

# 2022

YOUTH  
EXPERIENCES  
SURVEY



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# Acknowledgements

The 2022 YES Study was made possible by the following seven participating agencies:



The 2022 YES Study was funded by:



# Method

## Instrument

Participants completed the YES survey via paper-and-pencil surveys (n = 98, 91.6%) and online surveys utilizing SurveyMonkey (n = 9, 8.4%).



**91.6%**

Paper and Pencil Surveys



**8.4%**

Online Surveys

## Participants

**107**

homeless young adults from Phoenix, Tucson, and Flagstaff, Arizona, completed the Youth Experiences Survey. Participants completed surveys from seven agencies across the state. Participants of the YES study were receiving services from:

  
ourfamilyservices  
(n = 58, 54.2%)


  
NATIVE AMERICAN CONNECTIONS  
(n = 20, 18.7%)

  
HOMELESS YOUTH connection  
(n = 14, 13.1%)

  
SAAF  
Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation  
(n = 9, 8.4%)

  
one.n.ten  
Today's Youth. Tomorrow's Future.  
(n = 3, 2.8%)

  
Northland Family Help Center  
(n = 2, 1.9%)

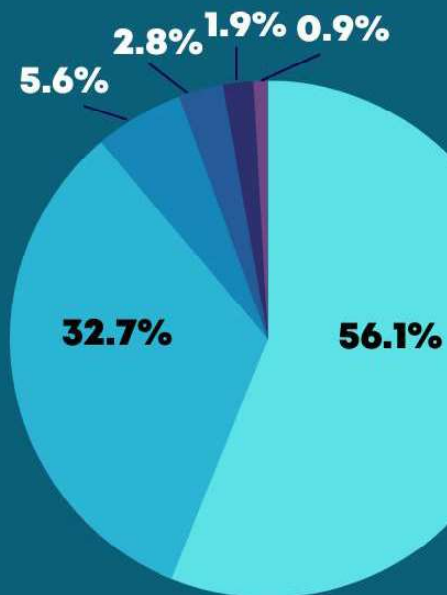
  
lumom  
NEW DAY CENTERS  
(n = 1, 0.9%)

## Setting

Participants responded to the survey from housing programs (n = 43, 48.3%), street outreach (n = 22, 24.7%), resource or drop-in centers (n = 18, 20.2%), and this data was missing for six (6.7%) participants.

# Participants

(N = 107)



## GENDER

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Genderqueer
- Non-conforming
- Two-spirit

## AGE

The age of participants ranged from



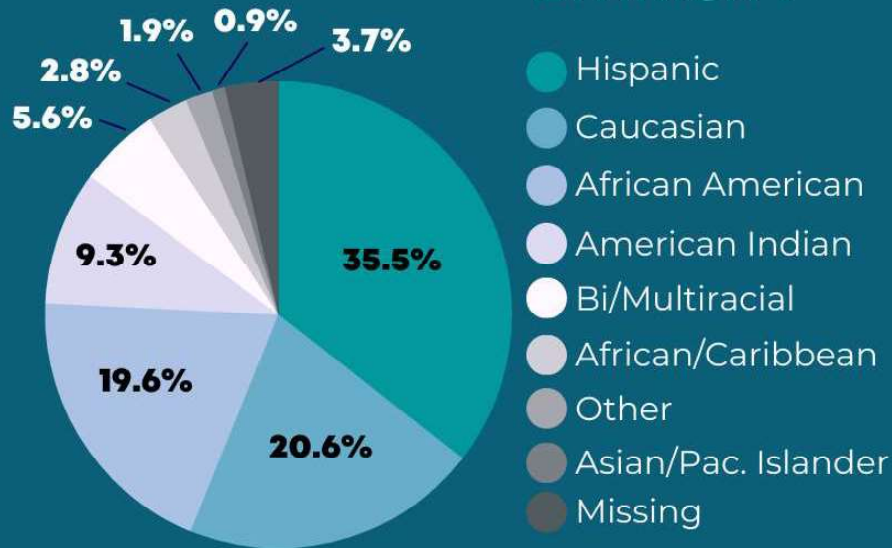
(M = 20.4, SD = 2.23)

The age of the homeless young adult participants ranged from 18 to 25 years old, with the average age being 20.4 years old (M = 20.4, SD = 2.23).

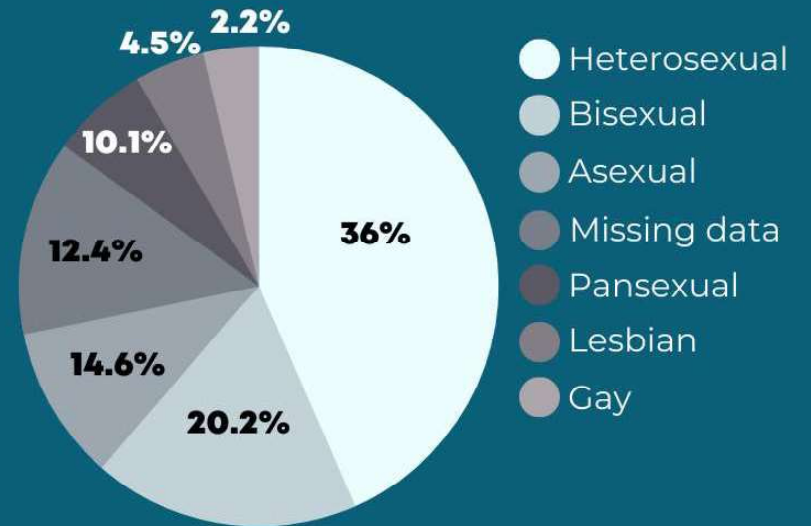
# Participants

(N = 107)

## ETHNICITY



## SEXUAL ORIENTATION



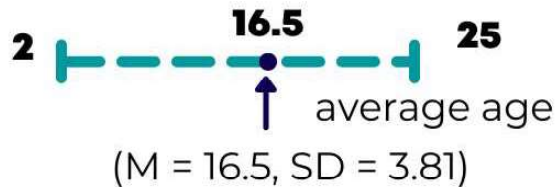
# Findings

(N = 107)

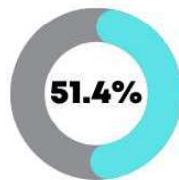
## HOMELESSNESS + HOUSING

Participants were asked questions regarding their experiences of homelessness, including age range of first homelessness experience, place of origin, and current housing situation.

Age of 1st homeless ranged from:

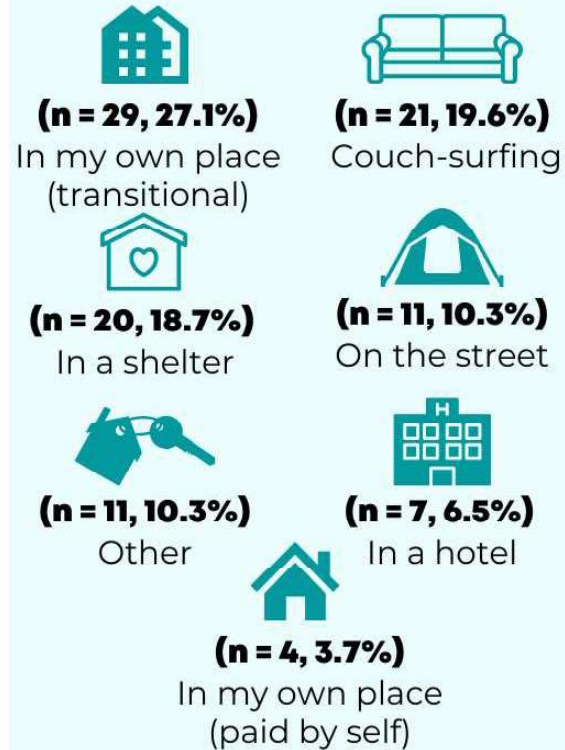


Fifty-five (51.4%) participants first experienced homelessness under the age of 18.



## Current Housing Arrangements

Participants reported currently living:



# Findings

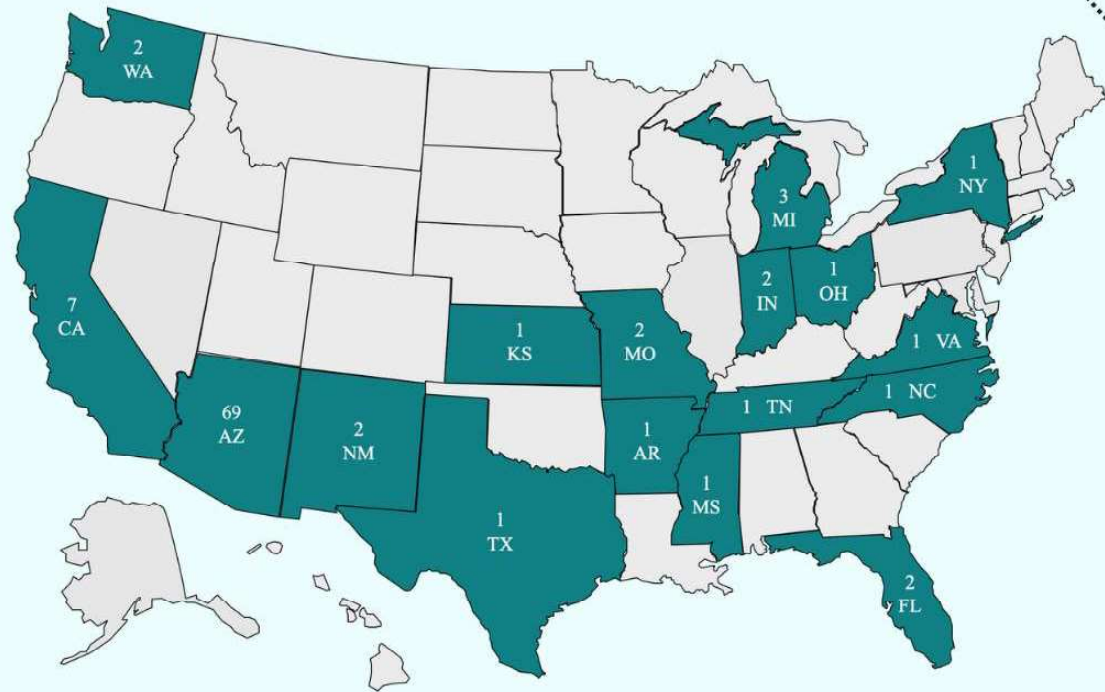
(N = 107)

## Place of Origin

Participants originated from around the United States, as well as from:

- Mexico (n = 1, 0.9%)
- Philippines (n = 1, 0.9%)

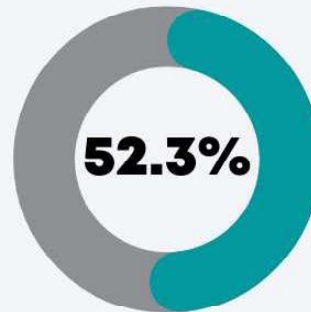
Over half (n = 61, 57%) of the participants reported that they were raised in the state of Arizona.



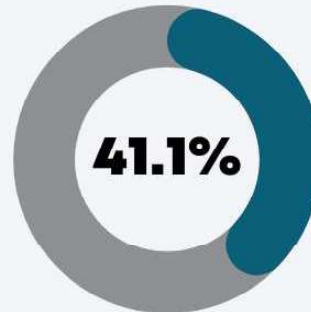
## Findings (N = 107)

### EDUCATION

The YES study asked a series of questions on educational attainment to gain a better understanding of the education challenges that homeless young adults face, and the underlying causes of potential low educational attainment.



Half (n = 56, 52.3%) of participants reported successfully graduating from High School.



Almost half of participants (n = 44, 41.1%) reported dropping out of school at one point in time during their educational journey.



# Findings

(N = 107)

## Dropping Out

Participants' reasons for dropping out of school included:



**(n = 20, 18.7%)**

I moved around a lot



**(n = 15, 14%)**

I was homeless



**(n = 14, 13.1%)**

Academic difficulty



**(n = 14, 13.1%)**

I had to work to support myself



**(n = 7, 6.5%)**

Bullying



**(n = 6, 5.6%)**

I was pregnant/  
had a baby



**(n = 2, 1.9%)**

I was expelled



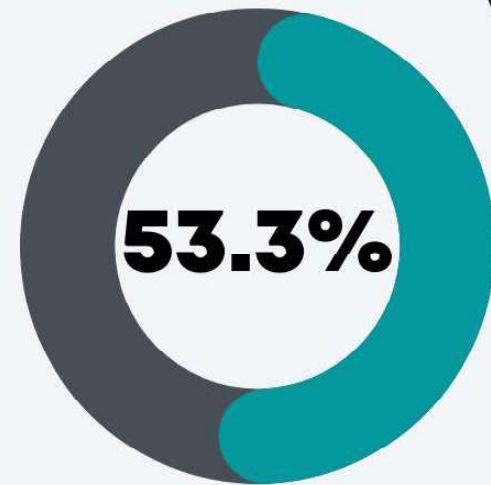
**(n = 1, 0.9%)**

I was using substances

## Findings (N = 107)

### SUBSTANCE USE

Questions about substance use are included in the YES study to explore use and addiction as possible challenges within this population. Questions on substance type, frequency of use and onset of use are included on the survey.

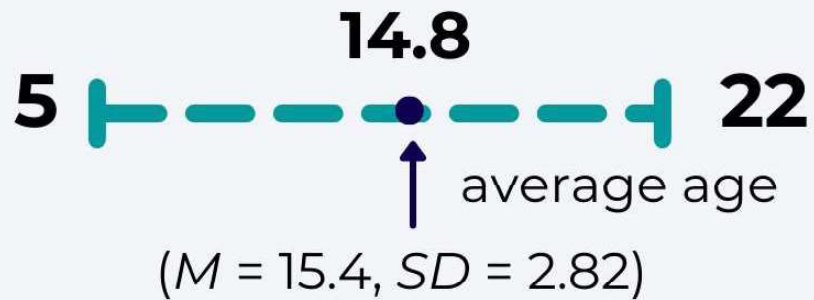


(n = 57) participants reported drug use.

## Findings

(N = 107)

Age of 1st drug use ranged from:



Of the 57 participants that reported drug use

**87.7%**

reported first drug use

**before the age of 18.**



# Findings

(N = 107)

## SUBSTANCES USED

Participants reported drug choice as:

Substance used by type (N = 107)	n	%
Marijuana/Weed	35	32.7%
Methamphetamines	15	14%
Heroin	13	12.1%
Fentanyl	10	9.3%
Opiates/Oxy	3	2.8%
Cocaine/Crack	2	1.9%
Acid	2	1.9%
GHB	1	0.9%
MDA	1	0.9%

## ADDICTION

Ten participants



9.3%

identified as having an **addiction to drugs.**

Of the 10 that identified as having an addiction,



30%

(n = 3) began experiencing addiction **after** becoming homeless.

Nine participants



8.4%

identified as having an **addiction to alcohol.**

Of the 9 that identified as having an addiction,



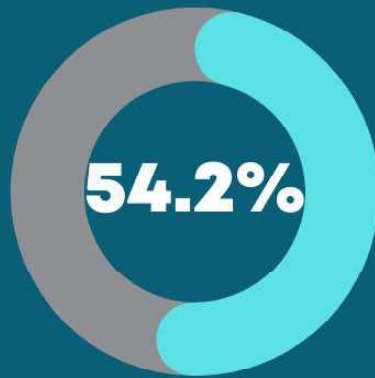
22.2%

(n = 7) began experiencing addiction **after** becoming homeless.

## Findings

(N = 107)

Over half (n = 58)



of participants reported engaging in some form of self-harming behavior.

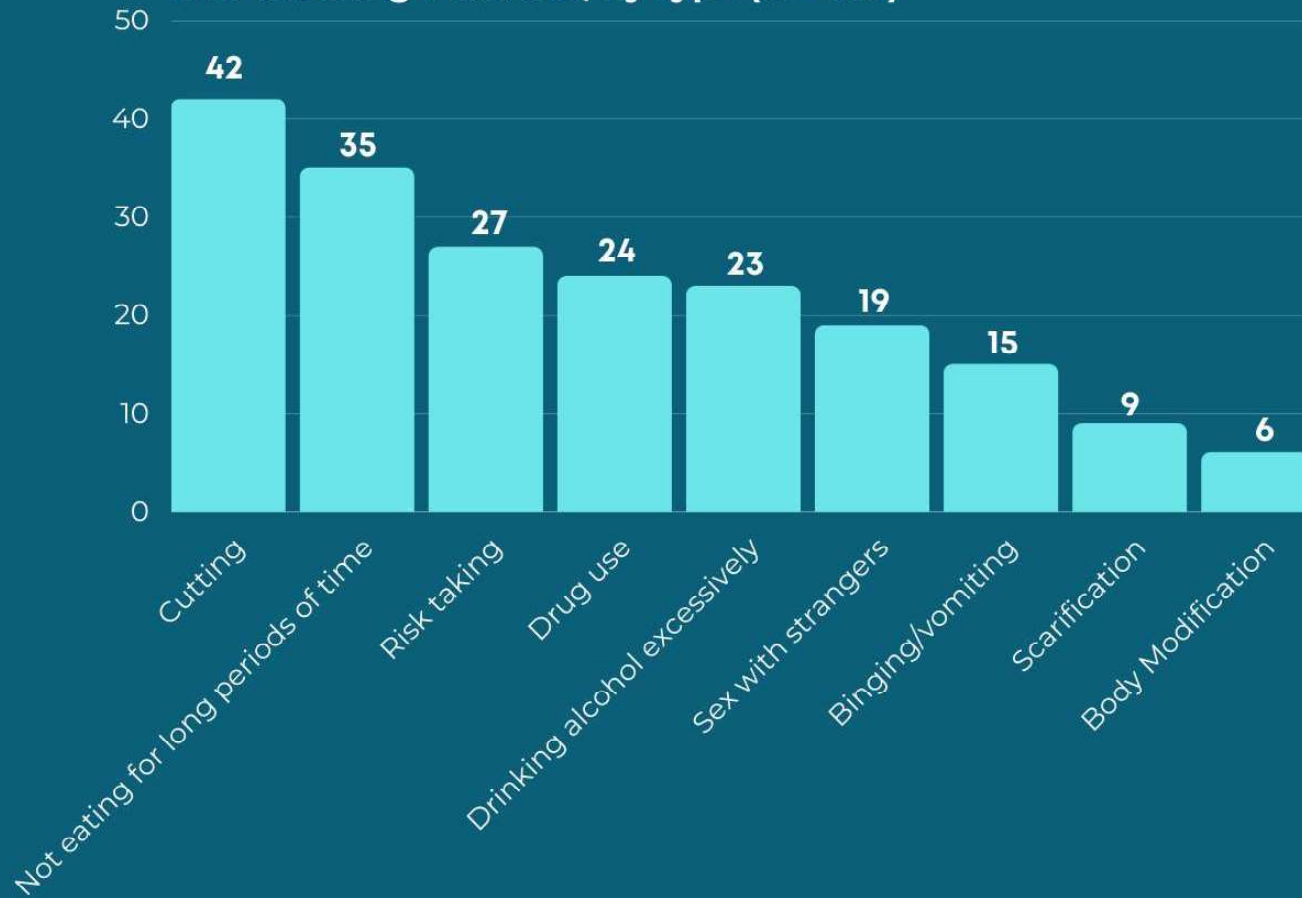
### SELF-HARM

- Homeless young adults have been found to face significant mental health challenges due to the instability of their living situations and acquisition of basic needs.
- Crisis situations that overwhelm the individual's ability to cope may result in self-harming or risk-taking behaviors, and suicidal ideations.
- To better understand the incidence of self-harm, the YES survey includes questions pertaining to self-harm engagement and suicidal ideations.

# Findings

(N = 107)

## Self-harming behavior, by type (N = 107)



# Findings

(N = 107)

## MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Fifty-five (61.8%) participants reported having a current mental health diagnosis, and over half (n = 47, 52.8%) reported more than one mental health diagnosis.



**44.9%**  
of participants  
reported  
attempting  
suicide.

Mental Health Diagnosis, by type	n	%
Anxiety	50	46.7%
Depression	45	42.1%
PTSD	26	24.3%
ADD/ADHD	25	23.4%
Bipolar Disorder	20	18.7%
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	7	6.5%
Antisocial Personality Disorder	6	5.6%
Oppositional Defiant Disorder	6	5.6%
Borderline Personality Disorder	5	4.7%
Autism Spectrum Disorder	4	3.7%
Schizophrenia	3	2.8%
Dissociative Identity Disorder	1	0.9%

## PHYSICAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Fifty-six (52.3%) participants reported having a current medical issue, but only 23 (21.5%) participants reported receiving treatment.

## Findings

(N = 107)

The most common medical issues reported included:



**(n = 27, 25.2%)**  
Poor vision



**(n = 25, 23.4%)**  
Asthma



**(n = 17, 15.9%)**  
Dental problems



**(n = 10, 9.3%)**  
Chronic pain



## Findings

(N = 107)

### PREGNANCY + CHILDREN



Three (2.8%) participants were pregnant at the time of the 2021 YES Survey.

Almost one in four (n = 25, 23.4%) participants reported having children.



Child amount ranged between **1 to 4 children each** ( $M = 1.7, SD = 0.83$ ) with children reportedly living:

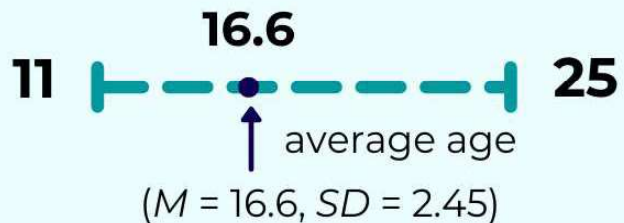
- In the participant's care (n = 13, 12.1%)
- With family (n = 9, 8.4%)
- In foster care (n = 2, 1.9%)
- Other (n = 1, 0.9%)

## Findings (N = 107)

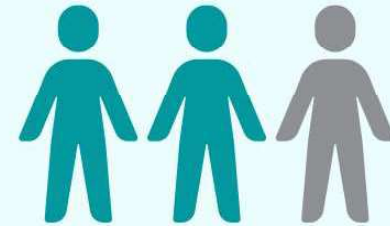
### KICKED OUT OF HOME

**71%** (n = 76) of participants reported being kicked out of the home.

The age of first time kicked out ranging between:



Of the 76 participants that reported being kicked out of the home

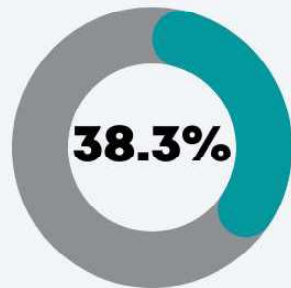


**Over 2 out of every 3**  
67.1% (n = 51) reported being kicked out **before the age of 18**

# Findings

(N = 107)

## VIOLENT RELATIONSHIPS



witnessed domestic violence in their household as a child.



### Witnessing Domestic Violence

Thirty-five (32.7%) participants witnessed their father hitting their mother, and 24 (22.4%) participants witnessed their mother hitting their father.

In adulthood, almost half of participants (n = 47, 43.9%) reported experiencing abuse in their relationship and 22.4% (n = 24) reported also being abusive toward their partner.

## Findings

(N = 107)

### MAKING MONEY

Participants were asked how they make money to live:

Jobs, by type	n	%
Steady Job	53	49.5%
Side jobs for cash	24	22.4%
Selling my own things	16	15%
Other	14	13.1%
Day labor	12	11.2%
Selling drugs	8	7.5%
Panhandling	7	6.5%
Selling stolen things	4	3.7%
Door-to-door sales	2	1.9%

Other ways to earn income reported by participants included asking family/friends/intimate partners, babysitting/caregiving for family, plasma donation, food delivery service, food stamps and unemployment, and part-time minimum wage work/gig work.

## Findings

(N = 107)

# ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Participants were asked questions from the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study, which examined exposure to different abuse and household dysfunction categories and the relationship to disease and early death in adulthood (Felitti, Anda, Nordenberg, Williamson, Spitz, Edwards, & Marks, 1998). Findings from that seminal ACEs study and subsequent studies demonstrated significant negative life outcomes, particularly for individuals who have experienced four or more ACEs.

**4**  
OR MORE  
ACEs



**12x**  
MORE  
LIKELY

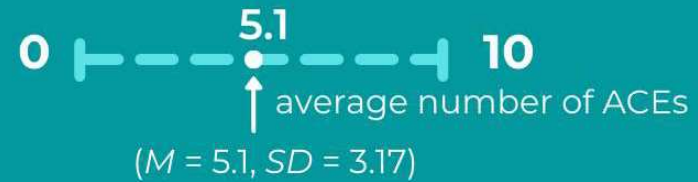


- to attempt suicide
- to experience alcoholism
- to use illicit drugs
- to have 50 or more sexual partners
- to have a history of sexually transmitted infections

# Findings

(N = 107)

Participants reported experiencing between zero to ten ACEs, with **the average number of ACEs being 5.1.**



Eighty-seven participants reported experiencing



more than one ACE

Thirty-eight participants reported experiencing



between 0-3 ACEs

Seventy-one participants reported experiencing



4 or more ACEs

## Findings

(N = 107)

Participants reported experiencing:



**79.4%**

Parents Separated  
/Divorced



**62.6%**

Emotional  
Neglect



**61.7%**

Emotional  
Abuse



**58.9%**

Substance Abuse  
in the Household



**49.5%**

Mental Illness in  
the Household



**44.9%**

Physical  
Abuse



**43%**

Physical  
Neglect



**36.4%**

Incarcerated  
Household Member



**33.6%**

Sexual  
Abuse



**31.8%**

Witness Domestic  
Violence