



Florida Life Course Indicator Report

CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES



This section details the following life course indicators related to **childhood experiences**:

- LC-01.** Adverse Childhood Experiences Among Adults
- LC-02.** Adverse Childhood Experiences Among Children
- LC-03.** Substantiated Child Maltreatment

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Life Course Theory looks at health as an integrated continuum where biological, behavioral, psychological, social and environmental factors interact to shape health outcomes across the course of a person's life. The adoption of the Life Course Theory into public health practice requires movement away from isolated efforts and encourages broader thinking about the factors impacting health. Instead of concentrating on one health disease or condition at a time, the Life Course Theory looks to social, economic and environmental factors as underlying causes of persistent inequalities in health.

The indicators in the report were calculated according to guidelines published by the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs. For each indicator, a brief description of the topic and definition, connection to the Life Course Theory, and data source are provided in the report. When possible, a state-level estimate for each indicator was calculated with 95% confidence intervals (CI) and Florida's status was compared to the nation. The indicators were then stratified by race/ethnicity when available and appropriate.



LC-01: Adverse Childhood Experiences among Adults

Adverse childhood experiences (ACE) are experiences of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction that occur during childhood.¹ Experiencing chronic stressful events as children disrupts normal neurodevelopment and negatively affects that child's ability to cope with negative or disruptive emotions later in life.² Those who experience ACE are at a greater risk for a variety of chronic mental, physical and emotional health problems in adulthood, including substance abuse and smoking, sexually transmitted diseases, depression, and ischemic heart disease.³ The original ACE study, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Kaiser Permanente organization in the mid-90s, found that ACE are common, tend to cluster together, and have a dose-relationship with many health problems.²

Data source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2011 & 2014, ACE module

Numerator: Number of adults who experienced three or more ACE during childhood

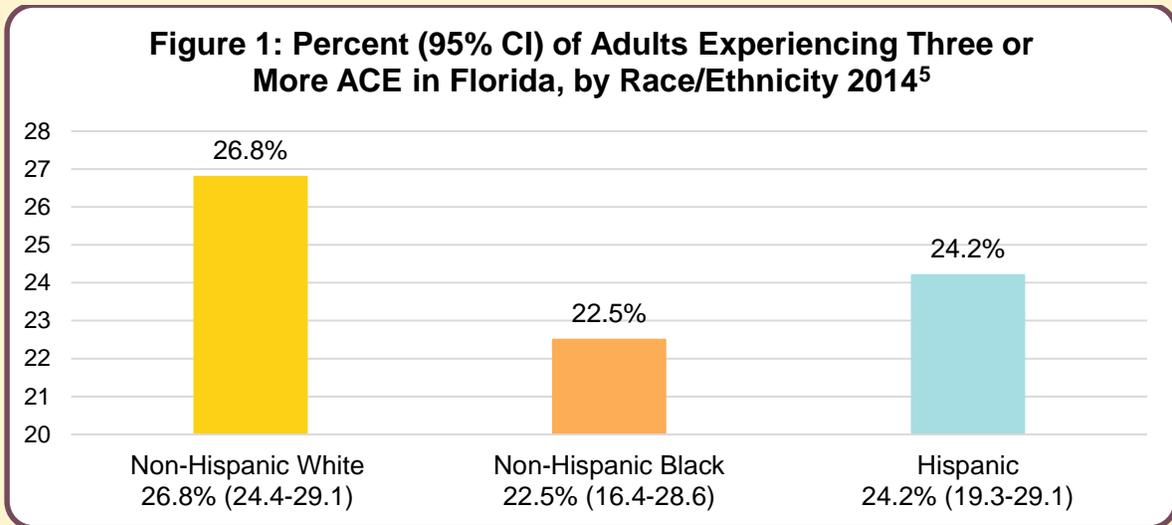
Denominator: Total adult population

On the 2014 BRFSS ACE module for Florida, respondents are asked about their exposure to the following eight experiences during childhood:

- Verbal abuse
- Physical abuse
- Death of a parent
- Household mental illness
- Household substance abuse
- Domestic violence
- Parental separation/divorce
- Incarcerated family members

Table 1: Percent (95% CI) of Adults Experiencing Three or More ACE	
National Range, 2011⁴	Florida, 2014⁵
20.8%-28.3%	25.8% (23.8-27.8)

Among the five states (Minnesota, Montana, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin) with the BRFSS ACE module in 2011, at least one in five adults experienced three or more ACE during childhood (Table 1). Florida included the ACE module on the BRFSS survey in 2010 and most recently in 2014. Approximately one in four Florida adults experienced three or more ACE during childhood in 2014.⁵



These results did not vary greatly by race/ethnicity, although the percent estimates of experiencing three or more ACE were highest among non-Hispanic white adults during 2014 (Figure 1).

Florida Research Spotlight⁶

Approximately, 66%–97% of Florida juvenile offenders reported experiencing at least one childhood adversity. Juvenile offenders in Florida have much higher rates of adverse childhood experiences than originally thought. Half of Florida juvenile offenders report experiencing four or more ACE from 2007-2012 compared with only 13.0% in the original ACE study conducted by the CDC in 1998. Only 3.1% of male juvenile offenders and 1.8% of female juvenile offenders in Florida reported experiencing no ACE.

This research has encouraged individuals working in juvenile justice across the state to change the conversation regarding juvenile delinquency: communities should look to address the root causes of asocial behavior and mental illness exhibited by children.

LC-02: Adverse Childhood Experiences among Children

As stated previously, ACE are stressful or traumatic experiences that happen during childhood or adolescence. Children who experience ACE are at increased risk of developing chronic disease and health risk behaviors as well as experiencing poor reproductive health outcomes and poor mental health.

Data source: National Survey of Children’s Health (NSCH), 2011-2012

Numerator: Number of children aged 0-17 years who experienced ACE

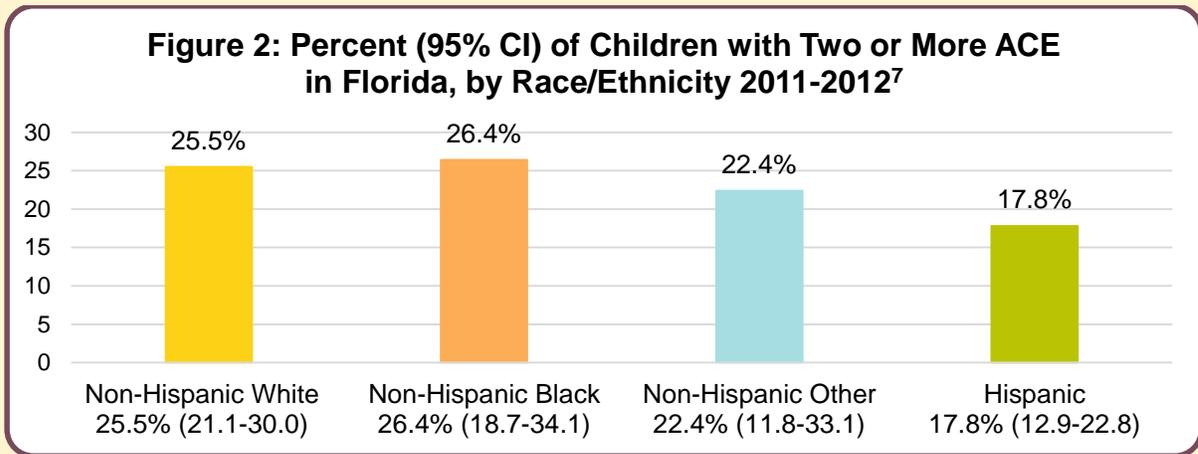
Denominator: Total number of children aged 0-17 years

To assess the proportion of children with ACE, parents were asked to respond about their child's exposure to the following experiences:

- Household income instability
- Parental separation/divorce
- Death of a parent/guardian
- Incarcerated family members
- Domestic violence
- Neighborhood-level violence
- Household mental illness
- Household substance abuse
- Perceived racial and ethnic discrimination

Number of ACE	Nation	Florida
No ACE	52.1% (51.3-52.8)	48.3% (45.0-51.7)
One ACE	25.3% (24.7-26.0)	28.5% (25.4-31.5)
Two or more ACE	22.6% (22.0-23.2)	23.2% (20.2-26.2)

Almost half of children in Florida have experienced no ACE (Table 2), while approximately one in five children in Florida has experienced two or more ACE. The percent of children with ACE in Florida was similar to the national average.



The percent estimates of experiencing two or more ACE were similar between non-Hispanic Black children (26.4%) and non-Hispanic White children (25.5%) and lowest among Hispanic children (Figure 2).

LC-03: Substantiated Child Maltreatment

Maltreatment is an act or failure to act by a parent, caretaker, or other person as defined under state law which results in physical abuse, neglect, medical neglect, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or an act or failure to act that presents an imminent risk of serious harm to a child.⁸ Child maltreatment can lead to poor physical and mental health outcomes that can persist into adulthood such as anxiety, smoking and drug abuse, and impaired

cognitive and socio-emotional abilities.⁹ The total lifetime economic burden from new cases of fatal and nonfatal child maltreatment cost the United States approximately \$124 billion in 2008.¹⁰ This public health problem also has an intergenerational impact. Those with a history of maltreatment during childhood and adolescence are more likely to perpetrate child maltreatment.¹¹

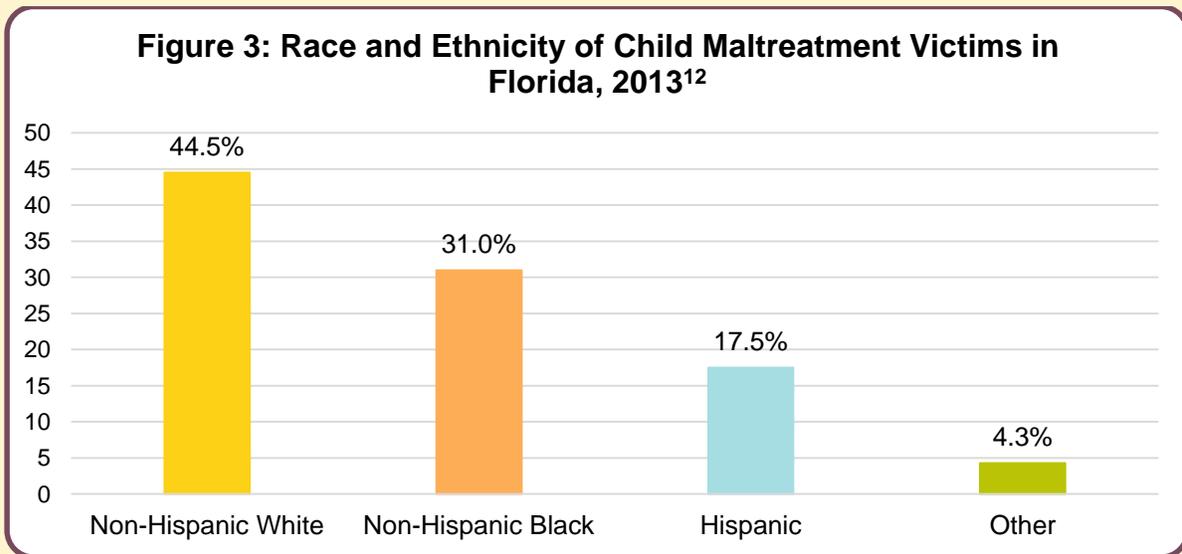
Data source: National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), 2013

Numerator: Number of children aged 0-17 years, with reports of maltreatment types that include physical abuse, neglect or deprivation of necessities, medical neglect, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional maltreatment and the report is considered substantiated

Denominator: Total number of children aged 0-17 years

Table 3: Rate of Child Maltreatment Victims Aged 0-17 Years, 2013 ¹²	
Nation	Florida
9.1 per 1,000 children	12.0 per 1,000 children

During 2013, there were 48,457 total child maltreatment victims in Florida resulting in a rate of 12.0 per 1,000 children (Table 3). NCANDS uses unique counts of child maltreatment when calculating rates as the same child may be a victim of maltreatment numerous times per year. The highest percent of child victims is infants under one year, making up 13.4 percent of all child maltreatment victims in Florida.¹² Half of child victims of maltreatment in Florida are aged five years and younger.¹²



The majority of children with reports of maltreatment in Florida during 2013 are non-Hispanic White, followed by non-Hispanic Black (Figure 3). The following groups were combined into multi-race/other due to low numbers: American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and two or more races (multi-race). Percentages do not equal 100% due to missing data on race/ethnicity.

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