

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. 143**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI
District 33 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Urges Governor to develop strategies reducing children's exposure to adverse childhood experiences.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** urging the Governor to develop
2 strategies to reduce children’s exposure to adverse childhood
3 experiences.
4

5 **WHEREAS**, Research over the last two decades in the evolving fields
6 of neuroscience, molecular biology, public health, genomics, and
7 epigenetics reveals that adverse childhood experiences in the first
8 few years of a child’s life build changes into the biology of the
9 human body that influence physical and mental health throughout a
10 child’s life; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Adverse childhood experiences are traumatic experiences
12 that occur during childhood; and

13 **WHEREAS**, These adverse experiences include physical, emotional, or
14 sexual abuse, physical and emotional neglect, household
15 dysfunction, substance use disorder, untreated mental illness or
16 incarceration of a household member, or domestic violence,
17 separation, or divorce involving a family member; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Strong, frequent, or prolonged stress caused by adverse
19 childhood experiences can become toxic stress, impacting the
20 development of a child’s fundamental brain architecture and stress
21 response systems; and

22 **WHEREAS**, Changes to a child’s fundamental brain architecture and
23 stress response systems cause health problems in adulthood that are
24 the lead to the most common causes of death and disability in the
25 United States; and

26 **WHEREAS**, Neurobiological, epigenetics, and psychological studies
27 have shown that traumatic experiences in childhood and
28 adolescence can diminish concentration, memory, organizational,
29 and language abilities, thereby negatively impacting a student’s
30 academic performance, classroom behavior, and ability to form
31 relationships; and

32 **WHEREAS**, The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACE Study)
33 is a research study conducted by Kaiser Permanente and the United
34 States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and

35 **WHEREAS**, The ACE Study, which surveyed approximately 17,000
36 participants, demonstrated an association of adverse childhood
37 experiences with health and social problems as adults; and

38 **WHEREAS**, According to the study, two-thirds of the participants had
39 at least one adverse childhood experience, and one in six of the
40 participants had four or more adverse experiences; and

41 **WHEREAS**, The ACE Study found that a person with four or more
42 adverse childhood experiences was two times more likely to have a
43 stroke, ischemic heart disease, or chronic pulmonary obstructive
44 disease, and are at a high risk of developing cancer and diabetes;
45 and

46 **WHEREAS**, According to the study’s findings, adverse childhood
47 experiences can affect a child’s future contact with the criminal
48 justice system. Women and men who have undergone adverse

1 childhood experiences are at a higher risk of becoming victims or
2 perpetrators of intimate partner violence than those who have not
3 suffered such adverse experiences; and

4 **WHEREAS**, The study also found that a person with four or more
5 adverse childhood experiences was 12 times more likely to attempt
6 suicide, 10 times more likely to use drugs, seven times more likely
7 to be an alcoholic, and 46 times more likely to have learning or
8 emotional problems; and

9 **WHEREAS**, The emerging science and research on toxic stress and
10 adverse childhood experiences evidence a growing public health
11 crisis with implications for educational, juvenile justice, criminal
12 justice, and health care systems; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Early childhood offers a unique window of opportunity to
14 prevent and heal the impact of adverse childhood experiences and
15 toxic stress on a child's body and brain; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Positively influencing the architecture of a child's
17 developing brain and reducing children's exposure to adverse
18 childhood experiences is more effective and less costly than
19 attempting to correct poor learning, health, and behaviors later in
20 life; now, therefore,

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22 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New
23 Jersey (the Senate concurring):

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25 1. The Legislature of the State of New Jersey respectfully urges
26 the Governor to develop strategies to reduce children's exposure to
27 adverse childhood experiences, address the impact of such
28 experiences on a child's brain and body, and invest in preventive
29 health care and other educational, social, and mental health
30 interventions that will positively affect the lives of New Jersey's
31 children and their families.

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33 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
34 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the
35 Secretary of the Senate to the Governor and Prevent Child Abuse
36 New Jersey.

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STATEMENT

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41 This concurrent resolution respectfully urges the Governor to
42 develop strategies to reduce children's exposure to adverse
43 childhood experiences, address the impact of such experiences on a
44 child's brain and body, and invest in preventive health care and
45 other educational, social, and mental health interventions that will
46 positively affect the lives of New Jersey's children and their
47 families.