

Integrating Data to Understand Adverse Childhood Experiences Among Minnesota Youth

Translating research to practice may be difficult, yet a better understanding of current research is necessary to ensure child welfare workers, educators, and other professionals engage in best practices when working with children and families. The Minn-Link Discussion Guide is designed to help facilitate thoughtful dialogue about the information presented in the research brief in order to inform practice and enhance discussion surrounding meaningful issues.

This project built a new surveillance tool to understand Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) prevalence around Minnesota with the goal of better understanding youth experiences, measuring protective factors, and identifying places to target ACEs prevention and awareness work.

Discussion on Practice Implications

1. We learned that students consistently reported higher rates of experiencing bullying than perpetrating it. What circumstances would lead to this difference in percentages? Could students not know when they are bullying others? How can social/emotional learning address this cognitive gap? What role can you play in helping students identify and respond to experiences of bullying and perpetration of bullying?
2. Students consistently reported high rates of feeling safe at home. How can we utilize this strength in our efforts to promote positive childhood experiences in our work with youth and their families?

Discussion on Agency- & System-Level Changes

1. Students reported feeling less safe at school than at home. If any, what precedence in other institutions exists for state and federal policymakers to improve feelings of safety and security for minors in school settings? What policies could be put in place to better support student safety? What resources might be required? Are there opportunities for cross-system collaboration in creating these safer spaces?
2. Some school districts opt out of the Minnesota Student Survey. How can we use our data to demonstrate the benefits of participation and motivate more districts to get involved in the 2025 survey? What kinds of benefits might we see with increased participation? And how might you use these findings in your organization with respect to practice and policy?