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# A Look into Medical Students' Knowledge on Adverse Childhood Experiences

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## Introduction

- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are defined by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention as traumatic events that occur from birth to 17 years old that involve abuse, neglect, and household violence<sup>1</sup>.
- Literature has shown that ACEs are linked to various mental and physical health consequences.
- Currently, training on ACEs is lacking in most medical school curricula<sup>2&4</sup>.

## Aims

The aims of this study were to assess medical student knowledge of ACEs and confidence in caring for patients with them

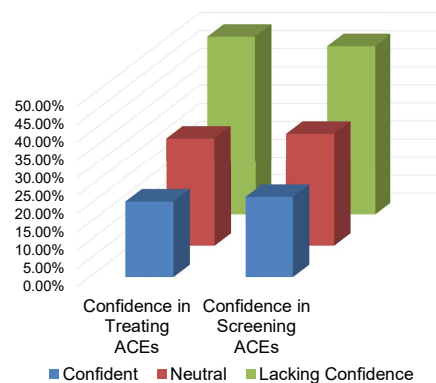
## Methods

83 out of 494 (16.8%) completed the survey.

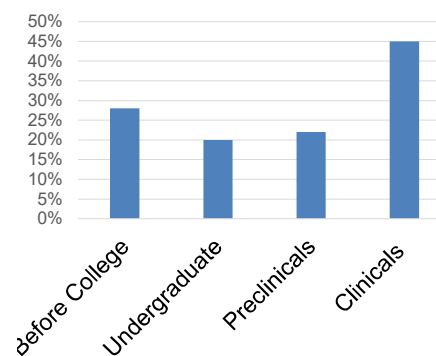


## Results

**Graph 1: Confidence with ACEs**

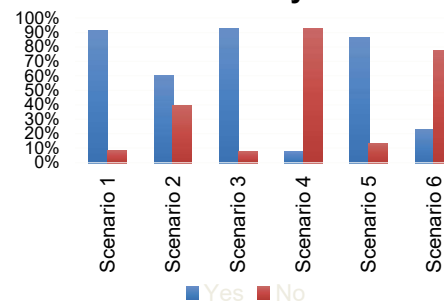


**Graph 2: Student Experience with ACEs**



|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | A 5-year-old child is neglected by his parents and sometimes misses dinner.  |
| 2 | A 25-year-old male who was part of a custody battle during his parents' divorce at age 16.                                 |
| 3 | A 7-year-old female is fondled by her uncle.   |
| 4 | A 6-year-old gets put in time-out after refusing to clean up her toys.   |
| 5 | A 10-year-old witnesses one of his mother's manic episodes.  |
| 6 | A 17-year-old feels like her parents don't love her because she isn't smart enough to get into the University of Michigan. |

**Graph 3: Percentage of ACE Scenarios Identified Correctly**



11/83 (13.3%) correctly identified all 5 ACE scenarios, which included scenarios 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6.

## Conclusions

- There is a lack of knowledge and confidence among students in regards to what ACEs are, what types of scenarios constitute ACEs, and how to treat patients with them.
- With the overwhelming evidence of future health complications associated with ACEs, it is of paramount importance for future physicians be taught to screen and care for patients with a history of ACEs.
- This study will encourage medical educators to incorporate teachings about ACEs early on in medical school.

## References

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