

ACEs Discussion Questions

The Central Iowa ACEs 360 Steering Committee has developed the following questions to help guide a group in discussing The ACE Study research, its implications, and ways to respond. This process is meant to be informal. For a more focused session that leads a group toward identifying specific action steps, please use the ACEs Facilitation Guide.

Preparation

Participants should be familiar with The ACE Study research before the discussion. If time is available, you may want to give a presentation on The ACE Study and Iowa's findings before leading a discussion. A long and short presentation is available with talking points here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/n84n77nsq5odqdu/p7yiNfyOLM>. Participants could also be encouraged to take the online learning module on The ACE Study (details to come soon), or read through information and resources found at www.iowaaces360.org.

Based on the group's goals for the session, familiarity with The ACE Study and time available for discussion, facilitators can select questions to focus on ahead of time. Some questions can be targeted toward the group's professional sector, organization or community depending on the goals for the session (see areas highlighted in blue on the following pages).

If you are working with a large group, consider breaking into smaller groups for more focused conversations, with time to come together as a larger group at the end to summarize each group's main ideas and takeaways. You may want to designate a scribe (or two) to take notes to type up and share with the group after the session.

Tips for managing the conversation

- Before beginning, explain that the purpose of the discussion based on the group's goals and desired outcome.
- Give everyone an opportunity to speak. Consider asking for everyone's response to the first question before allowing anyone to comment at random on future questions.
- Allow the conversation to flow in a direction that makes sense to the group. You may not get to every question. However, if you notice the conversation veering in a direction that is off-focus from the desired outcome, jump in with a new question or remind the group of the focus.
- If you ask a question and don't receive an immediate response, wait several seconds before asking the question in a new way or throwing out a new question.
- Leave time at the end to summarize the conversation and to ask group members for key takeaways. The group may want to brainstorm some next steps or actions they can take.

If you have questions about this process, e-mail iowaaces@gmail.com or swelch@pcaiowa.org.

ACEs Recap: What are the main points we've learned about The ACE Study? (10-15 minutes)

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: If you are not giving an ACEs presentation before this discussion, there may be a few participants who are unfamiliar with this topic. Gauge the group's understanding of ACEs by asking who has heard about the study. If a large part of the audience is unfamiliar, spend some time talking through key points. If the audience is largely familiar, it may still be helpful to share a few highlights to ensure the group is starting out on the same page. Consider one of these steps to start the discussion:

- Pass out a one-page handout sharing information about ACEs and Iowa data.
- Give a 5-10 minute presentation on the key points about the ACEs research.
- Ask everyone in the room to share one thing they remember most about the ACEs research.

Discussion Questions

FACILITATOR DIRECTIONS: We've gathered a long list of questions you can use to lead a discussion about ACEs and its implications. Pick the questions that make most sense for the group's goals for the session, participants' familiarity with the study and the time you have available.

Connecting to the ACEs research

- 1) What is one thing that stands out to you about the ACEs research? What about the Iowa ACEs data? (If not covered in the activity above.)
- 2) What would you say to a friend or coworker about ACEs? How would you describe ACEs to them?
- 3) What negative or positive reactions did you have when you heard about the ACEs findings?
- 4) How does this research impact you as an individual, professional, and/or community member?
- 5) How do these findings relate to anything you have discovered or noticed in your own *(profession/organization/community)*?
- 6) What do these findings mean to your *(profession/organization/community)*? What do these findings mean for Iowa overall?
- 7) How does your role in your *(professional sector/organization/community)* have an impact on ACEs and their outcomes?
- 8) What questions do you still have about the ACEs research?

Responding to The ACE Study research

1. What opportunities do you see for using The ACE Study and Iowa's ACEs data?
2. What activities are already going on to address ACEs and their outcomes that you know about?
3. What is this *(professional sector/organization/community)* doing well already to respond to the ACEs research? What is the state or other groups doing well?

4. What could this (*professional sector/organization/community*) be doing to better respond to the ACEs research? What could the state or other groups be doing?
5. What is one way you as an individual could address ACEs in your (*profession/organization/community*)?
6. What is one way this (*professional sector/organization/community*) could have a greater impact on ACEs and their outcomes?
7. If you could develop one response to ACEs, what might it look like?
8. Who else would you like to collaborate with to have an even bigger impact on ACEs and their outcomes? Who else needs to know about this information and take action?
9. If you and others in your (*professional sector/organization/community*) all took steps to address ACEs, what do you envision you collectively could achieve? What might the future look like?

Thinking through actions

1. Who all should be involved in the effort to address ACEs?
2. What specific people or partners should be invited to a discussion of next steps?
3. What are possible goals your (*profession/organization/community*) could set for addressing ACEs?
4. What is missing from the conversation about ACEs?
5. What strengths would this group bring to an effort to address ACEs?
6. What are the barriers to responding to the ACEs research?
7. What resources exist to help with this work?
8. Why is a particular action needed? What do you hope to accomplish by this action?
9. In taking a particular action, are we doing more harm than good?
10. What do we still need to learn or know before we take action?
11. How soon could we expect to take action? To see results?