

ACEs and Trauma-Informed Care Quick Reference Guide

ACEs, or Adverse Childhood Experiences, can have long-term effects on health and behavior. Use the suggestions in this guide to help you provide trauma-informed care for your clients.

Assumptions and Helpful Responses

If you catch yourself making these unhelpful assumptions, try to shift to a more helpful response.

Assumptions	Helpful Responses
This person's life is a mess.	This person is a survivor of trauma.
They should be over it already.	Recovery from trauma is a process and takes time.
They're making it up or want attention.	This is hard to hear, and harder to talk about.
Don't ask them about it, or they'll get upset.	Talking about trauma gives people permission to heal.

Positive Messages for Parents

You can support parents with affirmations and positive messages. These are adapted from [Helping Children Thrive](#).

- There are no perfect parents
- Parents can change their children's lives for the better.
- Learning to parent is a lifelong process.
- Clients can get help if they need it.
- Children are resilient and can thrive, even after negative experiences.

Offering Referrals

You can help clients by referring them to specialized support. Concrete help in times of need is a protective factor against ACEs. Remember to ask permission before giving referrals or making calls. When clients have some control, they feel more emotionally safe.

Example Referral to a Help Line Number

"I know a help line number you can call. The people who work there really care and have helped thousands of women. You can call them any time you want. They can help you find more local support too."

Example Warm Referral to Local Resources

"There's a program here in town that many moms have found helpful. I could call them for you to help you get started. Would that be OK?"

ACE's and Trauma-Informed Care Resources

For more ACE's and Trauma – Informed Care information visit:

- azdhs.gov/documents/prevention/womens-childrens-health/reports-fact-sheets/
- phoenixchildrens.org/community/injury-prevention-center/child-abuse-prevention
- strongfamiliesaz.com
- azpbs.org/strongkids
- acestoohigh.com/resources
- cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/
- developingchild.harvard.edu
- acf.hhs.gov/trauma-toolkit/historical-trauma
- nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org
- acesdv.org
- lfcc.on.ca/HCT_SWASM.pdf