Anghenion cymorth pobl ifanc sydd wedi cael profiadau niweidiol yn ystod plentyndod

Karen Hughes

Polisi ac Iechyd Rhyngwladol, Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru

Canolfan Cydweithredu Sefydliad Iechyd y Byd ar Fuddsoddi ar gyfer Iechyd a Llesiant

Support needs of young people exposed to adverse childhood experiences

Karen Hughes

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World Health Organization Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health and Well-being

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Profiadau niweidiol yn ystod plentyndod (ACEs)

- Digwyddiadau a allai fod yn drawmatig yn ystod plentyndod sy'n effeithio'n uniongyrchol ar blentyn (e.e. camdriniaeth) neu sy'n effeithio ar yr amgylchedd y mae'n tyfu ynddo (e.e. trais domestig, camddefnyddio sylweddau gan rieni)
- Un o'r rhagfynegyddion cryfaf o iechyd gwael a llesiant cymdeithasol ar hyd cwrs bywyd

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

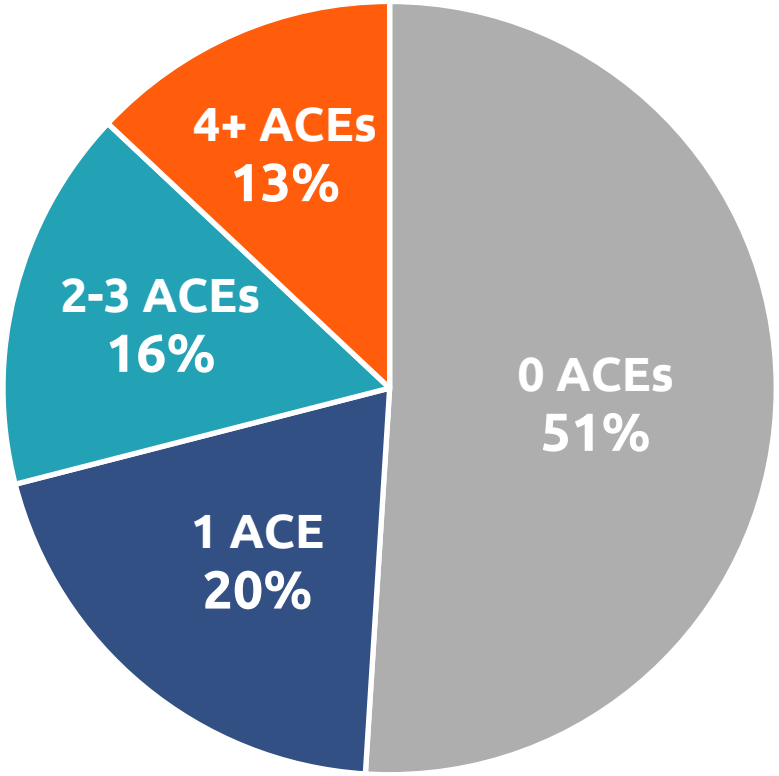
- Potentially traumatic events in childhood that affect a child directly (e.g. abuse) or affect the environment in which they grow up (e.g. domestic violence, parental substance abuse)
- One of the strongest predictors of poor health and social wellbeing across the life course

Astudiaethau ACE, Cymru
(n>10,000 oedolion)

- 9 ACEs cyn oed 18

ACE studies, Wales
(n>10,000 adults)

- 9 ACEs before age 18



Cam-drin llafar	23%	Verbal abuse
Cam-drin corfforol	17%	Physical abuse
Cam-drin rhywiol	8%	Sexual abuse
Rhieni'n gwahanu	23%	Parental separation
Salwch meddwl	18%	Mental illness
Cam-drin domestig	15%	Domestic violence
Camddefnyddio alcohol	13%	Problem alcohol use
Camddefnyddio cyffuriau	5%	Drug use
Carcharu	4%	Incarceration

↑ Risg (oedolion)	4+ ACEs v 0 ACEs	↑ Risk (adults)
Yfwr risg uchel	2x	High risk drinking
Llesiant meddyliol isel	4x	Low mental wellbeing
Defnydd o gannabis	5x	Cannabis use
Salwch meddwl	6x	Mental illness
Dioddef trais	8x	Violence victimisation
Meddyliau hunanladdol neu hunan-niwed	10x	Suicidal thoughts or self-harm

Iechyd gwael yn ystod plentyndod	5x	Poor childhood health
Absenoldeb o'r ysgol	7x	School absenteeism
Llai o ymdeimlad o berthyn yn yr ysgol	8x	Lower school belonging
Wedi cael ei fwlio yn yr ysgol	12x	Bullied at school
Dim cymwysterau addysgiadol	2x	No educational qualifications

Adolescents

England:

- ACEs ↑ risk of depression and self-harm

Northern Ireland:

- Each additional ACE
- 88% ↑ risk of self harm and suicide ideation

Pobl ifanc

LLoegr:

- ACEs ↑ risg o iselder am hunan-niwed

Gogledd Iwerddon:

- Pob ACE ychwanegol
- 88% ↑ risg o hunan-niweidio a synio am hunanladdiad

Farooq et al, 2025; Bunting et al, 2023

Swansea University Prifysgol Abertawe

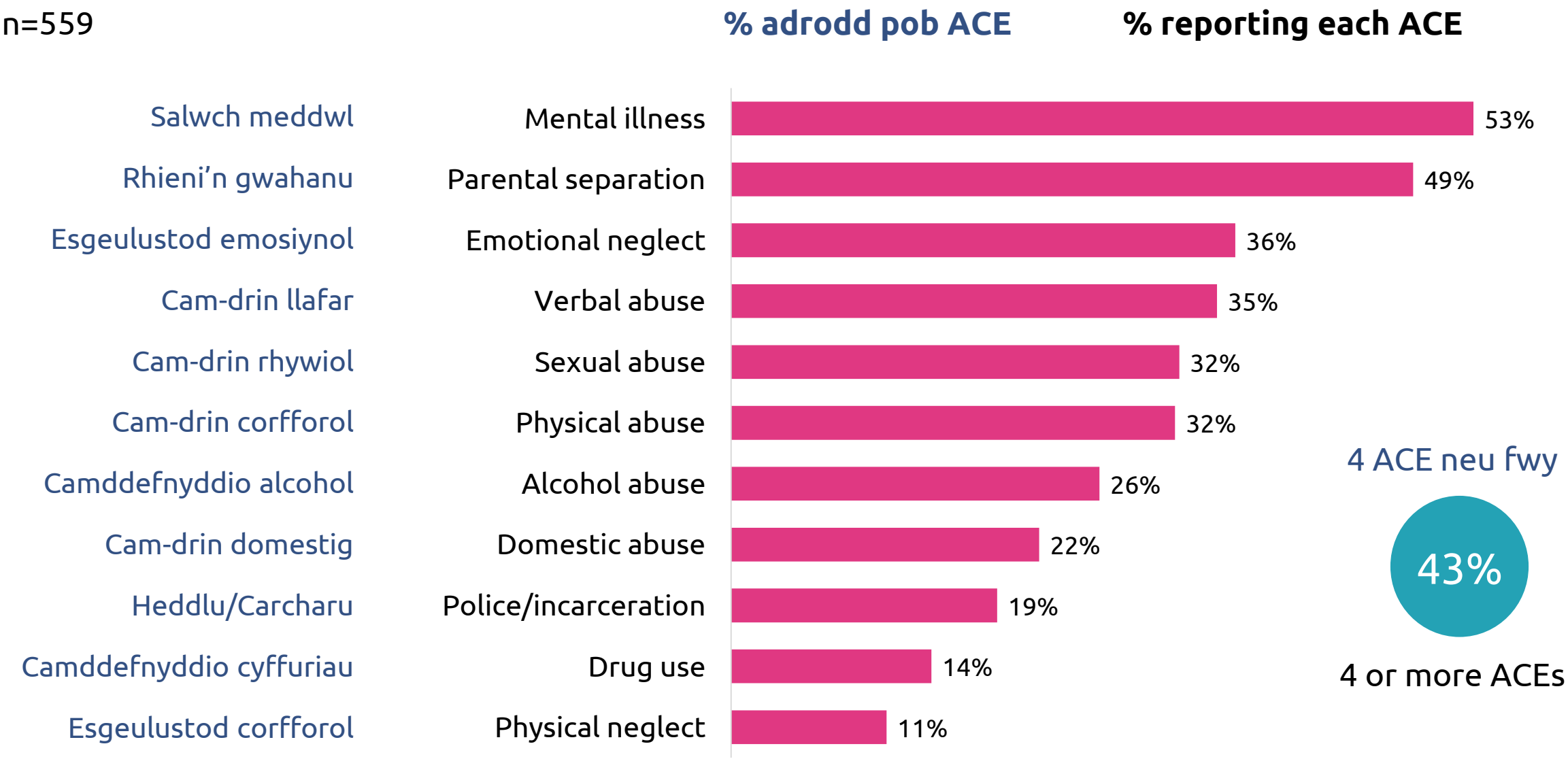
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Avery et al, 2025

- **Cefnogi pobl ifanc sydd wedi cael ACEs**
- **Arolwg o bobl ifanc 16-18 oed**
  - Holiadur ar-lein
  - 11 ACEs
  - Canfyddiadau ynghylch y gefnogaeth i ACEs
- **Campysau coleg a chyfryngau cymdeithasol**
  - 670 cyfranogwyr
- **>80% wedi adrodd am gael o leiaf un ACE**
  - n=559

- **Supporting young people with ACEs**
- **Survey of 16-18 year olds**
  - Online questionnaire
  - 11 ACEs
  - Perceptions of support for ACEs
- **College campuses and social media**
  - 670 participants
- **>80% reported at least one ACE**
  - n=559

n=559



4 ACE neu fwy

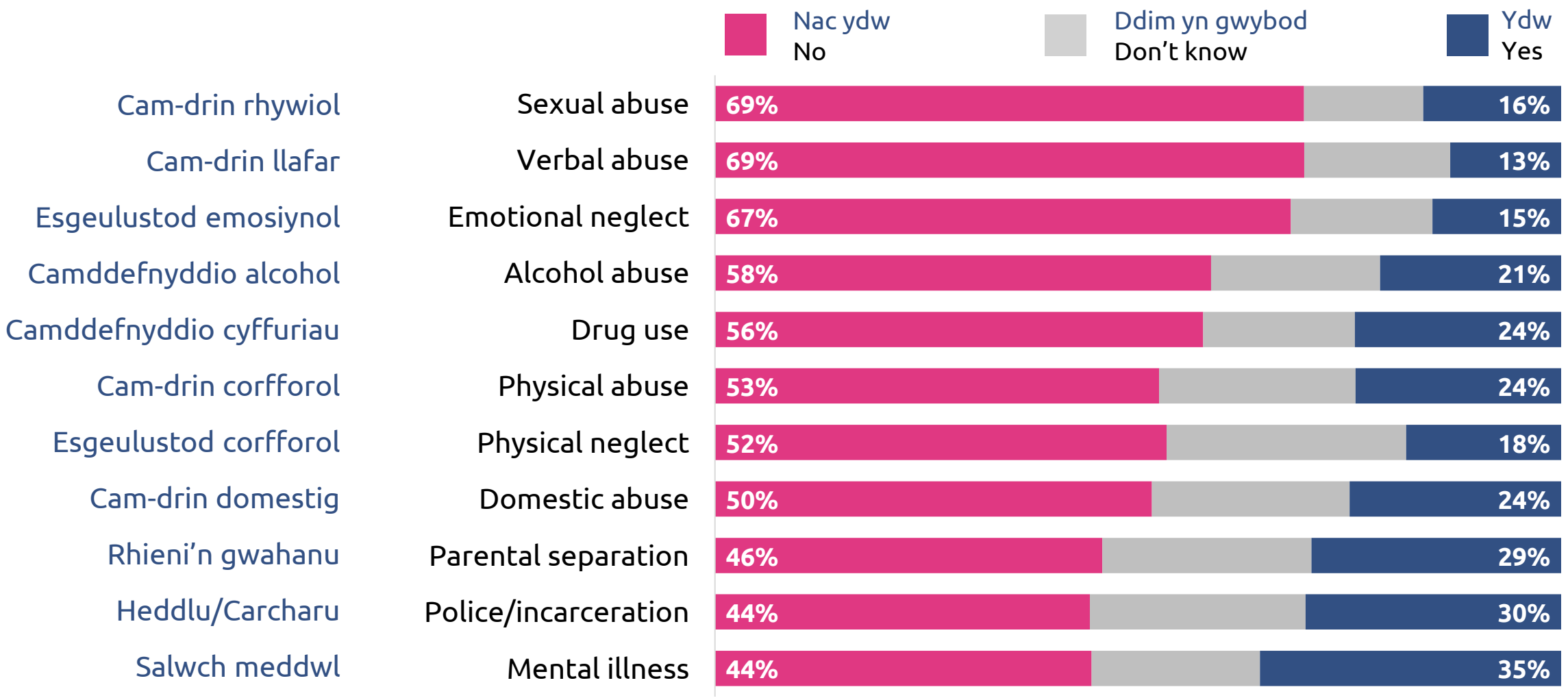
43%

4 or more ACEs

Avery et al, 2025

Oeddech chi'n teimlo eich bod wedi cael digon o help a chefnogaeth yn y sefyllfa hon?

Did you feel you received enough help and support in this situation?



Gadawodd 143 o bobl ifanc sylwadau ar y gefnogaeth yr oeddent wedi'i derbyn neu yr hoffent fod wedi'i derbyn

Themâu allweddol
Stigma a pheidio â datgelu
Helpwch fi drwy helpu fy nheulu
Siarad ag oedolyn dibynadwy
Unigrwydd a chefnogaeth gan gymheiriaid
Ysgolion a cholegau fel safleoedd cymorth

143 young people left comments on the support they had received or would have liked

Key themes
Stigma and non-disclosure
Help me by helping my family
Talking to a trusted adult
Loneliness and peer support
Schools and colleges as sites of support

Stigma a pheidio â datgelu

"Doeddwn i byth yn gwybod ble na sut i siarad â phobl am fy nheimladau; roeddwn i'n eu ffrwyno ac yn eu cadw i mi fy hun."

"Nid yw llawer o bobl yn gwybod amdano ac mae siarad amdano'n creu embaras."

"Hoffwn i pe bai wedi bod yn bwnc y byddai pobl wedi teimlo'n gyfforddus yn siarad amdano gyda mi, yn lle ynysu fy sefyllfa."

"Roedd ei gweld hi'n agored am y peth, a'r adnoddau oedd ar gael i mi er mwyn i mi allu dysgu mwy amdano [yn ddefnyddiol]."

Stigma and non-disclosure

"I never knew where or how to speak to people about my feelings; I bottled it all up and kept them to myself."

"Not many people know about it and it feels embarrassing to talk about it."

"I wish it would have been a topic which people felt comfortable to speak to me about, instead of isolating my situation."

"Her being open about it and the resources available to me to be able to learn more about it [was helpful]."

Helpwch fi drwy helpu fy nheulu

"Byddai cefnogaeth i dad wedi bod o fudd i mi oherwydd fi oedd yr un oedd yn gofalu amdano. Rhoddodd hynny straen enfawr arna i, ar fy addysg ac ar fy iechyd meddwl a chorfforol."

"Mae gan fy mam PTSD a gorbryder ond mae hi'n fam anhygoel ac mae hi yno i mi bob amser."

"Os ydych chi wedi arfer ag e neu os ydych chi am "amddiffyn" eich teulu, efallai y bydd rhywun yn betrus o ofyn am help, yn amharod i ofyn amdano neu'n gwneud i'r sefyllfa ymddangos yn llai difrifol…"

Help me by helping my family

"Support for my dad would have benefitted me because I was the one looking after him which put a massive strain on me, my education and my mental and physical health."

"My mum has PTSD and anxiety but she's an amazing mum and she's always there for me."

"If you're used to it, or if you want to "defend" your family, a person may be hesitant or reluctant to reach out for help, or downplay it..."

Siarad ag oedolyn dibynadwy

"Oedolyn arall yn fy mywyd y gallwn ymddiried ynddo neu ddibynnu arno."

"Gadael i mi siarad am yr hyn y bu'n rhaid i mi fynd drwyddo heb farnu, a'i gadw'n breifat."

"Rwy'n ei chael hi'n anodd siarad am fy mhrofiadau gan ei fod yn gwneud i mi deimlo cywilydd pan fydda i'n sôn wrth bobl eraill am fy mhroblemau."

"Dw i'n cael trafferth siarad am deimladau. Oherwydd hyn, dywedodd pobl CAMHS wrth fy mam fy mod i'n gwrthod ymgysylltu â nhw."

Talking to a trusted adult

"An alternative adult in my life who I could trust or rely on."

"To let me talk about what I had to go through without judgement and to keep it private."

"I find it hard to talk about my experiences as it makes me feel shameful putting my problems onto other people."

"I struggle to talk about feelings. Because of this the CAMHS people told my mum I refused to engage with them."

Unigrwydd a chefnogaeth gan gymheiriaid

"Doedd gen i neb y gallwn i droi ato am help gan fy mod i'n teimlo nad oedd neb mewn gwirionedd yn poeni am yr hyn roeddwn i'n mynd drwyddo."

"Mae'n anodd gofyn am help pan nad ydych chi'n gwybod beth sy'n digwydd go iawn gyda'ch iechyd meddwl eich hun."

"Hoffwn i fod wedi gwybod mwy am brofiadau pobl eraill mewn sefyllfaoedd tebyg i fy un i, a'r anawsterau a'r mecanweithiau ymdopi a oedd ganddyn nhw."

"Hoffwn i pe bai dulliau ymdopi wedi cael eu cyflwyno i mi, a sgiliau cyfathrebu a bod y bobl oedd yn fy nghefnogi i yn fwy empathig."

Loneliness and peer support

"I didn't have anybody that I could turn to for help as I felt nobody actually cared what I was going through."

"It's hard to ask for help when you don't know what's actually happening with your own mental health."

"I would have liked to know more about the experiences of others in similar situations to mine, and the struggles and coping mechanisms they had."

"I would have liked to been given coping methods, communication skills and have the people who were supporting me to be more empathic."

Ysgolion a cholegau fel safleoedd cymorth

"Wnes i erioed siarad ag unrhyw un am sut roeddwn i'n teimlo mewn gwirionedd a hoffwn i pe bawn i wedi cael mwy o gefnogaeth yn yr ysgol gynradd".

"Roeddwn i'n colli'r ysgol yn gyson a byddwn i'n cyrraedd yno'n ofidus, ac ni chynigiodd unrhyw athro help i mi."

"Gwelais fod y staff yn dangos eu bod nhw'n poeni amdana i drwy wneud yn siŵr fy mod i'n iawn a gwneud pethau gyda mi; roedd hynny o help."

"Rhoddodd un athro lawer o gefnogaeth i mi a helpodd fi drwy siarad am yr hyn oedd yn mynd ymlaen yn fy mhen, fy addysgu mwy am iechyd meddwl a rhoi technegau ymdopi i mi... Roedd y gefnogaeth hon yn aruthrol."

Schools or colleges as sites of support

"I never really spoke to anyone about how I felt and I wish I had had some more support in primary school".

"I continually missed school and came in distressed, and no teacher reached out to me."

"I found the staff showing that they care about me by checking on me and doing stuff with me, it was helpful."

"One teacher gave me loads of support and helped me by talking through what was going through my head, educating me more on mental health and giving me coping techniques... This support was immense."

Ysgolion a cholegau fel safleoedd cymorth

- Roedd llawer o bobl ifanc wedi derbyn cefnogaeth drwy'r ysgol neu'r coleg - neu'n dymuno eu bod nhw wedi
- Roedd cefnogaeth gan yr ysgol yn cael ei ystyried yn rhywbeth cadarnhaol
- Helpodd staff ysgol (athrawon, cynorthwywyr addysgu a chwnselwyr ysgol) bobl ifanc i ddeall profiadau niweidiol yn ystod plentyndod ac roedden nhw'n cael eu gweld fel oedolion dibynadwy y gallent siarad â nhw am eu teimladau.
- Argymhellion y dylai ysgolion wneud mwy, y dylai staff dderbyn mwy o hyfforddiant i'w galluogi i ddarparu cefnogaeth, ac ar gyfer grwpiau cefnogaeth gan gymheiriaid mewn ysgolion.

Schools or colleges as sites of support

- School support was viewed positively
- Many young people had received support through school or college - or wished they had
- School staff (teachers, teaching assistants and school-based counsellors) helped young people understand ACEs and were seen a trusted adult they could speak to about their feelings.
- Recommendations that schools should do more, that staff should receive more training to enable them to provide support, and for school-based peer support groups.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

"Support for my dad would have benefited me because I was the one looking after him": A qualitative analysis of the support needs of young people exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences

Flo Avery, Michaela James, Laura Elizabeth Cowley, Lucy Griffiths, Mark A. Bellis, Karen Hughes, Sinead Brophy

Published: April 22, 2025 • https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0313371

Article | Authors | Metrics | Comments | Media Coverage | Peer Review

Abstract
1. Introduction
2. Materials and methods
3. Results
4. Discussion
Supporting information
References

Reader Comments
Figures

Accessible Data
See the data

Abstract

Background

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are associated with negative health and wellbeing outcomes. Ensuring young people receive timely and appropriate support after experiencing ACEs could improve these outcomes.

Objective

This study aimed to explore what works to support young people living with ACEs; what support do they receive, and what are the characteristics of valuable help?

Participants and Setting

Young people living in Wales aged 16–18 years (n = 559) completed an online survey about their ACEs and the help they did or did not receive with these experiences.

Methods

Free text responses were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Public involvement

PLOS ONE

RESEARCH ARTICLE

A systematic review of non-clinician trauma-based interventions for school-age youth

Flo Avery[1]*, Natasha Kennedy[1], Michaela James[1], Hope Jones[1], Rebekah Amos[2], Mark Bellis[3], Karen Hughes[2,4], Sinead Brophy[1]

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Citation: Avery F, Kennedy N, James M, Jones H, Amos R, Bellis M, et al. (2024) A systematic review of non-clinician trauma-based interventions for school-age youth. PLoS ONE 19(9): e0293248. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0293248

Editor: Gerard Hutchinson, University of the West Indies at Saint Augustine, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Received: October 8, 2023

Accepted: June 11, 2024

Published: September 6, 2024

Peer Review History: PLOS recognizes the benefits of transparency in the peer review process; therefore, we enable the publication of all of the content of peer review and author responses alongside final, published articles. The editorial history of this article is available here: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0293248

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Abstract

Exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) is recognised globally as a risk factor for health problems in later life. Awareness of ACEs and associated trauma is increasing within schools and educational settings, as well as the demand for supportive services to address needs. However, there is a lack of clear evidence for effective interventions which can be delivered by non-clinicians (e.g., the school staff themselves). Thus, we undertook a systematic review to answer the question: What evidence exists for the efficacy of non-clinician delivered trauma-based interventions for improving mental health in school-age youth (4–18 years) who have experienced ACEs? The protocol for the review is registered in the PROSPERO International Prospective Register of Systematic Reviews (ID: CRD42023417286). We conducted a search across five electronic databases for studies published between January 2013 and April 2023 that reported on interventions suitable for non-clinician delivery, were published in English in the last 10 years, and involved participants aged 4–18 years (school-age) that had exposure to ACEs. Of the 4097 studies identified through the search, 326 were retrieved for full text screening, and 25 were included in the final review. Data were extracted from included articles for analysis and selected studies were quality assessed using validated assessment tools. Data were analysed through narrative synthesis. There was considerable heterogeneity in study design, outcome measures, and the interventions being studied. Interventions included CBT, mindfulness and art-based programs. A key finding was that there is a lack of high-quality research evidence to inform non-clinician delivered trauma-informed interventions. Many included studies were weak quality due to convenience sampling of participants and potential bias. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)-based approaches are tentatively suggested as a suitable target for future rigorous evaluations of interventions addressing ACE-related trauma recovery and mental health improvement in school-age youth.

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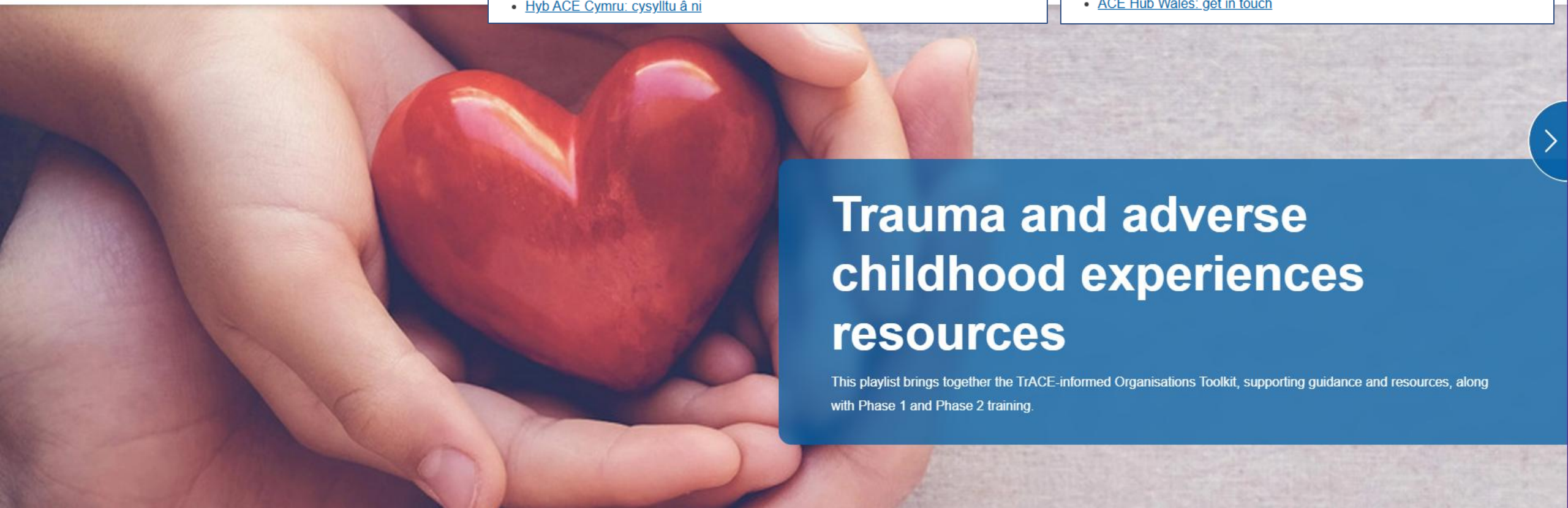
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Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experience (TrACE)-informed toolkit education resource

Trauma and adverse childhood experiences resources

- Fframwaith Cymru sy'n Ystyriol o Drawma
- Beth mae'n ei olygu i fod yn ysgol sy'n ystyriol o TrACE?
- Pecyn Cymorth Sefydliadau Ystyriol o TrACE
- Pecyn Cymorth Sefydliadau Ystyriol o TrACE: y broses ac adnoddau cefnogol
- Ysgolion yng Nghymru sy'n Ystyriol o TrACE: astudiaeth achos a gweminar ysgolion
- Hyfforddiant Cam 1
- Hyfforddiant Cam 2
- Beth nesaf?
- Hyb ACE Cymru: cysylltu â ni

- Trauma Informed Wales Framework
- What does it mean to be a TrACE-informed school?
- TrACE-informed Organisations Toolkit
- TrACE-informed Organisations Toolkit: process and supporting resources
- TrACE-informed Schools in Wales: case study and schools webinar
- Phase 1 training
- Phase 2 training
- What's next?
- ACE Hub Wales: get in touch



Trauma and adverse childhood experiences resources

This playlist brings together the TrACE-informed Organisations Toolkit, supporting guidance and resources, along with Phase 1 and Phase 2 training.

Diolch Thank you

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Diolch: Flo Avery, Sioned Brophy, Lucy Griffiths, Laura Cowley, Michaela James, Mark Bellis

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