

Positive Childhood Experiences Among Children in Arizona

What are Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)?

PCEs are known as "experiences in childhood that build a child's sense of belongingness and connection," according to [PCAAZ](#). [Positive experiences and supportive relationships](#) with adults are related to better school performance and health in both childhood and adulthood.

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are [potentially traumatic events](#) that occur before the age of 18 years, such as physical/emotional abuse and neglect, and household dysfunctions and are linked with a variety of health problems. Exposure to multiple ACEs are linked with various health problems and a shorter life expectancy.

About 43% of Children in Arizona have one or more ACE.

Why are PCEs important?

[Research](#) shows that PCEs are **protective against ACEs** by promoting child resilience. Children with resilience—including those who had been exposed to 4 or more ACEs—had better school and health outcomes.

Supportive relationships and environment can also lead to **positive adult functioning and better physical and mental health outcomes** regardless of socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity.

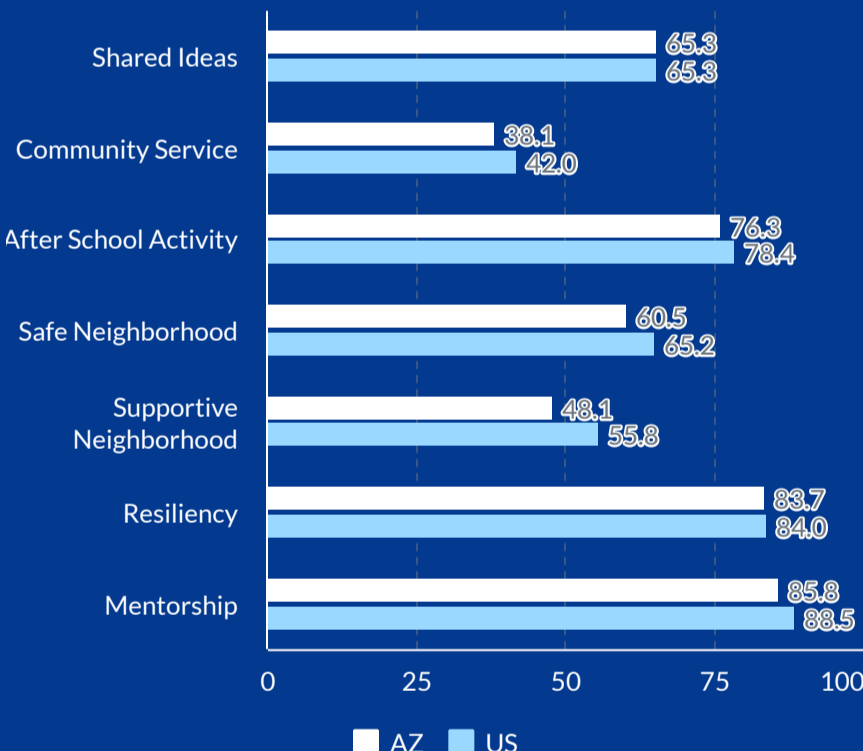
Categories of PCEs

CONSTRUCTS	POSITIVE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES CATEGORIES
Nurturing and Supportive Relationships	<p>Mentorship <i>The child has at least one adult at school or within the neighborhood or community who knows this child well and who he or she can rely on for advice or guidance.</i></p> <p>Family resilience <i>The child's family is more likely to resolve problems by talking and working together on solutions by drawing on strengths and remaining hopeful during difficult times.</i></p>
Living in a stable, safe, and equitable environment	<p>Supportive neighborhood <i>The child lives in a neighborhood where people help each other out, watch out for each other's children, and have community resources to rely on during difficult times.</i></p> <p>Safe neighborhood <i>The child lives in a neighborhood where he or she is safe.</i></p>
Opportunities for positive social engagement	<p>After school activity <i>The child participates in a sports team, clubs, or other organizations; or takes sports, music, art, language, or other organized lessons or activities after school or on the weekends during the last 12 months.</i></p> <p>Community service <i>The child participates in any type of community service or volunteer work at school, place of worship, or in the community during the last 12 months.</i></p>
Developing social and emotional competencies	<p>Shared ideas <i>The child is able to share ideas and talk about things that really matter.</i></p>

Important Facts #1

- The prevalence of individual PCEs among children in Arizona were **relatively similar to or lower than the national average.**
- The most prevalent categories of PCEs were **mentorship (85.8%)** and **family resilience (83.7%)**.
- The least prevalent PCE categories were **community service (38.1%)**, and **supportive and safe neighborhood (48.1% and 60.5%)**.

AZ vs. US: Comparisons of PCE Prevalence (%) in Children aged 0 to 17 years



Important Facts #2

- In Arizona, PCEs were reported at **lower frequencies** among...



Immigrant and mixed-status households



Children with Special Healthcare Needs



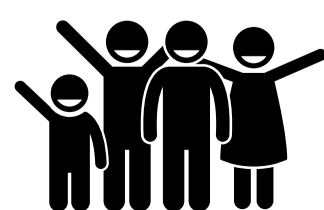
Low Socioeconomic Status Households



Children without adequate insurance coverage

- Also, **children of color** were less likely to live in a supportive neighborhood and report participating in community service, compared to white children.

Conclusion



Ongoing collaborative efforts with multi-level approaches at policy, system, and environmental-levels are necessary to promote PCEs.

Although it is impossible to change one's past, we can still shape a better future for children and their families by taking collaborative actions to promote nurturance and positive growth.

Please click [here](#) to check out more resources on how to promote PCEs in your home and work environments.