

## INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

Focus investments on families with young children who live in the areas of Stark and Carroll Counties with the highest levels of childhood poverty.

- **Primary Priority:** To prevent or lessen the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) during early childhood among those who live under the federal poverty level.
  - Primary Strategy: Support developmental milestones to ensure a strong start early in life.
- **Secondary Priority:** To improve household stability of their parents/caregivers.
  - Secondary Strategy: Provide immediate economic supports to avoid long- term harms.

## WHY?

ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood. The more ACEs the greater the risk of harm. Research shows that reducing the risk of ACEs and building upon protective factors reduces the health and economic costs related to ACEs.<sup>1</sup>

- Stark County children have more ACEs than children in other communities.<sup>2</sup>
- Those at greatest risk for multiple ACEs live in poverty or are BIPOC, disabled, urban and Appalachian.<sup>3</sup>

Together, childhood poverty and ACEs are linked to worse outcomes in nearly every aspect of life from physical, mental and behavioral health to educational attainment to job opportunities and success, as well as reduced quality of life and lifelong earning potential. To shore up future generations, we need to invest early in cost effective strategies.<sup>3</sup>

## HIGH LEVEL MEASUREMENTS:

	Ohio <sup>4</sup>	Stark County <sup>4</sup>
<b>Kindergarten Readiness (Language &amp; Literacy)</b>	48%	47% (Range by district 27-73%)
<b>Third Grade Reading Proficiency</b>	68%	67% (Range by district 33-84%)

**Figure 1: What are considered ACEs?<sup>1</sup>**

Abuse	Household Challenges	Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional abuse</li> <li>• Physical abuse</li> <li>• Sexual abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Witnessing domestic violence</li> <li>• Substance use in the household</li> <li>• Mental illness in the household</li> <li>• Parental separation or divorce</li> <li>• Incarcerated member of the household</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional neglect</li> <li>• Physical neglect</li> </ul>

**Figure 2: Examples of Risk and Protective Factors<sup>1</sup>**

Community	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
	Communities with limited education & economic opportunities	Communities with healthcare providers
	Communities with high rates of violence & crime	Communities with safe & affordable housing
	Communities with easy access to drugs & alcohol	Communities with high-quality childcare & early childhood education providers
<b>Family and Peers</b>	Caregivers who experienced ACEs as children	Caregivers who provide safe, stable & nurturing relationships
	Families living in poverty	Families who can meet basic needs
	Caregivers with limited understanding of children's needs or development	Positive friendships & peer networks
<b>Individual</b>	Children who do not feel they can share their feelings with their caregivers	Children who develop healthy social and emotional skills

**Figure 3: United Way Priorities Aligned with Key Cost-Effective Prevention Efforts<sup>1,3</sup>**

United Way Priority & Strategy	CDC Recommended Approach	HPIO Recommend Strategy
<p><i>Primary Priority:</i> To prevent or lessen the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences during early childhood among those who live under the federal poverty level.</p> <p><i>Primary Strategy:</i> Support developmental milestones to ensure a strong start early in life.</p>	Ensure a strong start for children	Early childhood education and home visiting programs
	Enhance skills so that parents and children can handle stress, manage emotions and tackle everyday challenges	Parent/caregiver skills training programs
	Connect youth to caring adults and activities	Mentoring & school based/after-school programs with social emotional instruction
	Promote social norms that protect against violence and adversity	School/community-based violence prevention programs
<p><i>Secondary Priority:</i> To improve household stability of their parents/caregivers.</p> <p><i>Secondary Strategy:</i> Provide immediate economic supports to avoid long-term harms.</p>	Strengthen economic supports for families	Family income supports (rent, utility, shelters, food, health, crisis programs)
	Intervene to less immediate and long-term harms	Medical-legal partnerships

## **References**

1. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention. (2021). *Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Leveraging the Best Available Evidence*. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html>
2. Northeast Ohio Youth Health Survey. (2021). *Northeast Ohio Youth Health Survey, Stark County Profile*. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from [https://cms7files1.revize.com/starkcountyoh/Document\\_center/Offices/Public%20health/Nursing%20Services/Stark%20County\\_2021.pdf](https://cms7files1.revize.com/starkcountyoh/Document_center/Offices/Public%20health/Nursing%20Services/Stark%20County_2021.pdf)
3. Health Policy Institute of Ohio. (2021). *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): A strategic approach to prevent ACEs in Ohio*. Retrieved December 15, 2022, from <https://www.healthpolicyohio.org/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces-a-strategic-approach-to-prevent-aces-in-ohio/>
4. Ohio Department of Education (2022). *Ohio School Report Cards 2021-2022*. Retrieved January 23, 2023, from <https://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/download>.