SEMINAR
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): A Trauma Informed Approach to Early Years

Hosted by the Regional ACE Reference Group

@safeguardingni
@cypsp
@publichealthni
@westernHSCTrust

#ACESNI  #belfasthealthycities18
WELCOME

Maurice Leeson
Health and Social Care Board
A STRATEGIC POLICY CONTEXT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Dreena Evans
Department for Education NI
Programme for Government Outcomes

Working Draft – Still subject to political agreement

1. We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy
2. We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment
3. We have a more equal society
4. We enjoy long, healthy, active lives
5. We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential
6. We have more people working in better jobs
7. We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other
8. We care for others and we help those in need
9. We are a shared, welcoming and confident society that respects diversity
10. We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest
11. We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure
12. We give our children and young people the best start in life

HSC
Context for Implementation

Programme for Government
- Best Start in Life
- We care for others and we help those in need

Children’s Services Cooperation Act

Executive’s Children & Young People’s Strategy

ACEs Implementation
A STRATEGIC VIEW TO ADDRESSING ACEs IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Maurice Leeson
Health and Social Care Board
Overview of Today’s Presentation

What you will hear about this afternoon:

• What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)?
• Linking to developments across 6 Nations
• The Northern Ireland Context
• The Role of the Regional ACE Reference Group
• ACE Developments in Northern Ireland

How you can play your part;

• Support the creation of resilient communities
• Support an ACE aware and trauma informed workforce
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly harm a child (e.g. sexual or physical abuse) or affect the environment in which they live (e.g. growing up in a house with domestic violence)

(Bellis et al 2016)
What are Adverse Childhood Experiences?

- **Abuse**
  - Emotional
  - Physical
  - Sexual

- **Neglect**
  - Emotional
  - Physical

- **Household factors**
  - Domestic Violence
  - Substance misuse
  - Mental ill-health
  - Parental separation
  - Imprisoned parent
  - Living in care
  - On-going parental conflict
  - Serious illness or disability
  - Poverty or financial stress
  - Troubles related
What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?

Nadine Burke Harris – Ted Talk

https://www.ted.com/talks/nadine_burke_harris_how_childhood_trauma_affects_health_across_a_lifetime
Why understanding about Adverse Childhood Experiences is important?

• Creates a shared, whole system, understanding of the impact of adversity in childhood
• Raise awareness of impact of trauma across all agencies
• Makes a powerful case for early intervention and prevention for all agencies
• Cost to the public sector of late intervention in Northern Ireland is estimated at £536 million per year. This is equivalent to £288 for every Northern Ireland resident, or £1,166 per child
• Emphasizes for agencies, communities and families the importance of building and fostering resilience
National Study of ACEs in Wales (18 – 69 years)

Compared with people with no ACEs, those with 4+ ACEs were

4 times more likely to be a high risk drinker

6 times more likely to smoke tobacco or E-cigs

11 times more likely to have smoked cannabis

16 times more likely to have used crack cocaine or heroin

20 times more likely to have been incarcerated in their life

INDEPENDENT OF POVERTY
Policy - Preventing ACES in Wales could reduce;

- Heroin/crack cocaine use (lifetime) by 66%
- Incarceration (lifetime) by 65%
- Violence perpetration (past year) by 60%
- Violence victimisation (past year) by 57%
- Cannabis use (lifetime) by 42%
- Unintended teen pregnancy by 41%
- High-risk drinking (current) by 35%
- Early sex (before age 16) by 31%
- Smoking tobacco or e-cigarettes (current) by 24%
- Poor diet (current; <2 fruit & veg portions daily) by 16%

in adults aged 18-69 years

(Bellis et al. 2015, n=2028)
What Can We Do?

• “To sustain improvements in public health a shift in focus to include prevention of ACEs, resilience building and ACE informed service provision” (Hughes et al 2017)

And in doing this we are…

• Building on an existing strategic direction
• Recognising that an body of work focused on trauma exists
• Supporting the development of resilience in individuals, families and communities
• Building a narrative of hope
What We Are Not Planning to Do

• Population wide screening for ACEs
• Encourage a widespread practice based on checklists
• Duplicate or ignore the contribution of existing service provision
ACEs and Resilience

Experience of ACEs → Short to medium term Impact → Moderated by Resilience → Long term impact of ACEs
BREAKING Always Available Adult

THE Equipped to manage your behaviours and emotions

CYCLE Feel you can overcome hardship and guide your destiny

Of ACEs Involved and connected
By being ACE aware and Trauma Informed we will move from asking…

“What’s wrong with you?” To “What happened to you?”

Blame
Shame
Punishment

Understanding
Nurturing
Healing
Making Connections-6 Nation Special Interest Group

- Who is involved: England, Northern Ireland Scotland, Wales, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands

- Inclusive of Civil Servants, Senior leaders from across Police, education, Social care, Justice Agencies, Children's Commissioner (Channel Islands)

- Focus on sharing knowledge/research

- Sharing experience of implementing responses to ACEs
Scottish and Welsh ACE Developments

**ACE Support Hub Scotland**

- Scottish Conference Call to Action
- The Scottish ACE Hub will increase understanding of ACEs in Scotland; and
- Develop actions to better prevent ACEs, and support the resilience of children and adults affected to mitigate the negative impacts of ACEs
- [ACES Documentary Scotland](#)

**ACE Support Hub Wales**

- A small, virtual team who are co-ordinating, facilitating, sharing, learning, engaging, involving, influencing and asking
- Strategic engagement and organisational readiness
- Tools and resources to enable ACE informed approaches
- Support from sector leads > identification of what's already going on, the gaps and the barriers
- [ACES Documentary Wales](#)
The Northern Ireland Context

What will be discussed;

• Legislation, Policy and Operational Context
• Programme for Government
• Regional ACE Reference Group
• Set a platform for the regional roll out of the ACE agenda across Northern Ireland.

• £1.5 million will be invested through the EITP to develop:
  1. General awareness of trauma informed practice across a multiagency spectrum
  2. Specialised training for professionals
  3. Trauma informed advisors to instil culture and practice at an organisational level.

Legislative, Policy and Operational Context

• UNCRC and International Conventions

• Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
  • Art. 17 (Definition) and Art. 18 (Duty)

• Policy – Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016

• Operational and Procedural Response
  • CSIB / CYPSP / SBNI / SWS

• Cross-Departmental, Inter-Agency and Multi-Disciplinary working towards Outcomes
Regional NI ACE Reference Group

- Established following the ACE Conference in Nov 2017
- Membership has grown to include cross departmental and multi agency representation to ensure links to the policy context
- Participation in the 6 Nations ‘think tank’
- Begin the conversations…ensure consistency of message and response
- Hearts and minds – inter and across disciplines and agencies

Collaborate to transform
# Regional ACE Reference Group - Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Agency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kieran Downey (Chair)</strong></td>
<td>Western Health and Social Care Trust (on behalf of all HSC Trusts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helen McKenzie</td>
<td>Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul McConville</td>
<td>Department of Health</td>
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<td>Rodney Morton</td>
<td>Department of Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maurice Leeson</td>
<td>Health and Social Care Board / CYPSP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maurice Meehan</td>
<td>Public Health Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pamela Woods</td>
<td>Education Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June Wilkinson</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jill Duffie / Ryan Henderson</strong></td>
<td>Police Service for Northern Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colleen Heaney</td>
<td>Youth Justice Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geraldine O’Hare</td>
<td>Probation Board for Northern Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catherine Taggart</td>
<td>Local Government (SOLACE)</td>
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Regional ACE Reference Group

- Share information about developments in the ACE agenda across agencies
- Share research knowledge and good practice in relation to the implementation of developments to tackle ACES and build resilience
- Promote collaboration by actively making linkages between initiatives designed to prevent ACEs and address the impact
- Act as a coordination point for ACEs development to ensure that there is no duplication
- Seek opportunities to promote the tackling ACEs agenda
**Logic Model for ACES in Northern Ireland**

**NI Vision**
A community and workforce that is aware of the impact of ACEs on children’s outcomes and is able to respond effectively.

**Activities**
- Awareness raising for multi-agency workforce who work or engage with children, young people and their families
- Engagement of other key stakeholders including politicians, departments, service delivery agencies and communities
- Service Development to model ACE informed working
- Workforce Development – Trauma Aware Practice Training

**Outputs**
- Outcomes Groups screening of the Resilience documentary & other awareness raising events focused on communities
- Awareness raising activities for politicians
- MACE Project
- EITP Project – Appointment of sectoral leads in health, education, police and VCs through EITP to develop the trauma informed practice
- Training programme
- Agreement by 5 Directors of Social Services to embed ACEs

**Outcomes**
- Increase in awareness of ACE’s within community and professionals
- Professional engagement with ACEs and support for PoG measures
- Model of ACE informed practice / services
- Workforce able to effectively respond to trauma
Adverse Childhood Experiences

Developing a Trauma Informed Workforce

Helen McKenzie – Project Lead EITP WKS 4

Helen.mckenzie@hscni.net

@safeguardingni
1. SBNI took the strategic decision in 2017 to adopt a trauma-informed approach to safeguarding practice, in the search for better outcomes for children.

2. Trauma informed practice is not a treatment model but a way of understanding and responding to problematic behaviour through the lens of trauma.

3. It is an example of service delivery which incorporates evidence of the impact of early trauma on behaviour across the person’s life span.

4. Trauma informed practice requires the practitioner, from whichever professional background, to integrate their knowledge and understanding of trauma and the impact of such, on a person’s sense of well-being and their current behaviour to then enable and assist the person to rebuild healthy relational skills.
Trauma Informed Practice – Professional Development Project

The aim of the project is that all SBNI organisations will;

- Have **awareness** of the adverse childhood experiences which cause trauma in a child’s life
- Be aware of the impact of these adversities on the **development** of a child
- Be able to identify what creates **resilience** to cope with adversity
- Be able to develop policies and practice to **embed** trauma informed practice in their work.
HOPE
CHANGES
EVERYTHING.
Who will be trained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACE</th>
<th>AWARENESS</th>
<th>Training</th>
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<tr>
<td>EANI</td>
<td>PSNI</td>
<td>HSCTs (Multi Disciplinary)</td>
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<td>PHA</td>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>Nurses</td>
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<td>Community &amp; Voluntary</td>
<td>PBNI</td>
<td>GPs</td>
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<td>(Inc Sport)</td>
<td>YJA</td>
<td>Councils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
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Three tiered training approach

Informed by:
- Evidence Review
- Knowledge transfer
- 6 Nations Special Interest Group
- Stakeholder Workshops
- Specialist Advisory Groups
- Training Needs Analysis
- Children and Young People
So What?

A system where:

- The workforce recognises and responds to the **impact of childhood adversity on children, caregivers and service providers**
- Trauma awareness, knowledge and skills are an **integral part of organisational cultures, practices and policies**
- Effective practice is used to maximise the physical and psychological safety of the child, **facilitate recovery of the child and family and support their ability to thrive**
- Children and families impacted by and vulnerable to trauma are **more resilient and better able to cope**.
So What?

Which will mean:

- Children grow up in more stable and supportive homes leading to **improved learning, health, social and economic outcomes** throughout their lives
- Agencies, programmes and service **providers support individuals** who want to disclose. They understand life-long symptoms associated with childhood adversity.
- Continuity of care and **collaboration** are emphasised **across child-service systems**
- People exposed to adversity find it **easier to access support earlier**, and in a way which is effective for them
- **Parents and family members understand** the importance of supporting childhood development, minimising adversity and building resilience
Trauma Informed Practice Project April 2018 – March 2020

- Justice Mentor
- Education Mentor
- Health Mentor
- Social Care Mentor

6 Nations Think Tank

- Rapid Review
- TNA
- Knowledge Transfer
- CYP Forum
- ACE AWARE

Comm /Vol
Stakeholder Workshops
Specialist Advisory Groups

Trauma Informed Practice

TI Advisors
Specialist Trauma Knowledge
Trauma Awareness Raising
it takes a village to raise a child

Thank you for listening and for participating in this conversation.
BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES
CAWT MACE PROJECT

Maurice Meehan
Public Health Agency
MACE Project Overview

**AIM:** To transform the lives of vulnerable children families who are at risk from multiple adversities in their lives, by identifying, intervening early and provide nurturing support within their own homes and communities.

**TARGET POPULATION:** Children within the age groups 0-3 and 11-13 and their families.

**OBJECTIVES:**
1. To establish an adversity matrix and risk stratification tool which will allow for early identification of vulnerable families
2. Develop a range of interventions to those assessed using the adversity matrix and/or risk stratification tool

**DURATION:** 48 months

**START DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**BUDGET:** €5,010,240

**PARTNERS:** WHSCT, SHSCT, HSCB, PHA, TUSLA & HSE (Lead Partner)
Indicative cross border community network areas

1. Derry/Letterkenny/Coleraine
2. Strabane/West Donegal
3. Fermanagh/Sligo & Leitrim
4. Armagh/Monaghan & Cavan
5. Newry/Dundalk
CAWT MACE Project

Project Outputs:

• Deliver and implement new border area frameworks for early intervention to benefit 3,125 vulnerable families

• Development of an Adversity Matrix & Risk Stratification Tool

• 500 staff trained to identify and support vulnerable families

• 5 cross border community networks of excellence

• E-health technologies
BREAKING Always Available Adult

Equipped to manage your behaviours and emotions

Feel you can overcome hardship and guide your destiny

Involved and connected

Of ACEs

RESILIENCE
A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO ACEs IN SCOTLAND

From evidence and policy to action in communities

Katy Hetherington
NHS Scotland

<see separate presentation>
PANEL DISCUSSION
FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit the ACE Reference Group webpage on the CYPSP website at:

www.cypsp.org/task-finish-groups/regional-ace-reference-group/