

Julie Rose

Heady

English 165

02/14/19

Definition essay

The term “A.C.E.” has associations that might lead to thinking about a few different topics. The highest valued playing card, or the hardware store with the catchy jingle are among a couple of examples. These thoughts are all valid, however, in this case, A.C.E. Is an acronym associated with a much more serious connotation. “A.C.E.,” or Adverse Childhood Experiences are any specific events in a child’s life that can affect their development in a negative way A few examples of A.C.E.s, according to SAMHSA, include “Physical abuse, Sexual abuse, Emotional abuse, Physical neglect, Emotional neglect, Intimate partner violence, Mother treated violently, Substance misuse within household, Household mental illness, Parental separation or divorce, Incarcerated household member” (“Adverse Childhood Experiences”).

A.C.E.s are organized using a questionnaire with a corresponding number chart. This will give the “A.C.E. score” (“Got Your ACE Score?”). The A.C.E. study originated in 1994, and according to Ace Response, an organization dedicated to improving the level of A.C.E.s a child experiences, “The study began with a sample of 9,508 individuals representing a 70.5% response rate” (“Who We Are”). The higher the score on the ACE test, the greater the effect on the child. Children who suffer from any number of these Adverse Childhood Experiences are more likely to have long-term effects. However, children who suffer from four or more tend to have a greater increased likelihood of suffering later in life. Some directly correlated, long-term effects include

alcoholism, drug abuse, likelihood of STDs, poor mental/ self-esteem health, obesity, just to name a few (“Who We Are”).

Adverse Childhood Experiences can affect students into their adult life, however, on a short-term basis, it can affect them in the classroom as well. Students with a high A.C.E. score can suffer from a problem called “toxic stress.” This kind of stress is detrimental to a student’s performance in the classroom. It can lead to low self-esteem, low test scores, and behavioral issues (“Who We Are”). This can prove to be an extremely difficult feat for educators. Each child comes from a different background with different types and amounts of A.C.E.s. Finding a way to keep students engaged, even when they have major conflicts going on at home, is not easy. At times, school can reinforce the child’s behavioral or esteem issues because of a frustrated or uninformed teacher who attempts to correct the behavior with punishment rather than encouragement (“ACEs and Resilience: What Can We Do?”). Although it is a tricky situation to navigate, it is vital to the success of those students who need extra help.

Bibliography:

“ACEs and Resilience: What Can We Do?” *Public Schools First NC*,
www.publicschoolsfirstnc.org/resources/fact-sheets/aces-and-resilience-what-can-we-do/.

“Adverse Childhood Experiences.” *Stages of Community Readiness / SAMHSA*,
www.samhsa.gov/capt/practicing-effective-prevention/prevention-behavioral-health/adverse-childhood-experiences.

“Got Your ACE Score?” *ACEs Too High*, 10 July 2018, acestoohigh.com/got-your-ace-score/.

ACE Response. “Who We Are.” *ACE Study*, www.aceresponse.org/who_we_are/ACE-Study_43_pg.htm.