



CHILDHOOD RISK

ACE: Divorce

INDICATOR

Percent of children who have divorced or separated parents.

Numerator Number of children who experienced the ACE

Denominator Children aged 0-17

DESCRIPTION

This is a proxy measure for toxic stress and is included as an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE). This asks parents, "Did [child's name] ever live with a parent or guardian who got divorced or separated after [child's name] was born?"

IMPORTANCE

Divorce is correlated with decreased school achievement, poor behavior, decreased self-confidence, and more distant relationships with both parents. Research suggests that these outcomes are in response to stresses related to single-parenthood, or absence of a consistent second parent; economic disadvantage; or family conflict and instability (Amato, 1991).

LIMITATIONS

- The National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) does not include never-married parents as an ACE.
- While divorce is correlated with negative outcomes, many children do not experience long-term negative effects due to continued supportive relationships in their lives.

ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

Wisconsin Analyses

| Race/Ethnicity |
|---------------------|
| Data not available. |

National Analyses

| Race/Ethnicity | % of Children Experiencing Divorce |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Black, non-Hispanic | 34.7% |
| Hispanic | 27.8% |
| Other, non-Hispanic | 18.7% |
| White, non-Hispanic | 22.7% |

| YEAR: | | 2016 | |
|------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| WI | US | Best | Worst |
| 22.2% | 25.0% | 18% | 33% |
| | | UT | AR |
| PAST YEAR: | | 2011/2012 | |
| WI | US | | |
| 19.8% | 20.1% | | |

SOURCE

Amato, P. R., & Keith, B. (1991). Parental divorce and the well-being of children: a meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 110(1), 26.
National Survey of Children's Health. (2016). Data query from the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health website. Retrieved from www.childhealthdata.org.