
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 447 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY JOHNSON-HARRELL, JONES, WEBSTER, RABB, STURLA,
KINSEY, HILL-EVANS, FRANKEL, DIGIROLAMO, KORTZ, T. DAVIS,
LONGIETTI, YOUNGBLOOD, ULLMAN, KENYATTA, KIRKLAND, READSHAW,
FREEMAN, CIRESI, MALAGARI, CALTAGIRONE, DALEY, SHUSTERMAN,
SCHLOSSBERG, ISAACSON, SONNEY, HARRIS, SANCHEZ, McCLINTON,
McCARTER AND KIM, SEPTEMBER 3, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH, SEPTEMBER 3, 2019

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the harmful effects of adverse childhood experiences
2 on individuals in this Commonwealth.

3 WHEREAS, The term "adverse childhood experience" is used to
4 describe all types of abuse, neglect and other potentially
5 traumatic experiences that occur during childhood; and

6 WHEREAS, Adverse childhood experiences can profoundly impact
7 child development and have been linked to risky health
8 behaviors, chronic health conditions, poor life outcomes and
9 early death; and

10 WHEREAS, The risk for these negative outcomes increases with
11 each adverse childhood experience; and

12 WHEREAS, A study on adverse childhood experiences conducted
13 at Kaiser Permanente from 1995 to 1997 involved more than 17,000
14 adults who completed confidential questionnaires on their
15 childhood experiences, current behaviors and current health
16 status during physical exams; and

1 WHEREAS, The study asked participants whether they had
2 suffered emotional, physical or sexual abuse or emotional or
3 physical neglect as a child; and

4 WHEREAS, The study also asked participants if, during
5 childhood, they had lived in a household where their mother or
6 stepmother was treated violently, if their parents had ever
7 separated or divorced or if they lived in a household where
8 someone abused alcohol or street drugs, had a mental illness or
9 was incarcerated; and

10 WHEREAS, Twenty-eight percent of participants reported
11 experiencing childhood physical abuse, 21% reported experiencing
12 childhood sexual abuse and 11% reported experiencing childhood
13 emotional abuse; and

14 WHEREAS, More than 10% of participants reported experiencing
15 childhood emotional or physical neglect; and

16 WHEREAS, Twenty-seven percent of participants reported that,
17 as a child, they lived in a household where a household member
18 abused alcohol or street drugs; and

19 WHEREAS, Almost two-thirds of participants reported at least
20 one adverse childhood experience, and more than one in five
21 participants reported having three or more adverse childhood
22 experiences; and

23 WHEREAS, It is a matter of debate whether the list of adverse
24 childhood experiences included in the study at Kaiser Permanente
25 is exhaustive, since 54% of participants in the study were
26 female, 75% were white, 46% were over 60 years of age and 39%
27 had earned at least a college degree; and

28 WHEREAS, Individuals with one adverse childhood experience
29 are twice as likely to identify as an alcoholic, 1.8 times more
30 likely to have attempted suicide and 1.7 times more likely to

1 have used illicit drugs when compared to individuals with no
2 adverse childhood experiences; and

3 WHEREAS, Individuals with four or more adverse childhood
4 experiences are 12.2 times more likely to have attempted
5 suicide, 7.4 times more likely to identify as an alcoholic and
6 4.7 times more likely to have used illicit drugs when compared
7 to individuals who have no adverse childhood experiences; and

8 WHEREAS, Six or more adverse childhood experiences can reduce
9 life expectancy by nearly 20 years; and

10 WHEREAS, According to a 2016 Centers for Disease Control and
11 Prevention (CDC) survey, more than half of all adults in this
12 Commonwealth are estimated to have at least one adverse
13 childhood experience; and

14 WHEREAS, Of survey respondents, 35% indicated that they
15 experienced emotional abuse, 16% indicated that they experienced
16 physical abuse and 11% indicated that they experienced sexual
17 abuse as a child; and

18 WHEREAS, Survey respondents between 18 and 29 years of age
19 were more than three times as likely to indicate that they had
20 four or more adverse childhood experiences than respondents who
21 were 65 years of age or older; and

22 WHEREAS, Nonfatal child maltreatment is estimated to cost the
23 United States \$401 billion annually; and

24 WHEREAS, The CDC recognizes that some children are more
25 vulnerable to adverse childhood experiences because of
26 surrounding socioeconomic conditions, and the public would
27 benefit from knowledge of how adverse childhood experiences
28 affect various individuals in a diverse population; and

29 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization is seeking
30 international data on adverse childhood experiences; and

1 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization's Adverse Childhood
2 Experiences International Questionnaire expands the list of
3 adverse childhood experiences to include, among other things,
4 bullying and gun violence; and

5 WHEREAS, Many children throughout this Commonwealth are
6 victims of bullying or gun violence; and

7 WHEREAS, A child's safe, stable and nurturing relationships
8 with an adult can be a protective factor against adverse
9 childhood experiences; and

10 WHEREAS, Individuals in this Commonwealth can benefit from an
11 increased awareness of adverse childhood experiences; therefore
12 be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
14 harmful effects of adverse childhood experiences on individuals
15 in this Commonwealth.