

PREVENTING ACES - DATA FOR DECISION MAKING

DFCS Region 12: Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, and McIntosh Counties

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are preventable, traumatic events that occur in childhood, that can lead to negative near- and long-term health outcomes (CDC, 2019).

Key Points:

- Trauma-informed practices recognize and respond to the signs, symptoms, and risks of trauma to better support the needs of people who have experienced ACEs. Trauma-informed care is an approach defined by treating the whole person, considering past trauma and resulting behaviors and health outcomes (Resilient GA).
- Trauma-informed supports can mitigate the effects of adversity by fostering inclusion and helping families and children manage stress.
- Promoting positive social norms about parenting and acceptable parenting behaviors or destigmatizing mental health care can reduce the incidence and limit the harmful impact of ACEs.

GA Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan (CANPP)

The data presented align with select strategies from the GA Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan (CANPP). To learn more about the CANPP, visit: <https://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/canpp/>

The following CANPP strategies were selected to implement in this region by a team of community stakeholders:

1. Expand efforts to develop safe and decent affordable housing for families.
2. Promote resilience strategies for children and youth (e.g. stress management, coping, skills development, problem-solving).
3. Promote trauma-informed training for all school personnel (e.g. trauma-informed care, addressing implicit bias, empathy, prejudices, attribution).

How this factsheet can help prevent ACEs

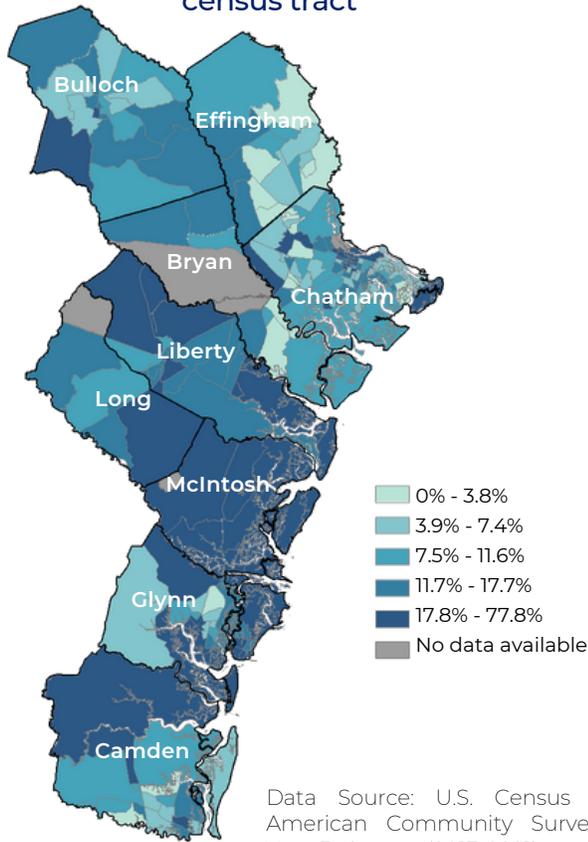
The data presented are measures that influence the occurrence of ACEs. These measures represent potential targets for interventions and are presented to help communities make decisions on the best lines of action.



Strategy 1: Expand efforts to develop safe and decent affordable housing for families.

Poverty and economic instability create high stress environments and conditions that put children at risk of experiencing ACEs. **High housing costs** may make it difficult for families to cover costs for things like healthy food or medical care. It also leads to familial stress, mental health issues, and increased risk of disease (Healthy People 2030). Policies and programs that support economic stability by making housing, food, education, or healthcare more affordable or assisting with employment can reduce poverty and prevent ACEs.

Percent of housing units that are vacant, by census tract



Percent of renter households for whom gross rent (contract rent plus tenant-paid Utilities) is 30% or more of household income, by county

County	Percent
Bulloch	45.3
Effingham	35.6
Chatham	46.8
Bryan	46.1
Liberty	43.9
Long	48.9
McIntosh	46.8
Glynn	41.1
Camden	46.2
Georgia	46.0

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2017-2021)

Strategy 2: Promote resilience strategies for children and youth (e.g., stress management, coping skills development, problem-solving skills development).

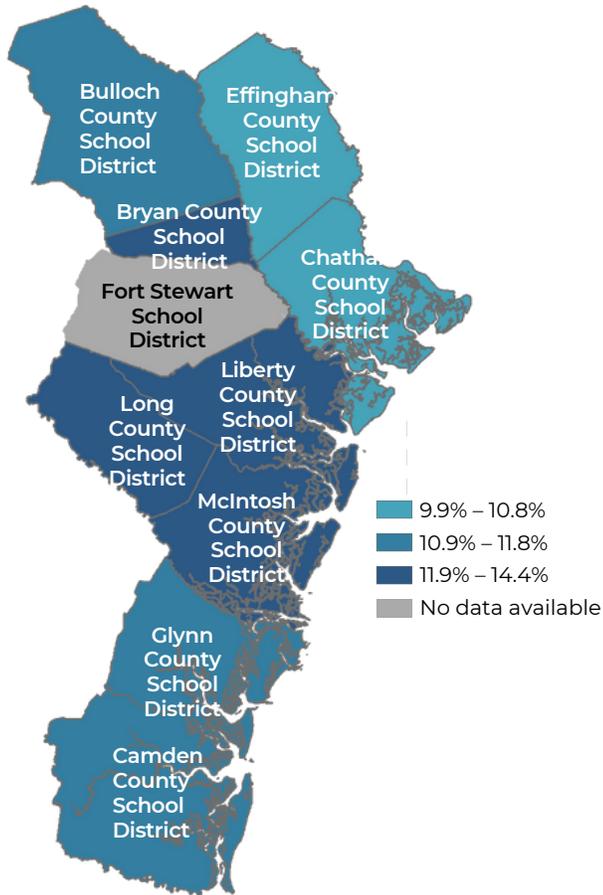
Students in this region have self-reported experiencing anxiety, depression, and traumatic events like bullying and fighting. These events can impact the ability to concentrate in school or make meaningful positive relationships. **Bullying, fighting, depression and anxiety, and substance use** are behaviors that are strongly associated with ACEs.

Improving mental health access for children and providing them with strong support systems are powerful ways to prevent these outcomes and promote resilience. For instance, connecting students to supportive adults through mentorship programs, involvement in religious activities, or after school programs or activities can promote feelings of belonging and engagement in school and decrease the occurrence of these mental health challenges (CDC 2019). Promoting trauma-informed training can help school personnel identify and respond to the trauma students are experiencing. Trauma-informed practices can create a more inclusive school environment that fosters resilience and supports positive childhood experience (PCA GA).

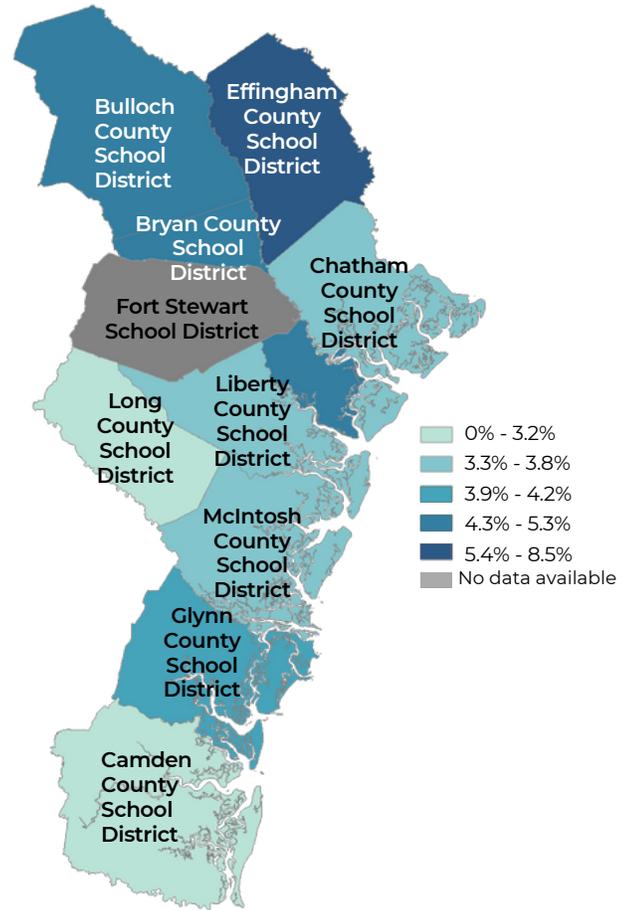
The maps below show Region 12 responses to several Georgia Student Health Survey questions pertaining to mental health: Percent of 6th-12th grade students who reported having been bullied or threatened by other students (Bullying); Percent of 6th-12th grade students who reported having experienced intense anxiety, worries or fears that got in the way of daily activities in the past 30 days (Anxiety); Percent of 6th-12th grade students who reported having had 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row in the past 30 days (5+ drinks); and During the past 12 months, have you seriously considered attempting suicide? (Considered Suicide).



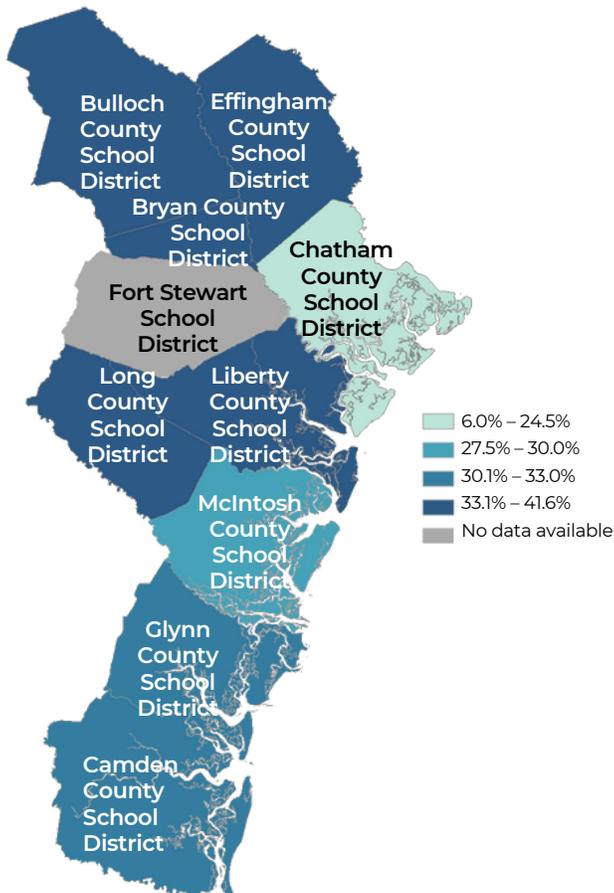
Considered Suicide



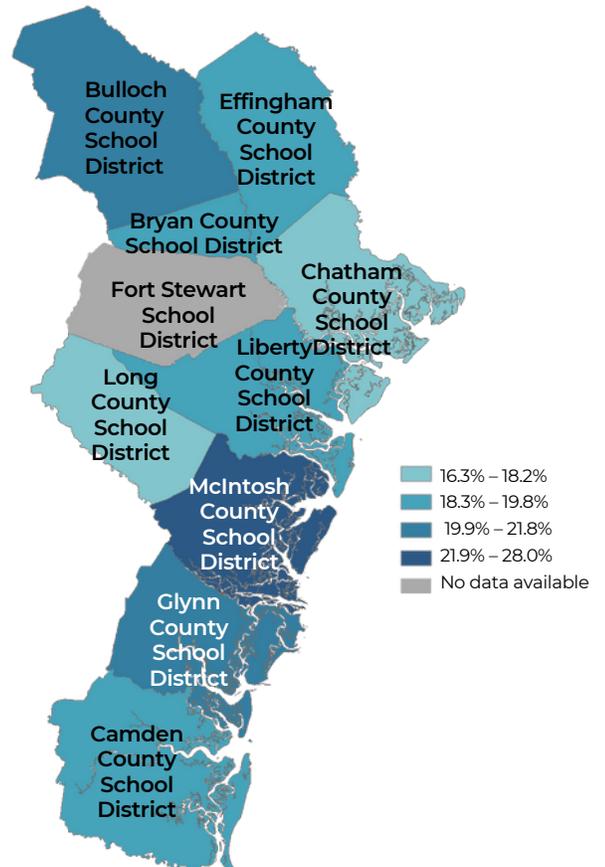
5+ Drinks



Anxiety



Bullying

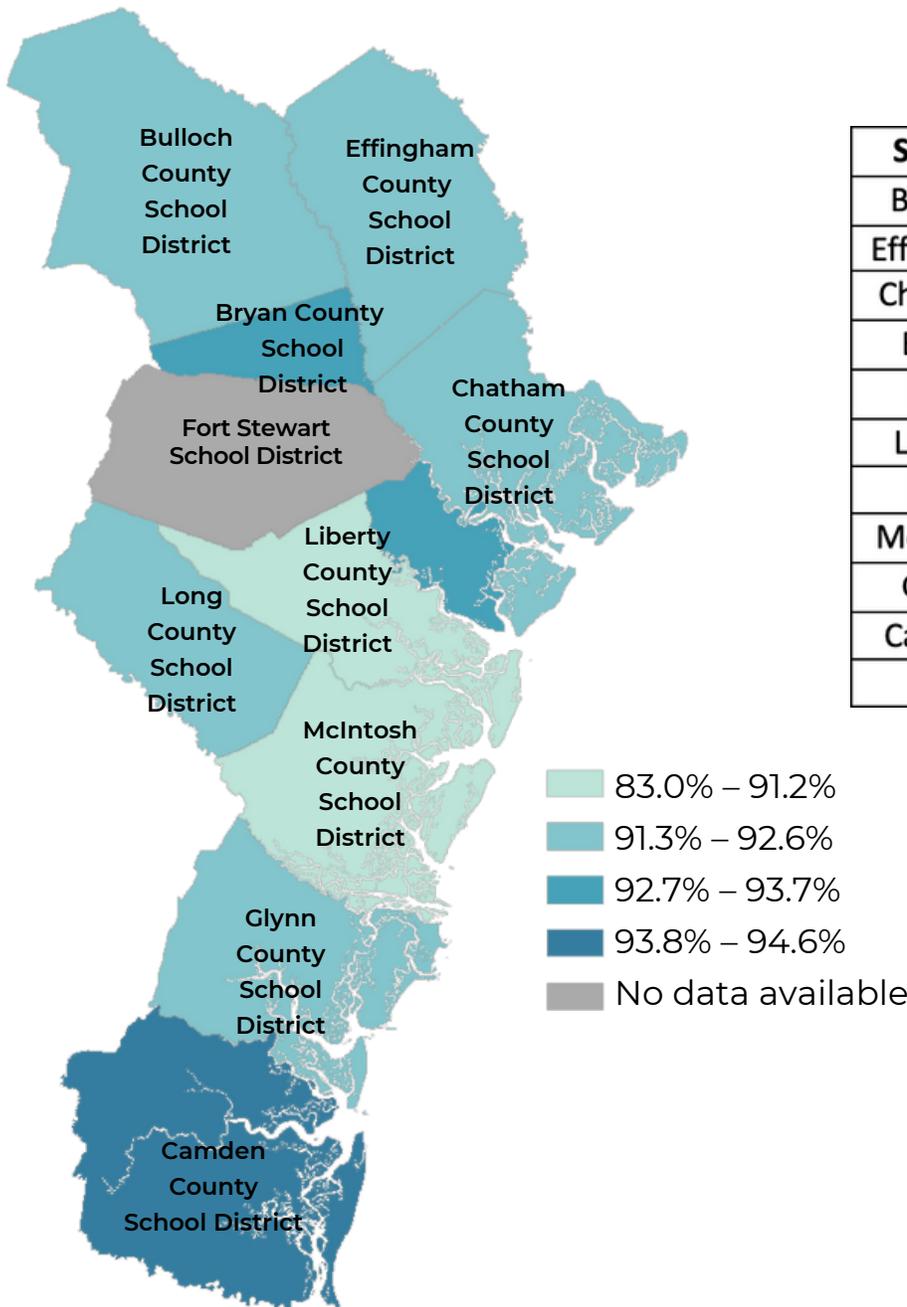


Data Source: Georgia Student Health Survey (2020).

Having meaningful and supportive relationships with peers and adults is an important protective factor that can mitigate the effects of ACEs and promote resilience in children. The CDC lists 'children who have positive friendships and peer networks' and 'children who have caring adults outside the family who serve as mentors/role models' as two of their ACEs protective factors (CDC 2021). Schools are an important place for children to access positive peer networks and caring adults, particularly when ACEs create instability in the home.

Below is a map and table with the percent of 6th-12th grade students who reported feeling connected to others at school by school districts in Region 12. At least 89% of students in every school district with available data reported feeling connected to others at school.

Percent of 6th-12th grade students who reported they feel connected to others at school by school district



School District	Percent
Bulloch County	91.4
Effingham County	92.6
Chatham County	91.4
Bryan County	93.6
Fort Stewart	No Data
Liberty County	89.9
Long County	92.6
McIntosh County	91.2
Glynn County	92.4
Camden County	94.3
Georgia	92.7

Data Source: Georgia Student Health Survey (2020).

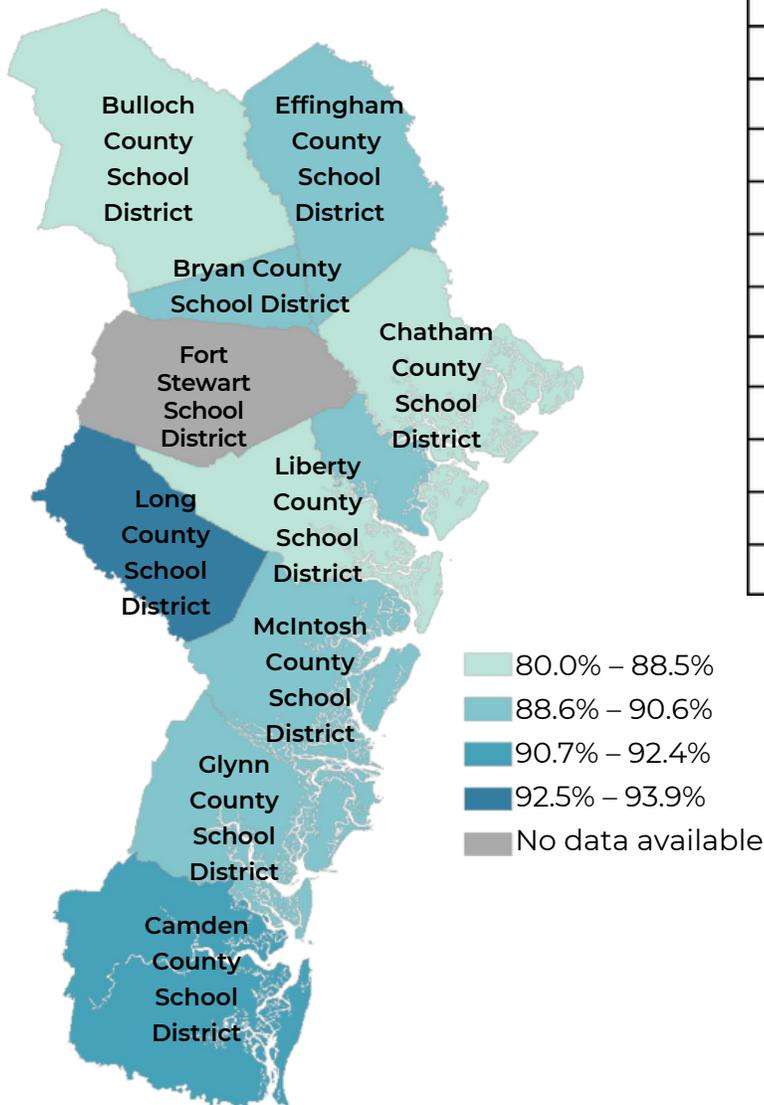
Strategy 3: Promote trauma-informed training for all school personnel.

Trauma can impact a child's ability to concentrate and succeed in school. Further, strict disciplinary actions in schools can themselves be re-traumatizing for students with existing trauma or ACEs (SAMSHA 2014). Trauma-informed training increases school personnel's compassion for students and understanding of their behavior and improves their ability to meet students' academic and emotional needs.



Students in this region felt **respected by adults** in their school, with at least 88% of students in every school district reporting they feel that adults in their school treat all students with respect.

Percent of 6th-12th grade students who reported that adults in their school treat all students with respect, by school district



School District	Percent
Bulloch County	88.5
Effingham County	89.3
Chatham County	88.1
Bryan County	90.6
Fort Stewart	No Data
Liberty County	88.2
Long County	92.6
McIntosh County	90.3
Glynn County	90.0
Camden County	91.9
Georgia	90.8

Data Source: Georgia Student Health Survey (2020).

Preventing the Impact of ACEs

The most impactful prevention strategies, such as those found in the CANPP, offer real solutions at the family, society, and community levels. Communities that have affordable housing, opportunities for economic mobility, and low occurrences of violence have the most potential to create healthy and vibrant environments where children can thrive. Policies and programs that promote early education, mental health, and caring relationships can lessen the stressful load some families experience and by doing so, limit exposure to and prevent the negative impact of ACEs.

Evidence-based Prevention Programs

Evidence-based programs are scientifically proven to promote health and prevent disease. Listed here are just a few evidence-based programs that lessen the harms of ACEs:

- Liberty County Family Connections: <https://liberty.gafcp.org/>
- Family Support Council, Inc: <http://www.familysupportcouncil.com/>
- Preferred Family Resource: <https://preferredfamilyresource.com/>
- Camden Community Family Center: <https://camdenfamilycenter.org/>

Helpful Resources

- Find Help GA: <https://findhelpga.org/>
- Belonging for Hope: www.belongingforhope.org
- Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan: abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/canpp/
- Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences: www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/preventingace-datatoaction.html
- Prevent Child Abuse Georgia: abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu
- Essentials for Childhood: abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/essentials/
- Peach Parenting: <https://peachparenting.org/>
- DECAL Developmental Milestones: <https://development.dec.ga.gov/#/>
- Georgia System of Care: <https://gasystemofcare.org/>
- Resilient Georgia: <https://www.resilientga.org/>



Looking for more ACE and ACE-related data like the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), Georgia Student Health Survey (GSHS), and other sources?

Visit our website at iprce.emory.edu/PACE-D2A.html

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Healthy People 2030. Housing and Homes. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/housing-and-homes>

Learning card: Trauma Informed. Resilient Georgia. <https://www.resilientga.org/trauma-informed>

Prevent Child Abuse Georgia. Preventing ACEs. Essentials for Childhood. <https://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/essentials/#PreventACES>

Prevent Child Abuse Georgia. Training. <https://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/training/>

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