

DEFINING A.C.E.S



Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences

The United States,
like all nations,
faces multiple social
and economic
challenges that
must be met to
secure a promising
future for its
citizens.



Are we up to the challenge?



An integral part of overcoming those challenges is producing a well-educated, healthy adult population sufficiently skilled to participate effectively in a global economy and to become responsible stakeholders in a productive society.

A Nation's Wealth



Children's health—involving much more than merely the absence of disease—is a nation's wealth.



A sound body and mind enhance the capacity of children to develop a wide range of competencies that are necessary to become contributing members of a successful society.

So, is 'being educated' enough?

Concerns continue to grow about the quality of public education and its capacity to prepare the nation's future workforce.



What could help? Science Says...

Science indicates that sound investments in interventions that reduce adversity and its effects on children are needed, along with education, to strengthen the foundations of physical and mental health, generating even larger returns to all of society.



ACEs have Life Long Effects

Adverse events or experiences that occur early in childhood can have lifelong consequences for both physical and mental well-being.





What's the real cause?

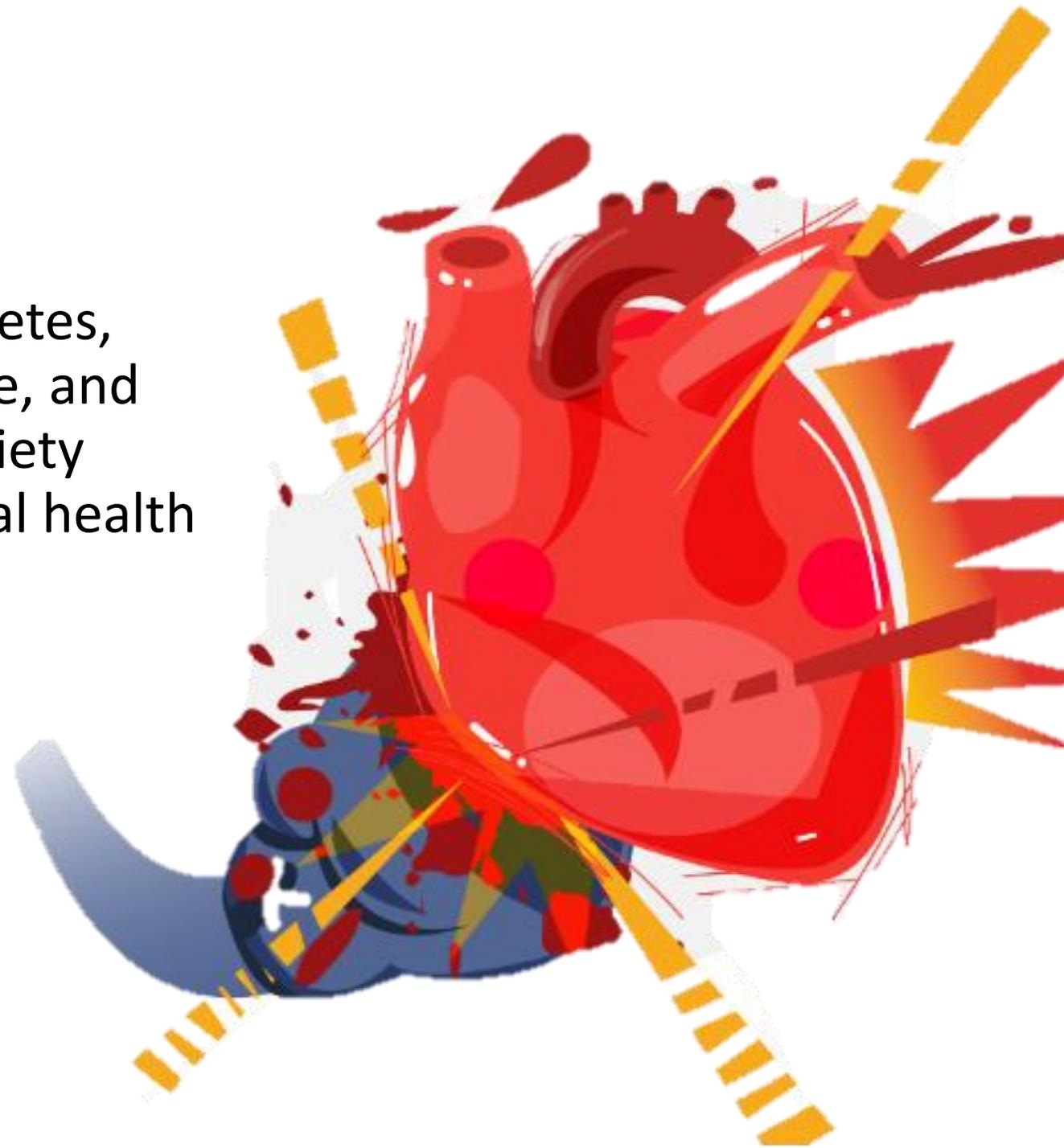
The leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the United States are related to health behaviors and lifestyle factors; these factors have been called the “actual” causes of death.

Increasing the Risks

Traumatic experiences during childhood, including physical abuse and the adversities that accumulate for children reared in persistent poverty, can lead to greater susceptibility to a wide range of illnesses well into the adult years.



This includes diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and cancer, as well as depression, anxiety disorders, addictions, and other mental health impairments.



Even if you don't remember?

They have this effect even in the absence of any conscious memory of early trauma.





ACEs are the Cause of Death?

Insofar as abuse and other potentially damaging childhood experiences contribute to the development of these risk factors, then these childhood exposures should be recognized as the basic causes of morbidity and mortality in adult life.



Paying a high price

Beyond its effect on individuals, poor health early in life also imposes significant societal costs that are borne by those who remain healthy.

Making a wise investment

This connection between early life experiences and the health of a nation underscores the importance of strategic investments in the care and protection of pregnant women, infants, and young children, and it suggests that most current attempts to prevent adult disease and create a healthier workforce may be starting too late.

