

Announcement



CYW Policy & Advocacy Milestones - A Special Update



Policy advocacy is a key part of the Center for Youth Wellness' work to support prevention and healing for children, families and communities. This year, our policy efforts focus on raising awareness about toxic stress caused by exposure to ACEs among parents, pediatricians, and policymakers. Here are a few of the exciting milestones happening at CYW this month:

Release of First CYW White Paper – “An Unhealthy Dose of Stress”

Newly released by the CYW, “An Unhealthy Dose of Stress” highlights the significant health and development challenges faced by children exposed to ACEs. Exposure to strong, frequent, or prolonged adversity, such as ACEs, without adequate support from an adult, can cause a severe stress response – or toxic stress – with serious, lifelong implications for children’s health and futures. Almost two-thirds of Californians have reported having one or more Adverse Childhood Experience, such as abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction. This white paper is intended to be a resource as well as a call to action for the state to do more to recognize, prevent, and heal toxic stress in children exposed to early adversity.

-The full white paper can be downloaded [here](#)

-Read our press release [here](#)

New Resolution Introduced on Adverse Childhood Experiences, Toxic Stress

Assembly Concurrent Resolution 155 (ACR 155) is a resolution urging the Governor to identify solutions to address the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences and toxic stress, and reduce children’s exposure to such trauma. Sponsored by the CYW, ACR 155 was introduced by Assemblymember Raul Bocanegra (D-39) and is coauthored by Assemblymembers Bonta, Bradford, Buchanan, and Calderon. The resolution is co-sponsored by Californians for Safety and Justice and Children Now.

The resolution was announced on May 29, 2014 during a legislative hearing in Sacramento sponsored by the Alliance for Boys and Men of Color on the trauma-informed health and healing practices. Testifying at the hearing, CYW Chief Executive Officer and Founder Dr. Nadine Burke Harris emphasized the need to recognize and address ACEs as a public health crisis. “There is a biological mechanism. We understand this. It’s not a mystery,” said Dr. Burke Harris at the hearing. “When you have kids exposed to chronic adversity, neurologically, it turns down the functioning of the prefrontal cortex. And then we sit there and ask, “why are these kids underperforming?”

The Center for Youth Wellness believes that every parent, pediatrician and policymaker should be familiar with the words ‘toxic stress’ and ‘Adverse Childhood Experiences’. The research around ACEs and their impact on children’s long-term health exposes the scope of the problem and the opportunity we have to heal and improve the wellbeing of children across the state. By identifying effective solutions and interventions to prevent ACEs and heal toxic stress, we can make kids healthier and build stronger families and communities.

To view ACR 155, please visit: <http://bit.ly/Six7iB> and read our [blog](#) post

Op-Ed by CYW COO Suzy Loftus: "Standing Up for Children Exposed to Trauma"

In an op-ed published in today's San Francisco Bay Guardian, CYW Chief Operating Officer Suzy Loftus emphasized the importance of preventing, screening, and healing toxic stress in children exposed to ACEs. Illustrating the early consequences of ACEs in the life of a child, Loftus highlighted the critical role that pediatricians can play in addressing toxic stress and the CYW's unique model to identify and heal toxic stress through its partnership with the Bayview Child Health Center. Loftus urged readers to help spread the word among parents, pediatricians and policymakers that ACEs are a public health crisis that we can no longer afford to ignore.

Loftus' op-ed can be read in full [here](#).

Also, don't forget to check out the full, newly launched [CYW blog](#) for more insights on issues related to ACEs and toxic stress!

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