



Adverse Childhood Experiences in Le Sueur County's School Districts: 2022 Minnesota Student Survey – Risk & Protective Factors Data

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic experiences that a young person may face before the age of 18. ACEs include multiple forms of abuse, neglect, and a range of household adversities experienced by others in the youth's home that the youth witnesses, such as mental health issues, substance misuse, or domestic violence. ACEs are common, and by the age of 18, most people will experience at least one ACE. In addition, ACEs tend to be interrelated and occur in clusters. The more ACEs an individual experiences, the higher the likelihood that person will develop health problems, like substance misuse, type 2 diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular problems, and depression. The health effects can arise in childhood, or well into adulthood.

However, ACEs are not destiny, and certain protective factors can have a positive buffering effect on adverse outcomes. Similar to ACEs, they are also powerful and cumulative: **more protective factors can better protect against the effects of ACEs.**

ACEs in Le Sueur County

ACEs data included in this fact sheet are from the 2022 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) of 8th, 9th, and 11th graders. Other ACEs studies may use different factors or conditions, or may calculate scores differently. MSS ACE scores are calculated by adding the number of adverse experiences reported by each student from the list below.

NOTE: Tri-City United did not survey 8th graders in 2022; percentages are based only on 9th and 11th graders. Because of this issue and because of small sample sizes that can skew data, please use caution when making comparisons between districts.

	LE SUEUR	WEM	LS-H	TRI-CITY	MN
Living with someone who is depressed or has MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES 	30%	30%	26%	31%	29%
Having a parent/guardian who is currently IN JAIL , and/or has been in jail 	19%	22%	19%	20%	16%
VERBAL ABUSE by a parent or adult in the household 	14%	12%	12%	16%	14%
Living with someone who DRINKS TOO MUCH alcohol 	13%	16%	13%	12%	10%
PHYSICAL ABUSE by a parent or adult in the household 	9%	7%	11%	8%	11%
SEXUAL ABUSE by a family member and/or a person outside the family 	10%	9%	9%	11%	8%
Witnessing DOMESTIC ABUSE of parents/adults in household 	7%	6%	4%	10%	6%
Living with someone who uses ILLEGAL DRUGS or abuses prescription drugs 	4%	2%	4%	6%	4%

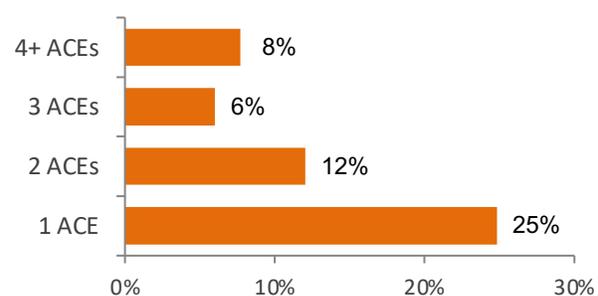
Prevalence + Frequency

Le Sueur County, 2022 MSS

- Of the 616 Le Sueur County 8th, 9th, and 11th graders, **51%** reported experiencing **at least one ACE**, compared to the state average of 47%. (ACEs are common.)
- About half of adolescents experiencing any ACEs report more than one. (ACEs tend to cluster.)
- Le Sueur County's prevalence of each ACE is equal to or higher than the state average, except for physical abuse.

Number of ACEs Reported

Le Sueur County, 2022 MSS



ACEs Can Increase Risk for Behavioral Health Problems

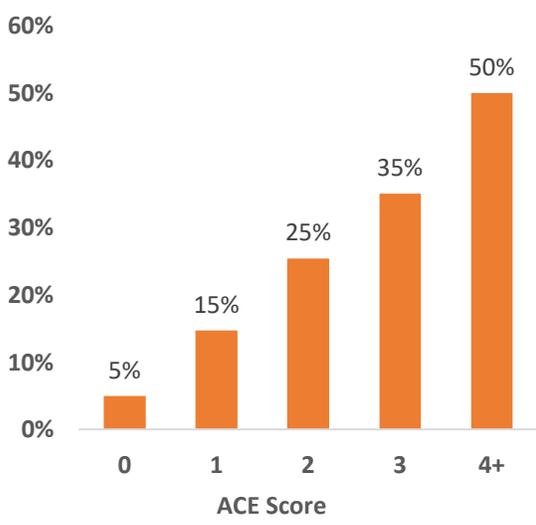
Minnesota, 2022 MSS

Mental Health

Students with 4+ ACEs are **4.6 times** more likely to report feeling down, depressed, or hopeless in the past 2 weeks (**67%** of those with 4+ ACEs vs. **15%** of those with 0 ACEs). Rates of other mental health issues also increase by ACE score:

Past 2-week anxiety:
70% (4+ ACEs) vs. **18%** (0 ACEs).
 Past-year suicidal ideation:
50% (4+ ACEs) vs. **5%** (0 ACEs).
 Past-year suicide attempts:
21% (4+ ACEs) vs. **1%** (0 ACEs).

Of students with 0 ACEs, **5%** reported having thoughts of suicide in the past year, compared to **50%** of students with 4+ ACEs; students with 4+ ACEs are **10 times** more likely to report **suicidal thoughts**.



Substance Use

Compared to youth who are not exposed to ACEs, those reporting an ACE score of 4+ are...

13.8 times more likely to report e-cigarette use
15.6 times more likely to report marijuana use
16.2 times more likely to report prescription drug misuse
 ...in the past month.

Additional Childhood Traumas Also Play a Role

Le Sueur County, 2022 MSS

While the MSS asks about 8 specific experiences to calculate an ACE score, there are other negative experiences that can contribute to dysfunction and health risks. Chronic stress can result from adversity both in children’s communities, as well as in their families. According to the MSS, children in Le Sueur County also face these adversities:

49% of students have been bullied in the past month:
 Students reported being bullied most for their physical appearance (**31%**); their weight (**26%**); their gender expression* (**19%**); and their race, ethnicity, or national origin (**14%**)
3% don’t feel safe in their neighborhoods
13% don’t feel safe at their schools
19% have experienced dating violence (including being verbally or physically abused, or being pressured into sex by a girlfriend or boyfriend).*
1% have been in foster care in the past year; **2%** were in foster care more than a year ago.

According to the US Census, the poverty rate in Le Sueur County was **6.7%** in 2021 (compared to a state average of 9.3%). Poverty and its attendant issues (such as hunger and homelessness) also have lasting effects.

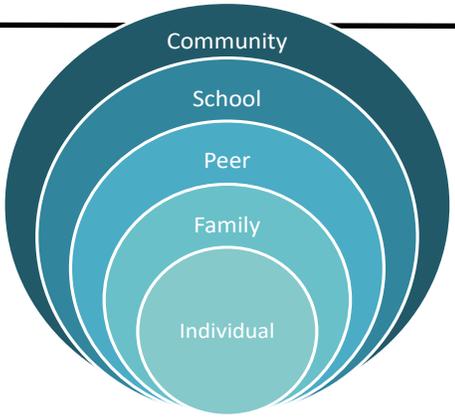
3% had to skip meals because their family didn’t have enough money; and
4% experienced homelessness in the past year.*

*These questions are only answered by 9th and 11th graders.

Protective Factors Buffer Negative Outcomes

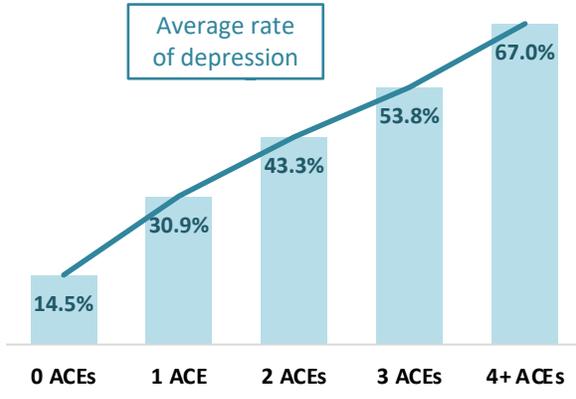
Minnesota, 2022 MSS

Protective factors are characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community or cultural levels (shown here in an illustration of the social-ecological model) that precede and are associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes such as substance use and mental health issues.

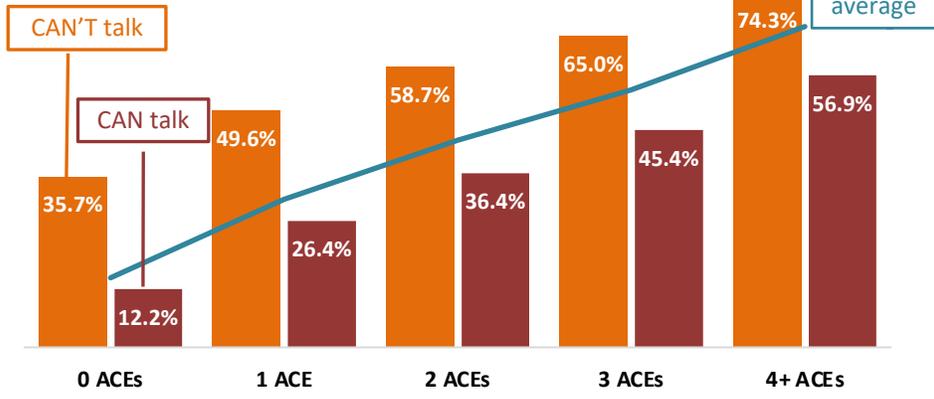


ACEs are correlated with negative outcomes; however, those who have experienced ACEs, and who also have protective factors, are buffered from some negative effects of ACEs. Protective factors work like adverse experiences, but in reverse; they work to reduce negative behaviors and lessen the effects of ACEs.

Students with 4 or more ACEs are more likely to report depression than students with 0 ACEs. **Rates of depression increase in a stepwise manner as the number of ACEs increase.**



However, even if a student reports a higher ACE score, **the rates of depression are lower** when students feel they can talk about their problems with a parent. This graph compares the rate of depression for students **who feel they CAN talk to their parents** about problems with **those who CAN'T**; it shows that **being able to talk to a parent has a protective effect against depression.**



Protective Factors Can Build Resiliency Through the Whole Community

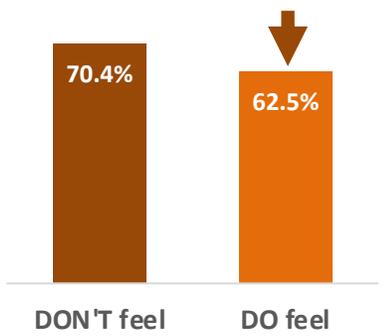
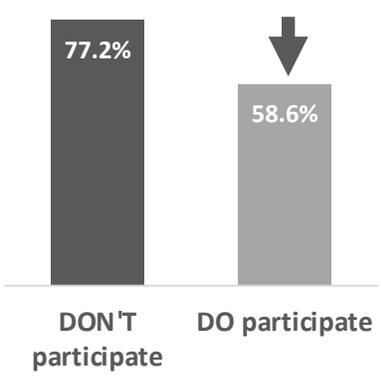
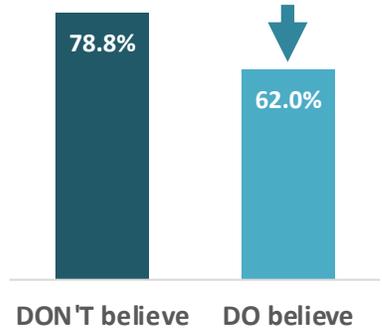
Minnesota, 2022 MSS

No matter how many ACEs students experience, they still benefit from protective factors; for example, students are less likely to use e-cigarettes or experience depression when they believe school and community adults care about them, whether they've experienced 4+ ACEs, or none. But the effect is especially large when it comes to students who have experienced multiple ACEs.

Levels of depression in students with 4+ ACEs **decrease** when they **believe an adult cares about them** (parent, relative, school or community adult).

Levels of depression in students with 4+ ACEs **decrease** when they **participate in activities outside of school that give them joy and energy.**

Levels of depression in students with 4+ ACEs **decrease** when they **feel that teachers are interested in them as a person.**



Examining Protective Factors in Your Community

Le Sueur County, 2022 MSS

Focusing on protective factors can improve resilience in your community. Below are selected indicators from the MSS highlighting positive relationships and other factors that can be harnessed or boosted to support the health and emotional wellness of young people in our communities – regardless of whether they have experienced ACEs. These include ensuring that youth:

	LE SUEUR	WEM	LS-H	TRI-CITY	MN
Believe AN ADULT CARES about them (parent, relative, school or community adult)	93%	94%	92%	93%	91%
Feel they can TALK TO PARENTS about problems they're having	84%	84%	86%	82%	80%
Feel their RELATIVES CARE about them	77%	82%	74%	75%	74%
Participate in activities that give them ENERGY AND JOY	73%	73%	79%	68%	76%
Feel TEACHERS ARE INTERESTED in them as a person	61%	64%	55%	60%	63%
Feel they can TALK TO A SCHOOL ADULT about about problems they're having	33%	32%	21%	43%	27%
Feel the ADULTS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES CARE about them	20%	26%	16%	19%	29%

NOTE: These data represent 8th, 9th, and 11th graders combined, except for Tri-City United, which combines 9th and 11th graders.

There are many sources of data on protective factors experienced by Minnesotans. These data can highlight your community's strengths and challenges; and inform your steps to promote protective factors in your community. For help finding MSS and non-MSS data to aid in ACEs prevention planning for Le Sueur County, please see the Community ACEs Planning Tool.

Resources

FamilyWise: <https://familywiseservices.org/>

Substance Use in Minnesota, reports and data, including MSS data on ACEs, mental health, and substance use, by county and demographic group: <https://www.SUMN.org>

Minnesota Department of Human Services, Adult ACE report: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/communities/ace/acereport.pdf>

Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota Student Survey data: <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/DSE/MDE085585>

Minnesota Kids Count, data on the wellbeing of children in Minnesota: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#MN>

MN Compass, data on various Minnesota topics, such as health, housing, and equity: <https://www.mncompass.org/>

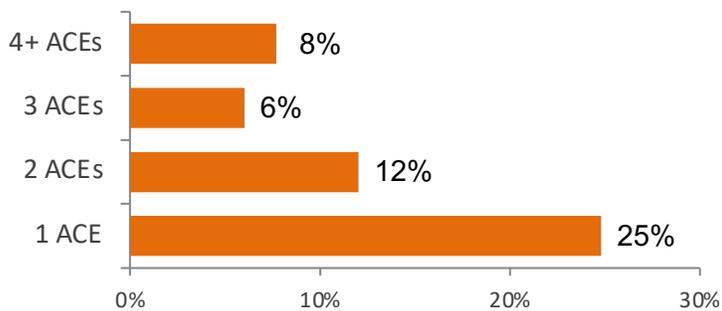
County Health Rankings: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/use-data/explore-your-snapshot>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventingACES.pdf>

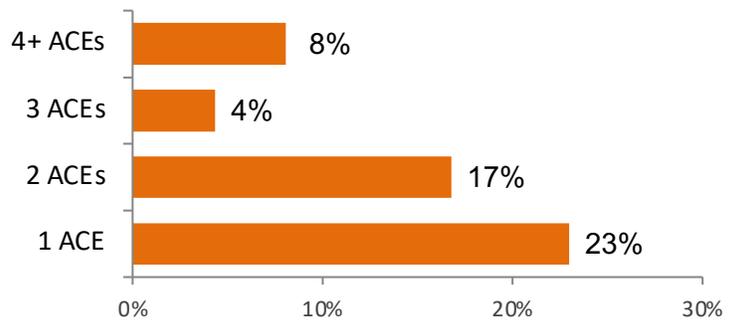
This fact sheet was developed for More Resilient Minnesota. Data and design by EpiMachine and EpiCog.

Additional Childhood Traumas	LE SUEUR	WEM	LS-H	TRI-CITY
Experienced past-month BULLYING	49%	51%	46%	51%
DON'T FEEL SAFE IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS	3%	2%	3%	4%
DON'T FEEL SAFE IN THEIR SCHOOLS	13%	13%	14%	11%
Have experienced DATING VIOLENCE	19%	18%	17%	22%
Have been in FOSTER CARE , past year/more than a year ago	1% , 2%	1% , 4%	1% , 1%	1% , 2%
Had to SKIP MEALS because the family didn't have enough money	3%	1%	3%	6%
Experienced HOMELESSNESS in the past year	4%	3%	2%	6%

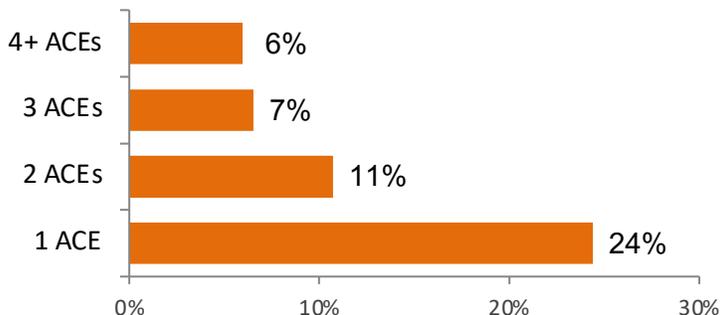
Of the 616 **Le Sueur County** 8th, 9th, and 11th graders, **51%** reported experiencing **at least one ACE**, compared to the state average of 47%.



Of the 174 **WEM** 8th, 9th, and 11th graders, **52%** reported experiencing **at least one ACE**, compared to the state average of 47%.



Of the 192 **Le Sueur-Henderson** 8th, 9th, and 11th graders, **48%** reported experiencing **at least one ACE**, compared to the state average of 47%.



Of the 233 **Tri-City United** 9th, and 11th graders, **50%** reported experiencing **at least one ACE**, compared to the state average of 47%.

