
Aspiranet

~ March 2022 ~

Monthly Training

Wellness Screening: Trauma & Resilience

Aspiranet completes a Wellness Screening with every child and young adult at placement and again every six months. Aspiranet believes in the importance of the overall well-being of each individual. The purpose of the Wellness Screening is to identify a child or young adult's needs in key areas of "wellness", including:

- Physical/dental health
- Risk of harm (suicide or violence)
- Nutrition
- Pain
- Substance abuse
- Spiritual needs
- Cultural needs
- Trauma and Resilience

Through the Wellness screening process, identified needs in any of the above areas help to determine referrals for services as well as service plan goals to address the child or young adult's individual needs.

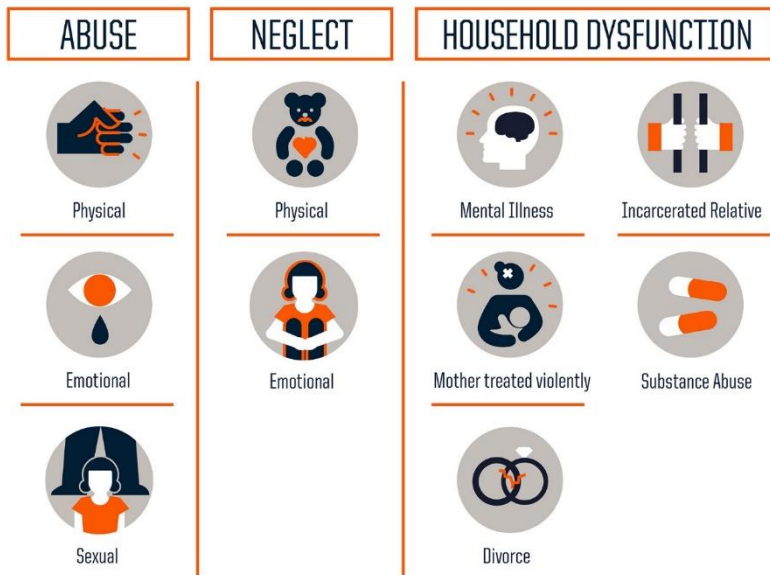
Aspiranet believes all areas of the Wellness Screening are important. One area of particular focus is Trauma and Resilience. While each area is very important, the one area that impacts all children and young adults in foster care is trauma. We know that the process of being in the child welfare system and separated from birth family leads to trauma. Due to the impact of trauma, Aspiranet screens each child and young adult using the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Questionnaire.

The ACEs screening questionnaire was developed following the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study conducted by Kaiser Permanente, with 17,000 Kaiser members volunteering to participate. The study focused on how stressful or traumatic experiences during childhood affect adult health. The study information was then further evaluated and processed by the Centers of Disease Control (CDC).

Many people experience harsh events in their childhood. 63% of the people who participated in the study had experienced at least one category of childhood trauma. Over 20% experienced 3 or more categories of trauma, also known as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) can include:

- **Abuse:** Emotional / physical / sexual
- **Neglect:** Emotional / physical
- **Witnessing a brother or sister being abused**
- **Household:** Substance abuse / mental illness / domestic violence (mother treated violently) / incarcerated household member / parental separation or divorce
- **Bullying by another child or adult**
- **Homelessness**
- **Involvement in child welfare system**
- **Medical trauma**
- **Natural disasters and war**
- **Racism, sexism, or any other form of discrimination**
- **Witnessing violence in the community**



The study found that the more categories of trauma experienced in childhood, the greater the possibility for increased risk of:

- alcohol and drug abuse
- asthma/lung disease
- depression
- heart disease
- liver disease
- intimate partner violence
- sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
- smoking
- suicide attempts
- unintended pregnancies / adolescent pregnancy

Overcoming Impact of ACEs with Resilience

Now the good news! Studies show that having and building resilience can help to overcome the impact of ACEs.

What is Resilience?

Resilience is the ability to endure adversity and bounce back from difficult life events. Research shows that if parents provide a safe environment for their children and teach them how to be resilient it helps to reduce the effects of ACEs.

In addition to the ACEs screening for trauma, Aspiranet also screens for Resilience using specific screening tools with questions for children 0-11 years, and another set of questions for 12-21 year olds.

Both of these tools provide a “resilience score” to help gauge a child or youth’s ability to “recover” and “bounce back” from adverse or challenging situations and experiences. Aspiranet is using these scores as a way to help monitor a child or youth’s progress toward building resilience.

How Resource Parents Can Help

And now even better news...increasing resilience can be done through everyday actions Resource Parents are already doing!

By reviewing this information, you’ve take a first step to helping by gaining an understanding of ACEs and how they can impact children as they move into adulthood. Additional, everyday ways you can and do help include:

- Create safe physical and emotional environments at home
- Maintain a daily routine; meet basic needs with nutritious food, regular sleep schedule, positive play, appropriate clothing, regular health care, and supportive education
- Build attachment and nurturing relationships: listen and respond patiently to your child in a supportive way; pay attention to your child’s physical and emotional needs
- Gain understanding of child and adolescent development
- Encourage development of social and emotional skills: help children to make friends, interact in a healthy way with others; identify and manage their emotions; communicate their feelings and needs
- Be a role model: demonstrate how to manage stress, challenges, and problem solving in an effective manner. Model healthy communication
- Maintain social connections: have positive relationships with other adults for both fun and support of your family

Talk with your Aspiranet Social Worker about your child and youth's ACEs and resilience scores. The information will help to gain understanding and offer an opportunity to explore together specific ways to assist the children and youth in your care.

Additional Resources:

ACES 101 <http://acestoohigh.com/aces-101>

Triple-P Parenting www.triplep-parenting.net/glo-en/home

Resilience Trumps ACEs www.resiliencetrumpsACEs.org

CDC-Kaiser Adverse Childhood Experiences Study

[www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/ace study/](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/)

Zero to Three Guides for Parents

<http://www.zerotothree.org/aboutus/areas-of-expertise/freeparent-brochures-and-guides>

My signature below indicates that I have completed the March 2022 training "Trauma & Resilience"

Signature Foster Parent #1

Date

Print Name Foster Parent #1

Signature Foster Parent #2

Date

Print Name Foster Parent #2

Aspiranet Authorized Signature

Date

Training credit: ____ minutes