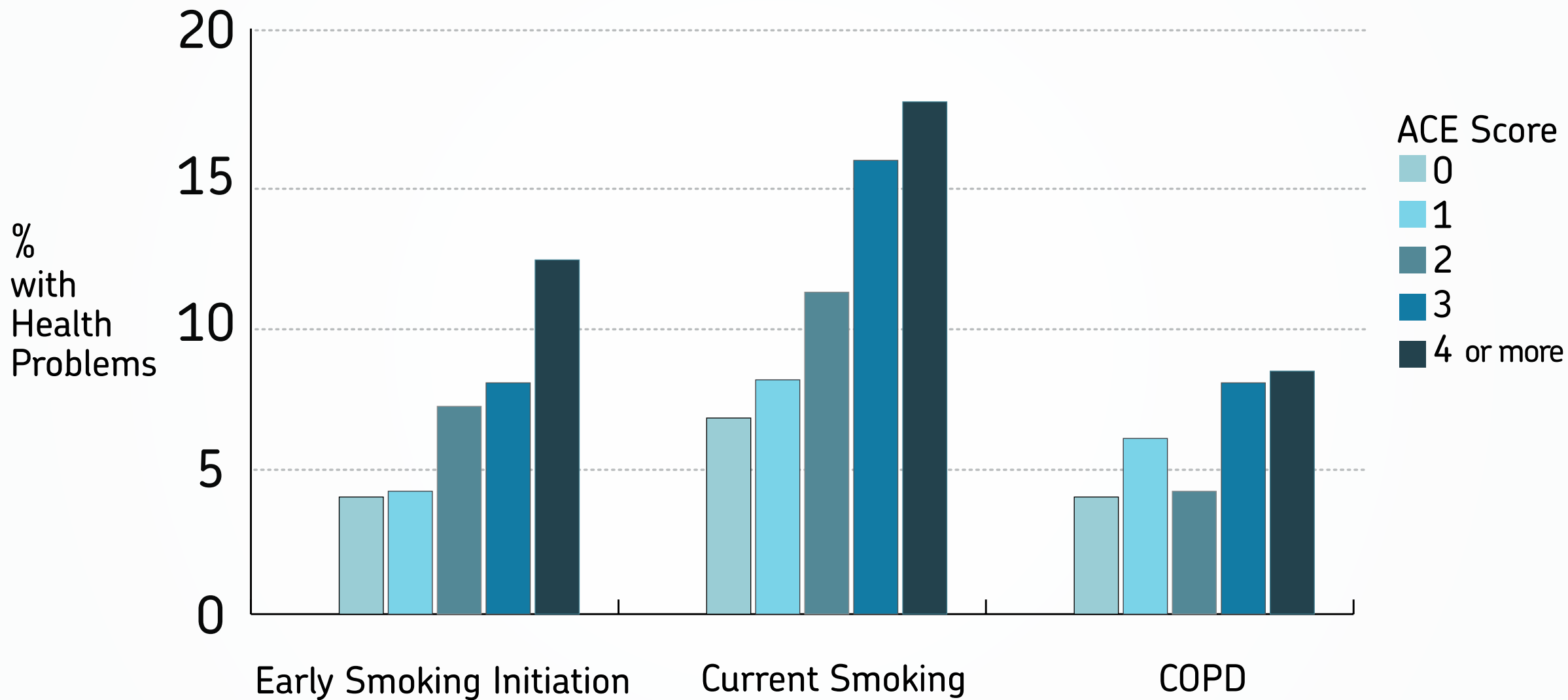


ACE Scores Reliably Predict Challenges During the Life Course

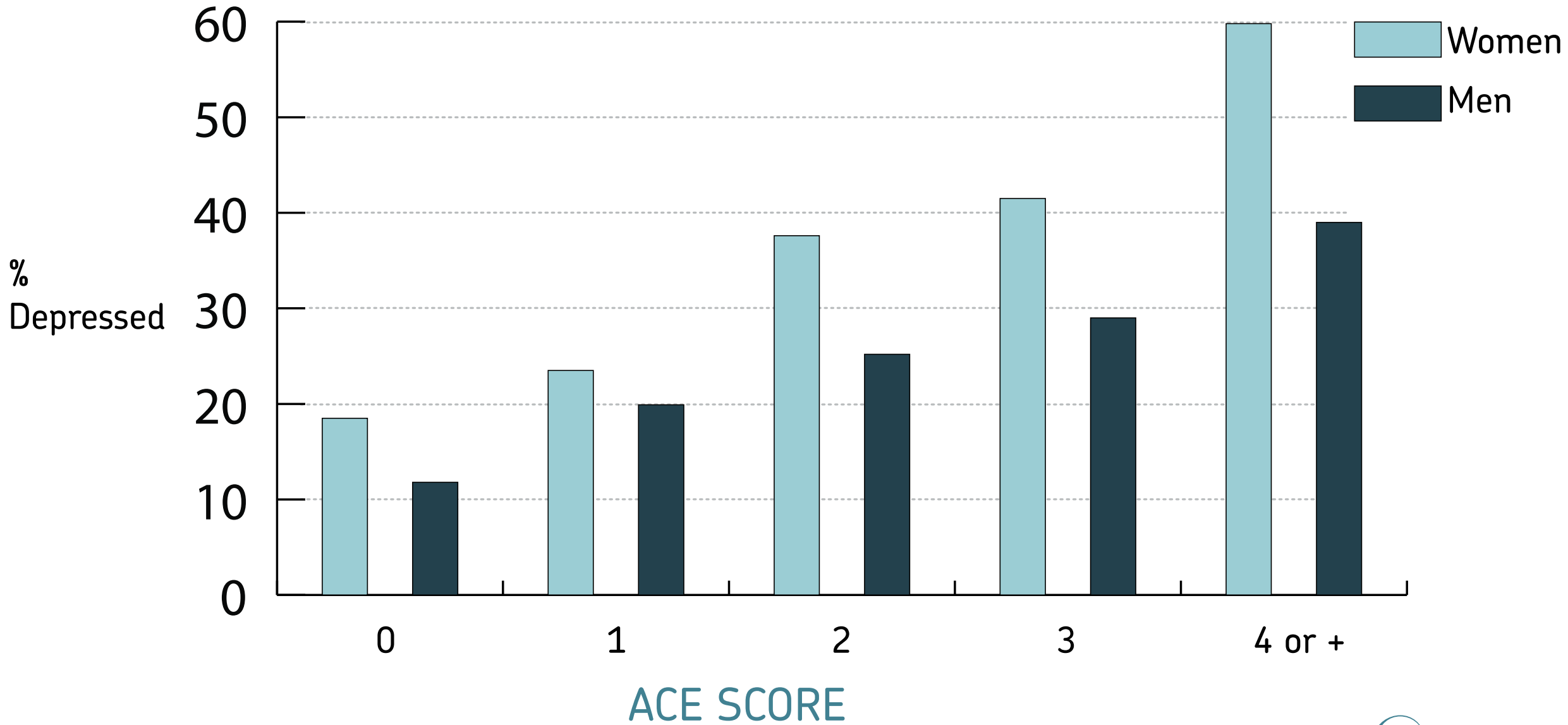
ACE Score and Health Problems



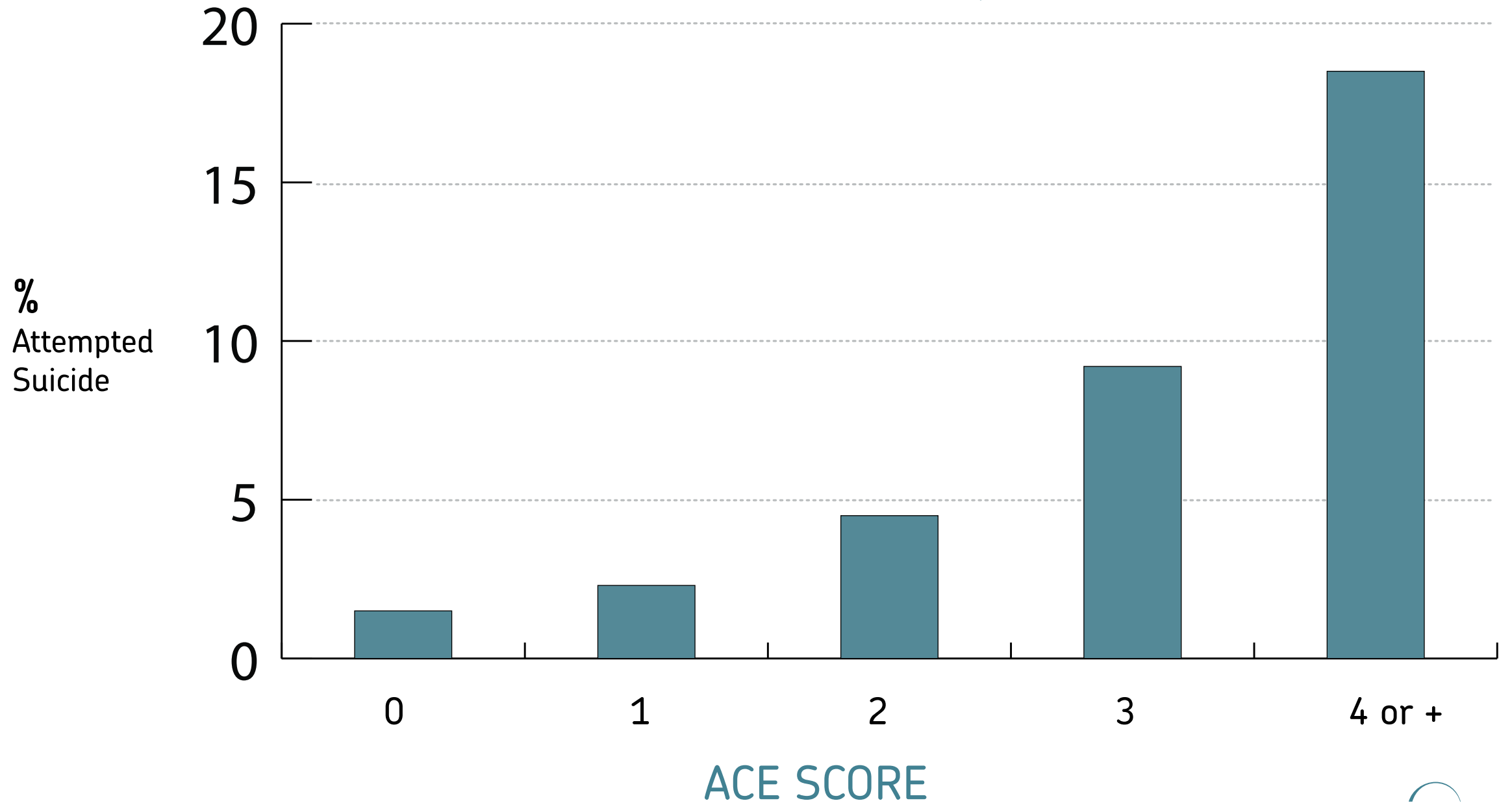
ACEs, Smoking and Lung Disease



ACEs & Depression

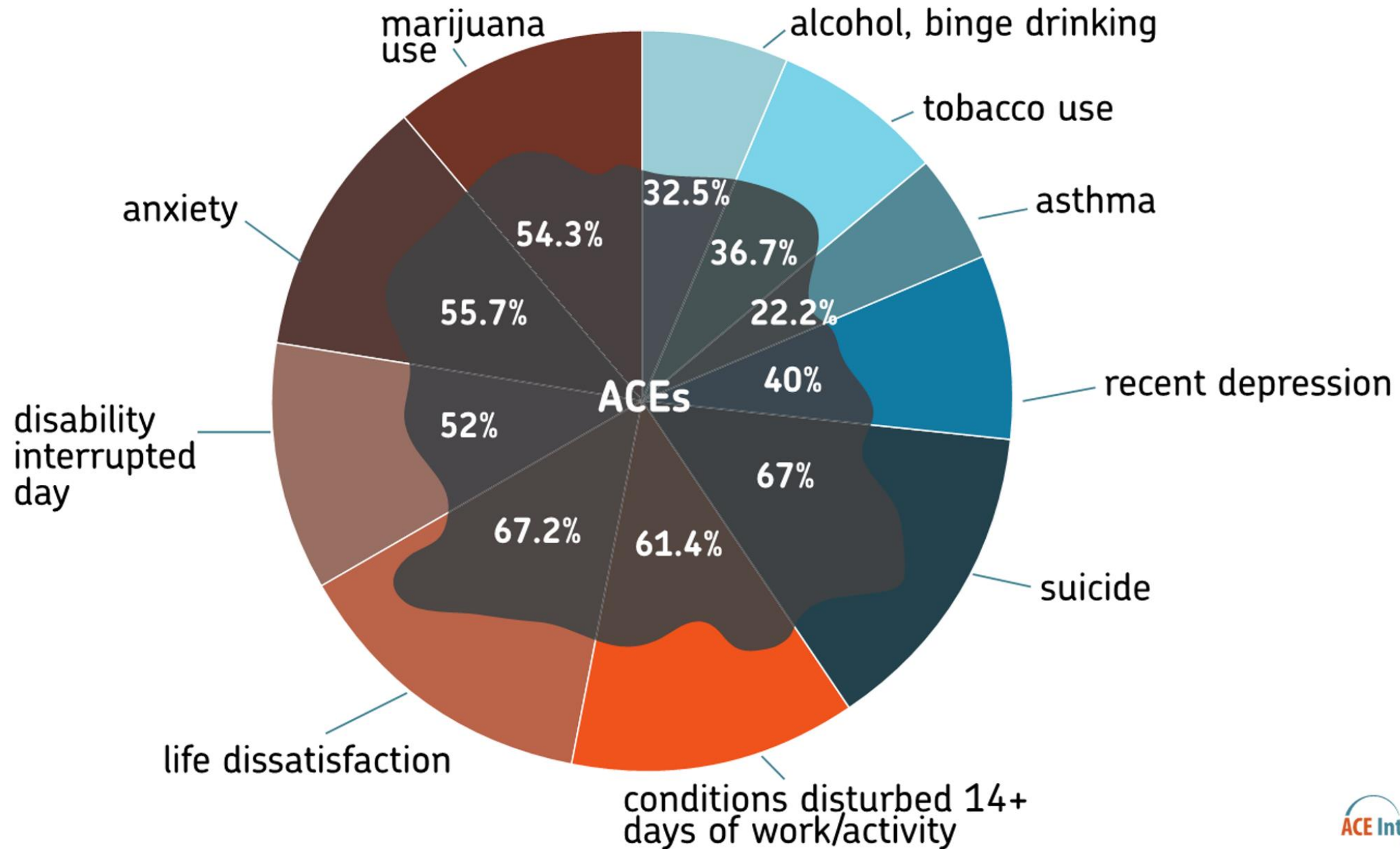


ACEs & Suicide Attempt



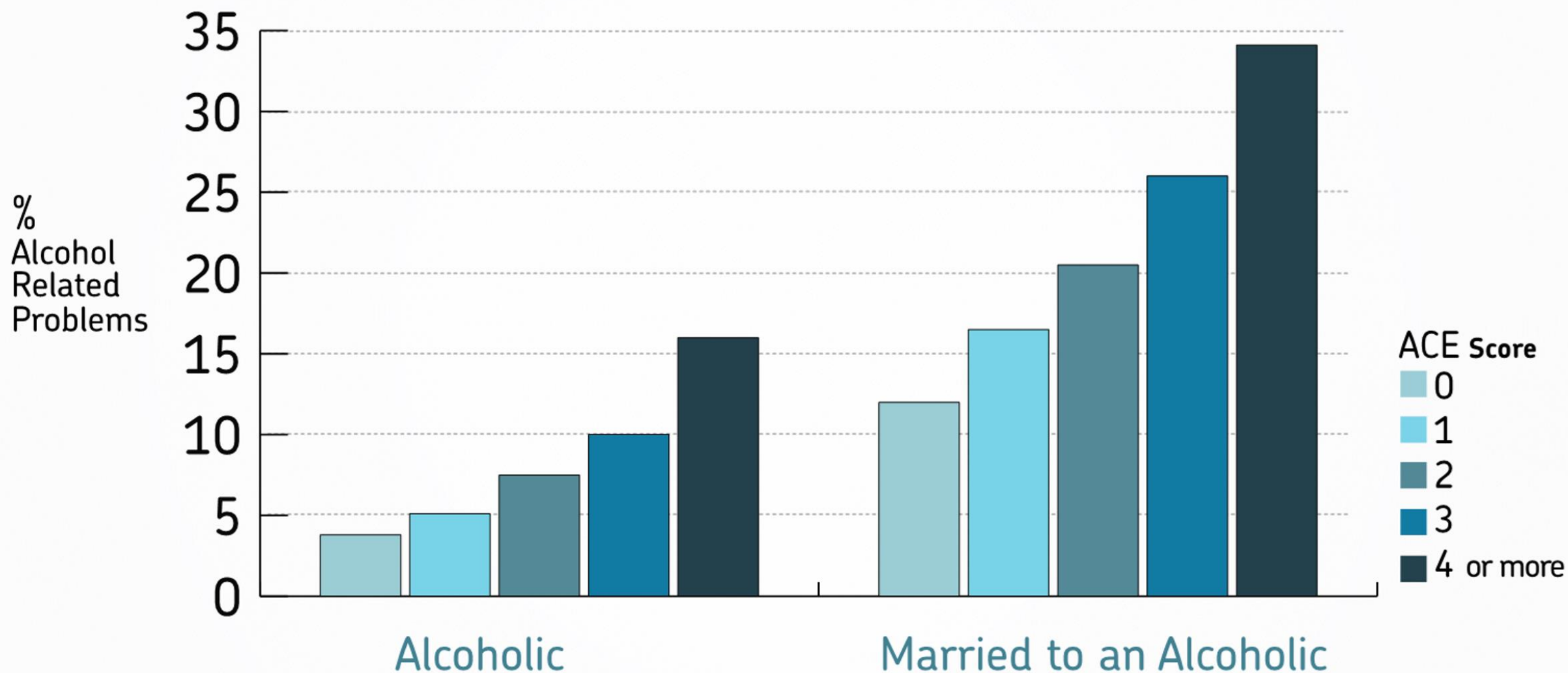
Population Attributable Risk

50

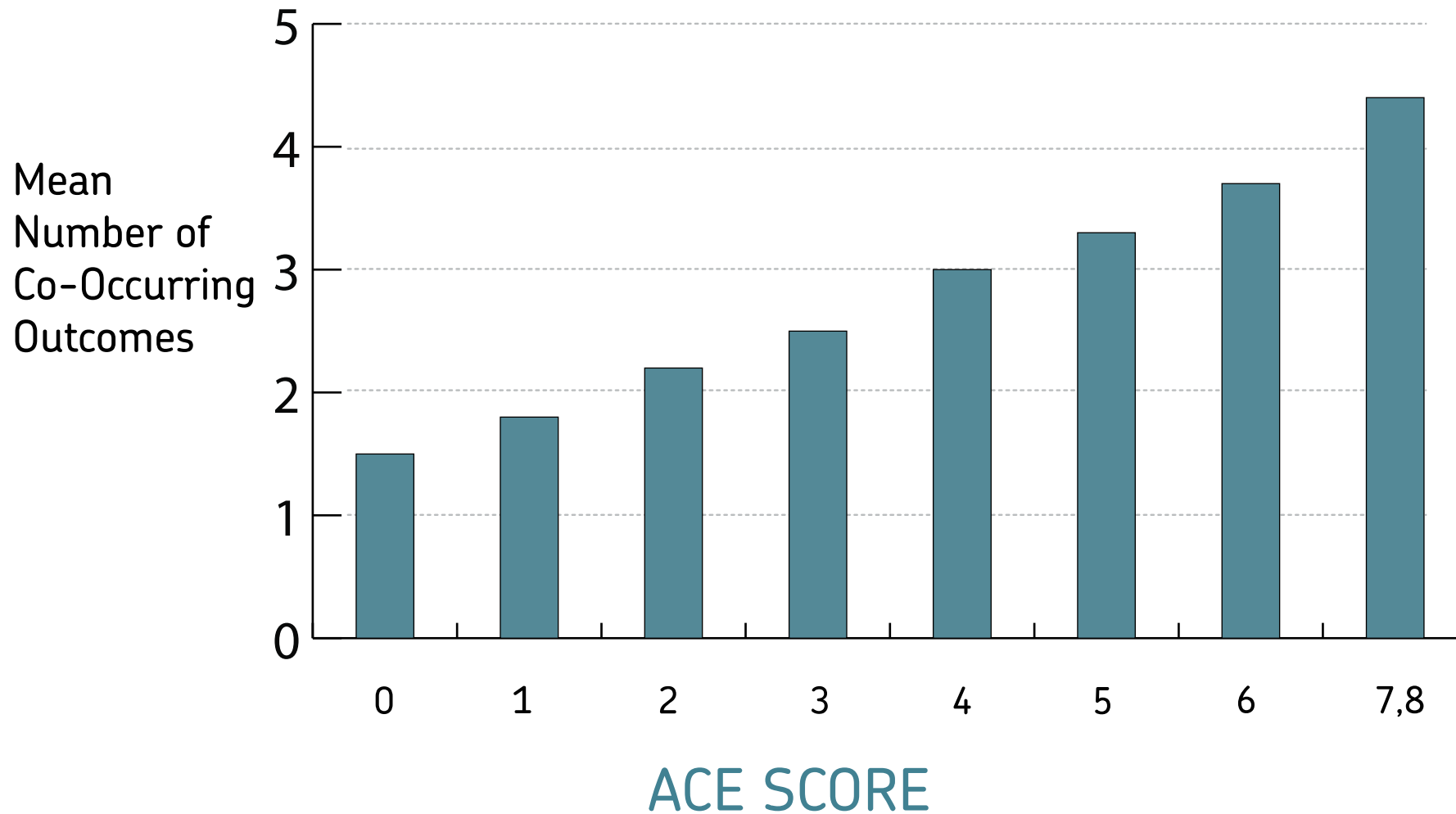


ACEs & Alcoholism & Marrying an Alcoholic

39



Neurobiology and Epidemiology Converge



Health and Social Problems

panic reactions
depression
anxiety
hallucinations
sleep disturbances
severe obesity
pain
smoking
alcoholism
illicit drug use
IV drug use
early intercourse
promiscuity
sexual dissatisfaction
amnesia (childhood)
high stress
problems with anger
perpetrating
domestic violence

EXAMPLES OF ACE-ATTRIBUTABLE PROBLEMS

Alcoholism & Alcohol Abuse

Chronic Obstructive

Lung Disease

Coronary Heart Disease

Depression

Drug Abuse & Illicit Drug Use

Fetal Death

Intimate Partner Violence

Liver Disease

Mental Health Problems

Obesity

Sexual Behavior Problems

Smoking

Unintended Pregnancy

Violence

Workplace Problems

Knocking Down ACE Scores

———— will prevent ————



3

homelessness, unemployment, incarceration

2

disability, learning problems

1

poverty



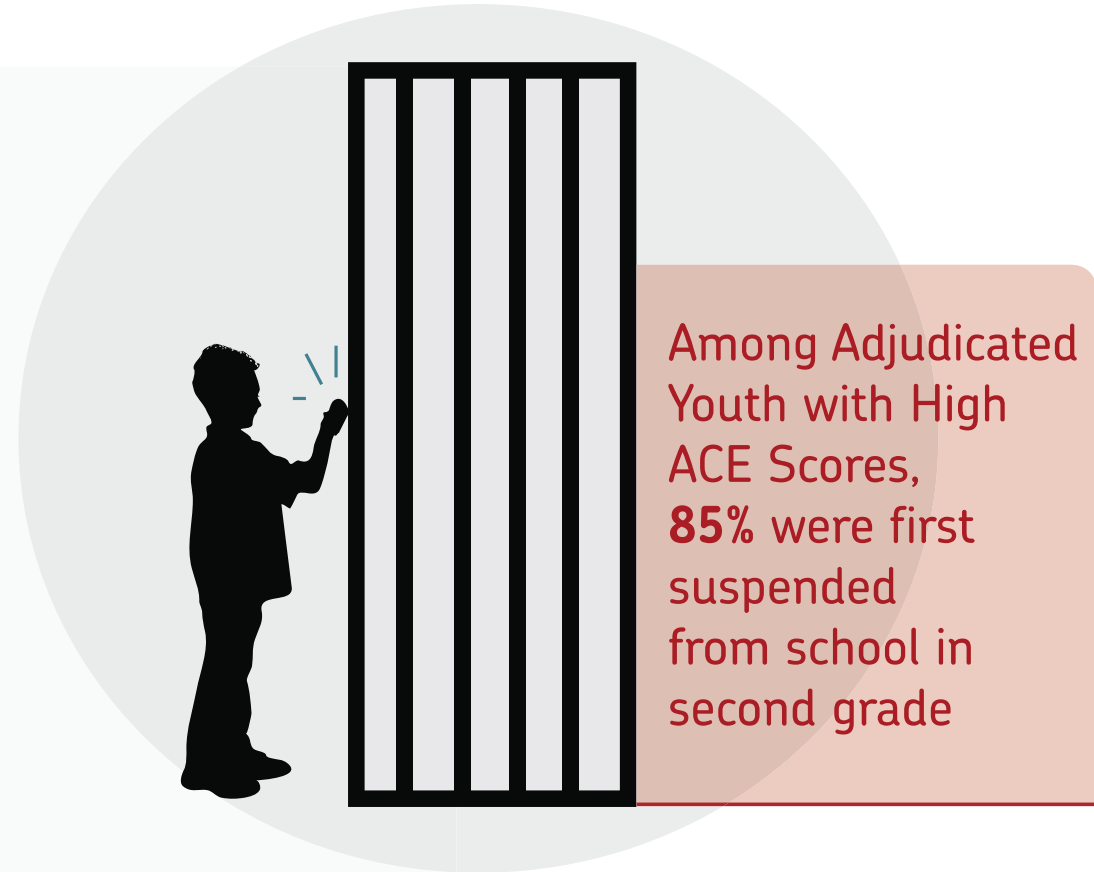
Results Oriented Decision Making: Data



Not Safe at Home



Not Welcome at School



Pathways to Poverty and Homelessness

Adaptations To Toxic Stress

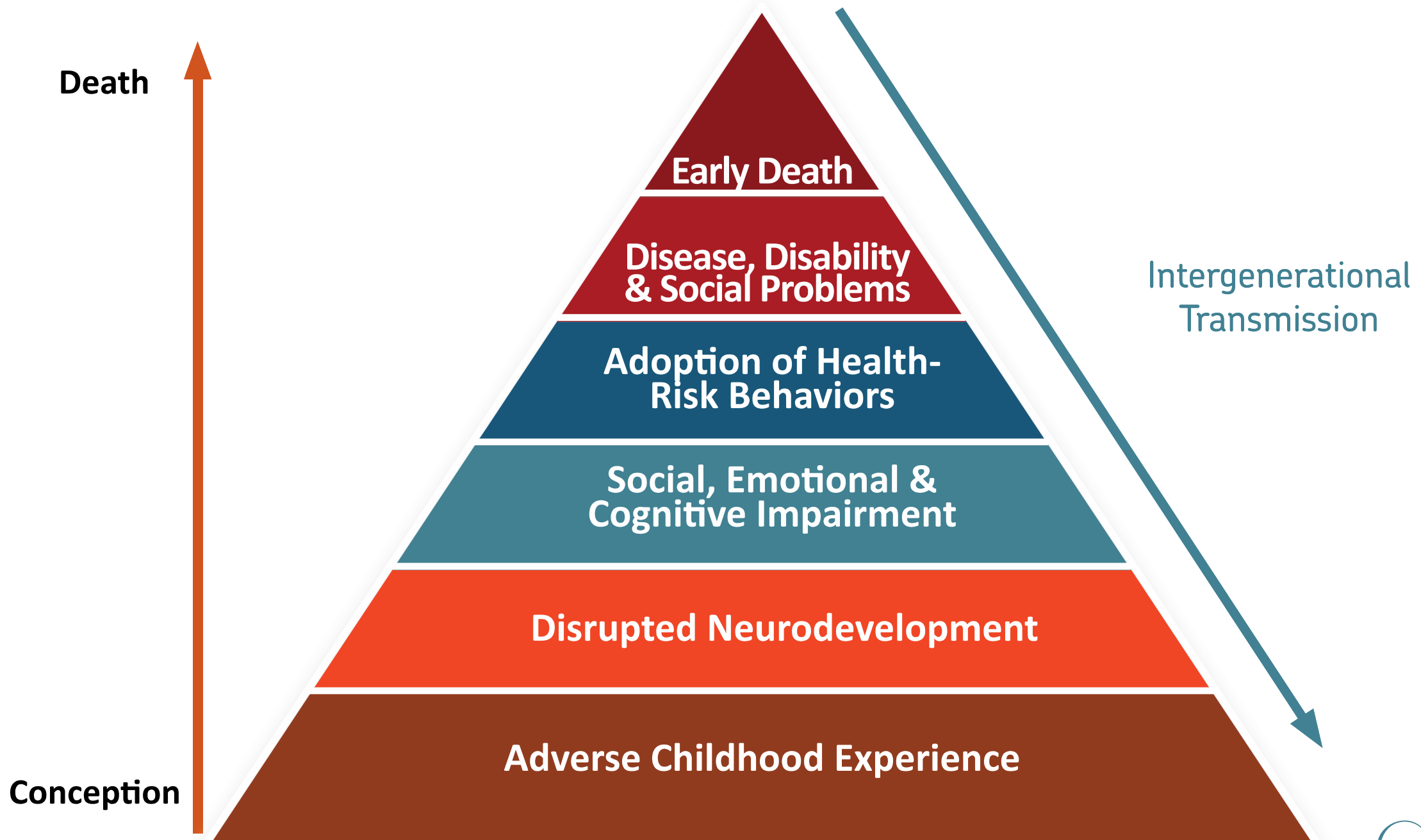
Cognition
Attention
Behavior

Risks

Academic Failure
Early Substance
Use/Abuse
Kicked Out
Dropped Out
Adult Adversity

Productivity

Low Wage Jobs
Worker Injury/Illness
Disabilities
Chronic Health
Problems



ACEs are Common, Interrelated, Powerful



High ACE Scores
in Population



Increased Risk of Multiple
Health and Social Problems



Intergenerational
Transmission of ACEs



we

**have the power to
shift the dynamics
that lead to high
ACE scores.**

CHANGE is up to US



It is shaped by our thoughts, our conversations, the way we relate with one another in relationships, in families, and in communities.

OVERCOMING ACES - BUILDING RESILIENT ADULTS



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RESILIENCE

“This capacity to cope with stress, overcome adversity, and thrive despite (and perhaps even because of) challenges in life.

While some people may seem to be naturally more resilient, research shows that children, adults, and even communities can learn skills and ways of thinking that boost resilience and help them grow”

- Anda, 2014

FACTORS THAT FOSTER RESILIENCY

- Supportive Relationships (Peer support example)
- Sense of Belonging
- Healthy Coping Strategies

- www.developingchild.harvard.edu

RESILIENCY TRUMPS ACES

We cannot take away adverse experiences

However, communities can develop prevention strategies

We can counter and buffer the effects on children

- Tip the scale with Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) Sege & Browne, 2017
- Incorporate healthy stress management practices
- Engage families, communities, faith communities

POSITIVE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

- Nurturing, supportive relationships
- Safe, stable, protective, and equitable environments
- Opportunities for constructive social engagement and connectedness
- Learning social and emotional competencies

- *Responding to ACEs with HOPE: Health Outcomes From Positive Experiences, Sege & Browne, 2017*

PEER SUPPORT CHARACTERISTICS

- **Relationship-focused:** The relationship is the foundation. It is respectful, trusting, empathetic, collaborative, and mutual.
- **Trauma-informed:** Peer support utilizes a strength-based framework that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety and creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

- **SAMSHA**