

Why Buffer the Kids of Divorce from Toxic Levels of Stress? Your Ability to Communicate & Co-Parent Skillfully Matters!

Compiled/organized by Ria Severance, LMFT

- **Video** – Young child exposed to only 1 min to conflict/anger of another adult at another adult – not the child. Immediate activation of amygdala – NO neural connections. What do you see?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FC4qRD1vn8>
- **Video** - Unresponsive (e.g. depressed/disengaged) parent produces attachment panic, with protests, attempts to pursue engagement & observable distress.
 - This happens in adult relationships as well, per the research.
 - Ease of parent-child repair/re-engagement speaks to the solidity of the initial attachment (barring any assessed resist-refuse dynamics when kids refuse contact with a parent during/beyond a divorce).
- 10 “ACEs” = **10 Adverse Childhood Experiences** the produce Toxic Levels of Stress
 - Research identified **Divorce as 1 of the 10 ACEs** that adversely impact mental and physical health in significant, predictable ways.
 - Specifically, the CDC-Kaiser Studied of over 17,000 participants across cultures, genders, ages, SES, etc. and followed these participants over many years.
 - In California, the Physician General offers free training to physicians, licensed mental health practitioners and other professionals to ensure they assess for ACEs when assessing a client’s mental and physical health, as well as the sources of symptoms.
- **Impact of ACEs on Children’s Mental & Physical health:**
Toxic Stress → Physical/Mental Health Probs
(see **AcesAware.org** for more detailed, extensive list of significant adverse outcomes)
ACEs are associated directly in a “dose-response” way with 9 of 10 leading causes of death, including earlier mortality in adults.
 - “Dose-Response” means the more ACEs, the more likely you/your kids will experience one of the leading causes death, as well as an earlier death.
- **ACEs are associated with significantly greater instances of:**
 - Failure to Thrive, Growth Delays, Sleep Disturbances, Developmental Delays
 - Increased risk of viral infections, pneumonia, asthma & other atopic diseases (“atopic diseases” include those involving an *exaggerated immune response to harmless substances in the environment.*)
 - Learning/behavioral challenges
 - Somatic complaints e.g. stomach aches & head aches
 - Increased engagement in high-risk behaviors
 - Teen Pregnancies & Paternity
 - Mental Health Disorders, e.g. PTSD, Depression, Anxiety & Substance Abuse
 - Chronic Pain, Diabetes, Stroke, Cardiovascular Disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Cancer
 - 6 or more ACEs predicts a 19-yearr shorter life expectancy than 0 ACEs.

I have watched/read and understood the above, and asked any related questions I may have.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date _____