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## California Launches Awareness Campaign for Youth Impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences



*Live Beyond Campaign Created With Input From California's Youth*

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:** The Office of the California Surgeon General is launching the *Live Beyond* campaign to increase awareness and understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), toxic stress, and their potential impacts. The campaign provides science-based, healing-centered resources for all Californians. More than 250 young Californians, including a Youth Advisory Board, shared their personal stories, insights, and perspectives to inform campaign development.

**SACRAMENTO** — Today, the Office of the California Surgeon General (CA-OSG) is launching the *Live Beyond* campaign to increase awareness and understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), toxic stress, and their potential impacts, and provide science-based, healing-centered resources for all Californians. The campaign's primary audience is youth and young adults, and its secondary audience is parents and/or caregivers who have experienced one or more ACE.

*"Despite how unfortunately common Adverse Childhood Experiences are, most of us are unaware of how to recognize the outcomes and the steps needed to heal from the trauma," said **California First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom**.*

*"California's Live Beyond campaign is rooted in the science of mental health*

and anchored by the stories of hundreds of selfless young Californians who were willing to share their stories in order to help develop a resource for all California youth and families.”

“This campaign comes at a critical time for our youth who may be struggling,” said **California Surgeon General Dr. Diana Ramos**. “Our desire is that our messages of hope and evidence-based healing strategies will lead to improved physical and mental wellness over their life course.”

**WHY THIS MATTERS:** RAND conducted a survey of California youth (ages 16 to 25) and parents/caregivers (of children ages 8 to 16) for the campaign and found that 6 in 10 surveyed have experienced at least 1 ACE, but only 12% of youth and 10% of parents/caregivers have heard of the term “ACEs” and know what the acronym stands for, confirming an urgent need to educate Californians now. The good news is that healing is possible and it’s never too late to get support. Healing ourselves is the first step to healing our communities and ending cycles of trauma. Evidence-based stress-busting activities can help, like being mindful, getting enough sleep, moving our bodies, eating well, getting outside, and finding supportive relationships.

**CREATED WITH AND FOR CALIFORNIA’S YOUTH:** The *Live Beyond* campaign is grounded in science, market research, and best practices. It’s guided by subject matter experts, including former California Surgeon General Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris and the Youth and Young Adult Advisory Board of the UCLA-UCSF ACEs Aware Family Resilience Network (UCAAN). Insights from in-depth research, focus groups, and listening sessions with a diverse group of California’s youth were incorporated into the *Live Beyond* campaign concept, strategy, and resource materials.

“This is the first campaign about ACEs to directly focus messaging toward youth and young adults,” said **Dr. Sohil Sud, Director of California’s Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI)**. “We’re hearing that they want to understand the science behind ACEs, how these events can negatively impact their mental and physical health and show up in their lives and relationships well into adulthood, and how to heal with evidence-based strategies. That’s exactly what this campaign aims to do.”

**WHAT ARE ACEs?** **ACEs** are highly stressful and potentially traumatic experiences that can happen to any of us before we turn 18 years of age, including growing up with a parent/caregiver who struggled with mental health or substance use, witnessing domestic violence, or experiencing abuse or neglect. Prolonged, intense, or persistent exposure to traumatic experiences like ACEs can cause a toxic stress response, a response that can affect our mental, physical, emotional, and relational health even as adults. ACEs are strongly associated with 9 out of the 10 leading causes of death in the U.S. and more than 40 common health conditions.

Hear some of the campaign's youth advisors discuss their own experiences with ACEs and strategies they use to heal:



**ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN:** The *Live Beyond* media and outreach campaign will reach youth and young adults — with an emphasis on youth ages 16 to 25 — and parents/caregivers across California.

The *Live Beyond* campaign launches with a new website, social content on Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, and campaign resources focused on:

- Increasing knowledge about ACEs, toxic stress, and the science behind their potential impacts on everyday life — including physical and mental health, interpersonal relationships, and more
- Influencing attitudes about help-seeking by sharing stories of healing

- Building skills with accessible tools and resources by providing scientifically proven, culturally relatable, actionable steps to heal and manage stress
- Inspiring action to overcome the impacts of ACEs and toxic stress, and prevent them from continuing into future generations

A free, healing-focused kickoff event will be held in Los Angeles at Exposition Park on Saturday, May 11, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, please visit our [event page](#).

**CAMPAIGN MATERIALS:** The following assets can be found on the *Live Beyond* [campaign materials](#) page:

- *Live Beyond* press kit
- *Live Beyond* logo package
- *Live Beyond* fact sheet


For more resources, visit [livebeyondCA.org/campaign-resources](https://livebeyondCA.org/campaign-resources).

Please follow our campaign social channels for updates, educational content, stories from youth, and more.

 Website: [livebeyondCA.org](https://livebeyondCA.org)

 TikTok: [@LiveBeyondCA](https://www.tiktok.com/@LiveBeyondCA)

 Instagram: [@LiveBeyondCA](https://www.instagram.com/LiveBeyondCA)

 Facebook: [Live Beyond Campaign](https://www.facebook.com/LiveBeyondCampaign)

**BIGGER PICTURE:** The *Live Beyond* campaign is part of [the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative](#) (CYBHI), a historic investment by the State of California that seeks to ensure all young people and families can find support for their emotional, mental, and behavioral health needs — when, where, and in the way they need it most. It is a key component of Governor Gavin Newsom's [Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health](#) and Governor Newsom's broader [Mental Health Movement](#).