

ACEs: ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

ISSUE

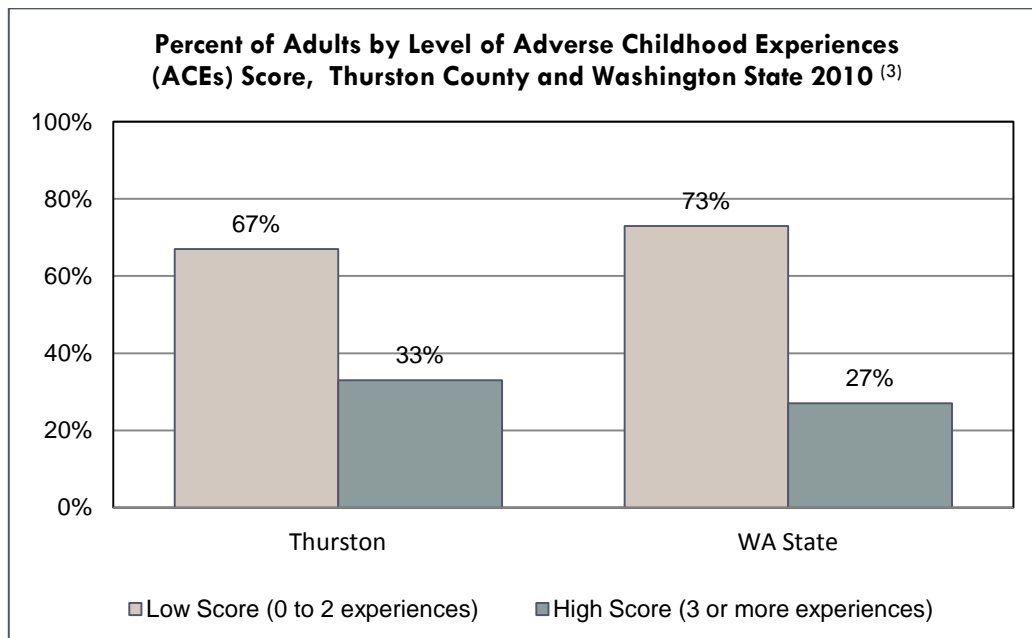
Research has identified a set of experiences, called adverse childhood experiences, that are associated with increased risk for poor physical and mental health outcomes. Included in these adverse experiences are: 1) physical abuse, 2) sexual abuse, 3) verbal abuse, 4) witnessing domestic violence, 5) living with someone who is mentally ill, depressed or suicidal, 6) having a family member with a substance abuse problem, 7) parental discord such as divorce, separation or abandonment and 8) having a family member incarcerated (jail, prison). ⁽¹⁾

Adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, can be stressful and traumatic to children. The more ACEs experienced as a child, the higher the risk for a range of health issues including: ⁽²⁾

- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Cigarette smoking
- Depression
- Heart disease
- Interpersonal violence
- Liver disease
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Suicide

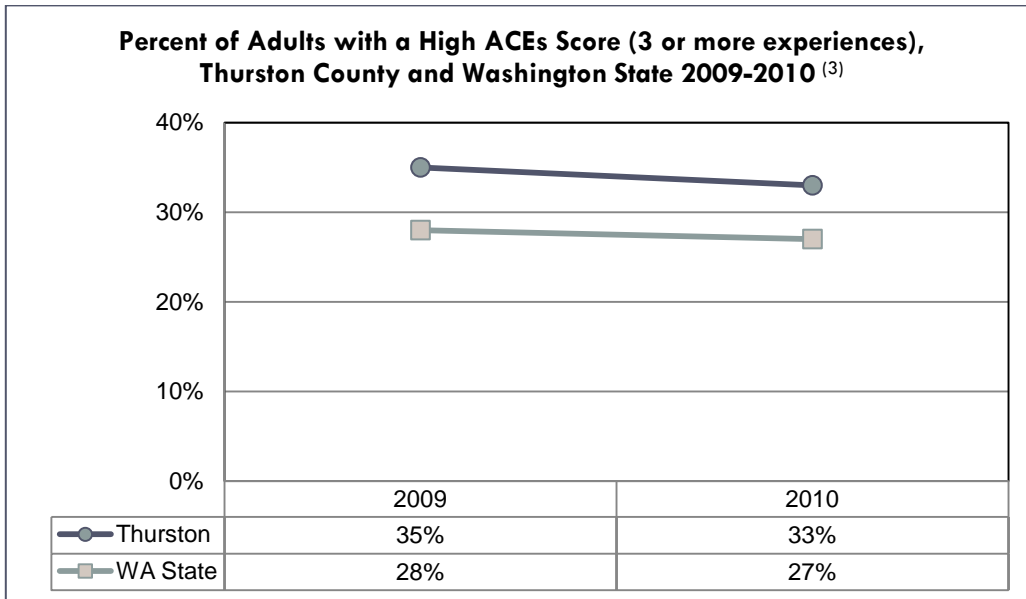
FINDINGS

- In 2010, about 1 in 3 (33%) of Thurston County adults had experienced 3 or more ACEs during childhood (high ACEs score). This equates to about 64,149 county adults with a high ACEs score. ⁽³⁾

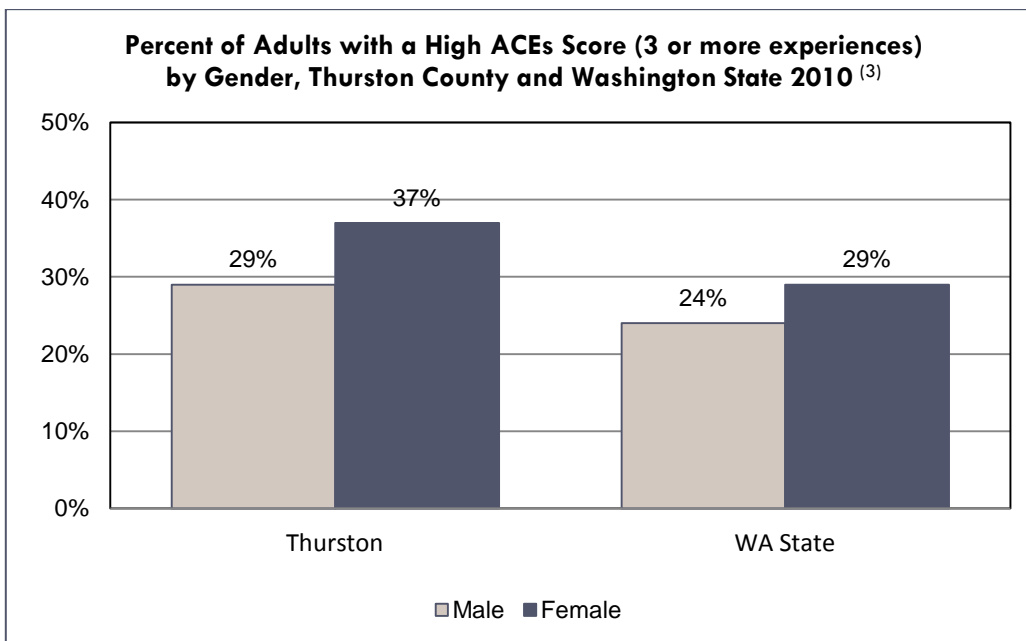


DETAILED DATA

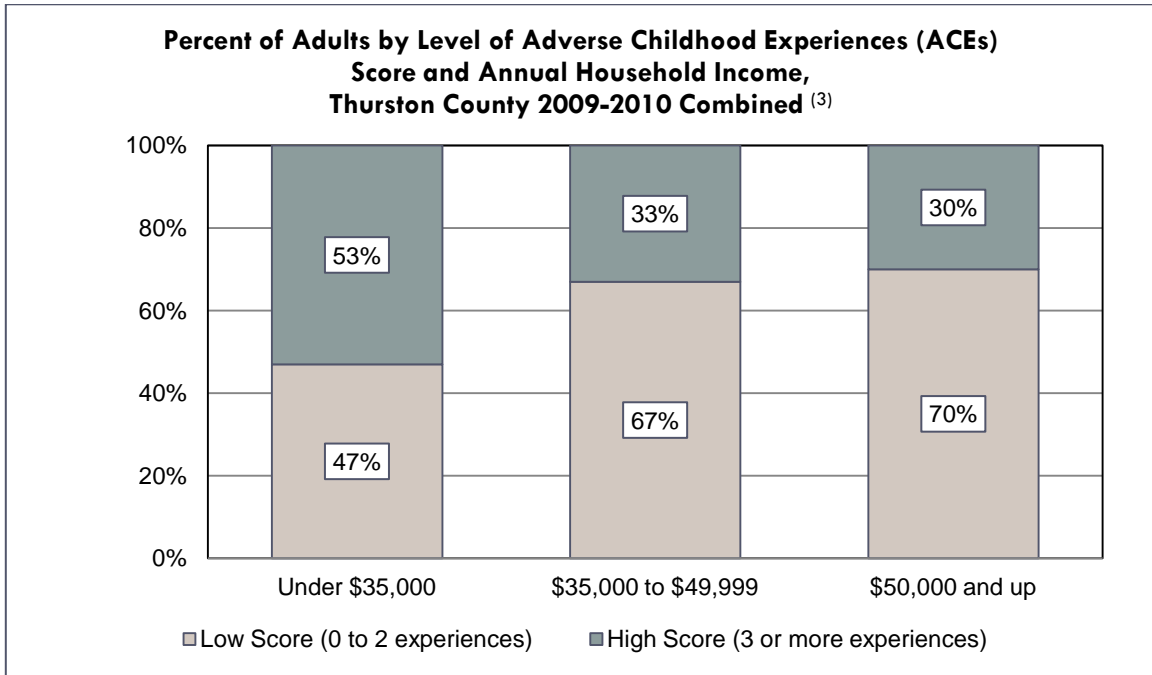
- In Washington State, adult data about adverse childhood experiences began to be collected in 2009.



- Having a high ACEs score varies by gender.



- Having a high ACEs scores varies by annual household income.



- ACEs scores are calculated by determining how many of the following experiences adults had as a child (before age 18).

Percent of Adults by Individual Adverse Childhood Experience, Thurston County 2009-2010 Combined ⁽³⁾

During childhood lived with:	Percent	During childhood was:	Percent
Substance abuser	40%	Verbally abused	42%
Parental discord (divorce, separation)	34%	Physically abused	21%
Someone who was mentally ill	27%	Witness to domestic violence	19%
Someone who was incarcerated	10%	Sexually abused	15%

CITATIONS

- (1) The Health and Social Impact of Growing Up with Adverse Childhood Experiences: The Human and Economic Costs of the Status Quo. 2007. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and Kaiser Permanente. <http://acestudy.org/>
- (2) Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study: Major Findings. 2012. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. www.cdc.gov/ace/findings.htm
- (3) Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) Data. 2009-2010. Washington State Department of Health. Prepared by Thurston County Public Health & Social Services Department.

NOTES

- High ACEs Score = having experienced 3 or more adverse childhood experiences before age 18.
- The following survey questions are used to calculate ACEs scores. "All questions refer to the time period before you were 18 years of age. Now, looking back before you were 18 years of age:"
 - Did you live with anyone who was depressed, mentally ill, or suicidal?
 - Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic? Did you live with anyone who used illegal street drugs or who abused prescription medications?
 - Did you live with anyone who served time or was sentenced to serve time in a prison, jail, or other correctional facility?
 - Were your parents separated or divorced?
 - How often did your parents or adults in your home ever slap, hit, kick, punch or beat each other up?
 - Before age 18, how often did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt you in any way?
 - How often did a parent or adult in your home ever swear at you, insult you, or put you down?
 - How often did anyone at least 5 years older than you or an adult, ever touch you sexually? How often did anyone at least 5 years older than you or an adult, try to make you touch them sexually? How often did anyone at least 5 years older than you or an adult, force you to have sex?

MORE INFORMATION

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