



CAPITAL REGION  
CLIMATE READINESS  
COLLABORATIVE

## Quarterly Adaptation Exchange: Notes

Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup> | 1:00 – 4:00 PM

Sacramento County Primary Care Center Room PCC2020 | Sacramento, CA

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### New Member Presentation: Breathe California Sacramento Region

**Dave Modisette** | Chief Executive Officer

- Breathe California is a health organization that advises local communities
  - Currently in process of redesigning / reorienting programs around the Sacramento region
- One of the oldest nonprofits in Sacramento region – started to help cure Tuberculosis
  - Public health organization first, environmental organization second
  - After development of drugs to address Tuberculosis epidemic, Breathe CA went into other regions and focused on other areas: air pollution, air toxins, etc. They recognized lung health is correlated to ambient air quality and In order to have a lung-health program, Breathe CA needed to include tobacco. Climate change is a recent addition to their portfolio.
- Three focus areas of Breathe CA Sacramento Region:
  - Clean air and climate change (Clean Air)
    - Most work in done in education, research to constituent groups in policy and advocacy with a focus on ambient air quality. Air quality index is used to educate students and parents
    - Program in schools: O2 for you: 100 different lesson options. Breathe CA does the teaching and trains the trainers
    - Public transit education: Breathe California Sacramento Region goes into underserved communities and educates community about public transportation
    - Hosts healthy community air events to educate underserved communities
    - New program: [food waste recycling](#)
  - Tobaccos smoking and prevention – e-cigarettes (Tobacco-free communities)
    - Go to colleges and vocational school to educate students of the dangers of tobacco
    - Smoke in movies : 37% start smoking after seeing smoking in movies; 6 million children – 2 million will die prematurely as a result of smoking; working to get R rating if the movie contains smoking
  - Healthy Lungs
    - The Lung Health Collaborative connects underserved communities with doctors to provide asthma screenings and informative materials

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## New Member Presentation: Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW)

**Vanessa Toro Barragan** | Sacramento Area Program Coordinator

### EJCW Background:

- EJCW is statewide organization that serves as a public voice and advocate for environmental justice issues in California water policy. EJCW vision is for all communities to have access to safe and affordable water, while also ensuring our rivers, streams, ceremonial and recreational uses, etc. are clean
- EJCW activities
  - Community organizing
  - Coalition-building
  - Capacity-building

### Water in California:

- Water in California is wildly complicated. There are agriculture demands, recreational, residential, and business demands.
- It's all connected – whole systems thinking
  - There are still areas in CA where residents don't have access to clean water or water at all. This is a result of decades of racial segregation and informal segregation
- Fundamental principle - California's Human Right to Water Law: safe, clean, affordable, accessible, reliable, non-discrimination, etc., all at once
  - California's human right to water law states simply and elegantly that "every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes" and that "state agencies" must "consider" the policy when implementing state programs.
- Drought
  - The drought is causing a declining health in fisheries and toxic algae bloom. Less water also means more wildfires which are exacerbated with mudlines
    - Effects are compounded by a history of racial and class inequality. Some communities become more vulnerable because they are compounded (rural community access, drinking water quality, water billing)
  - In 2016, California communities experienced record-breaking drought and record-breaking floods in the same 12-month period.

### EJCW's work

- Community organizing led to AB 685 – EJCW helped with this effort
  - Prop 1 helps support disadvantaged communities. This includes Sacramento homelessness access to water and sanitation.
  - It is imperative to look to the margins
    - Homeless, Private well users, Unincorporated communities, Renters, Mobilehome park residents, California Indian Tribes. Instructive circumstances (E.g., Lucerne, San Jerardo, etc
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## Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences

**Danielle Prince** | Bay Area Regional Community Facilitator, ACEs Connection

### About ACEs Connection

- Sonoma county is one of the longest running ACEs community in CA
- ACEs Study and Science: epidemiology – [ACEs original study](#) published in 1998
  - Tracked health outcomes based on childhood ACEs – 17,300 adults. The study tracked health outcomes based on traumas they experienced before the age of 18 and how that translates to mental health issues. It started as an obesity study and ended up finding out about ACEs and the brain, and how to develop resilience out of that trauma.
  - The participants were 75% Caucasian, 39% college graduates, 36% some college, living wage jobs with insurance; median age 57 yr. old
- ACEs connection started to educate the community

### What are the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?

- Child physical abuse, Child sexual abuse, Child emotional abuse, Physical Neglect, Emotional Neglect, Mentally ill, depressed or suicidal person in the home, Drug addicted or alcoholic family member, Witnessing domestic violence against the mother, Loss of a parent to death or abandonment, including abandonment by divorce, Incarceration of any family member
- ACEs science is the foundation
  - Epidemiology
  - Impact on the brain
  - Impact on the body
  - Epigenetics
  - Resilience
- Communities at city/county/state level are conducting ACEs surveys to see what issues they need to address in the community - a lot more states and communities are conducting ACEs surveys
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Definition of Trauma: Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being
- Harvard center for the Developing Child
  - Major adversity can weaken developing [brain architecture](#) and permanently set the body's [stress response system](#) on high alert.
  - Science also shows that providing stable, responsive environments for children in the earliest years of life can prevent or reverse these conditions, with lifelong consequences for learning, behavior, and health.
- Toxic stress: the biological response to severe and or repeated adversity absent the suffering support from a caring and trusted adult
  - Impact of toxic stress on the brain and body - Parts of the brain affected by toxic stress
    - Illnesses associated: Depression, substance abuse, heart disease, cancer, lung disease, and other social effects by untreated trauma
- Trauma is historical, structural, and political
  - Impacts of trauma are embodied across generations and receive differentiated response

- White communities are validated, empathized with, resourced, and restored
  - Communities of color are shamed, questioned, ignored, stigmatized, criminalized
- We need to approach all communities with empathy and resources. Trying to implement trauma-specific practices without implementing trauma-informed culture change will not be effective
- Interacting layers of trauma and healing
  - Structures of our society dehumanize and lead to trauma. These structures need to focus on **liberation** and healing from trauma
- Building resilience - most common factor for those who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with an adult. Even in adulthood, relationships heal. This can be a teacher, coach, neighbor, etc.
- *Change the trauma question: what is wrong with you TO what happened to you?* This helps explain what trauma-informed means
  - Trauma-informed practice and resilience-building: To be trauma informed is to make an effort to know the past and current traumas impacting those you work with: whether a client, patient, student, or program participant. You may not have the option to know an individual's particular trauma history, but you can learn to view behavior through a trauma-informed lens.
- Who's using ACEs science?
  - Physicians, schools, courts, community based programs, city and state initiatives
- Sonoma County ACEs Connection
  - Mental-health collaborative formed after the Tubbs fire to address specific for fire-related trauma
- [ACEs connection website](#)
  - Go online to join – free!

#### Participant Questions

- Q: Is there a study on communities that have relatively low ACEs and what they are doing?
  - Walla Walla, Washington created an evaluation of their ACEs initiatives over time
    - School suspensions, teen pregnancies, etc. went down
- Q: how does food insecurity fit into the framework?
  - Philadelphia – urban ACEs, added community violence to the trauma list
- Q: what happens with acute exposure over time?
  - Chronic level in the problem. Trauma becomes when an event happens, you have no support, and it continues. Toxic stress response will continue until you get treatment. A single event, if the child has resilience, will not lead to ACEs. Every organ system is altered by cumulative and unintended stresses and the inability to cope
    - Your resilience depends on your ability to survive without those consequences

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#### Panel Discussion: Trauma-Informed Decision-Making to Build Social Resilience

**Judy Robinson** | County of Sacramento (moderator)

**Vanessa Toro Barragan** | Environmental Justice Coalition for Water

**Victoria Flores** | Sacramento City Unified School District

**Gail Kennedy** | ACEs Connection

**Donielle Prince** | ACEs Connection, San Francisco Bay Area

Panelist Introductions: Tell us about your role?

- Victoria Flores (VF)
  - Oversees all school social work and school nurses. Her job is to support learning, but recognize children bring traumas to school and that effects their learning
  - Then school Applied for grant funding from Kaiser to build their professional skills and support students and families by using science to address their traumas and inform teachers about ACEs - person-centered approach
- Gail Kennedy (GK)
  - Helps support all community work ACEs connection does - communities throughout CA and USA. ACEs Connection brings people together around content - ACEs and education, etc. ACEs connection is full of resources and is a platform to talk about successes
  - When ACEs connection helps support communities, it helps build resilience
    - Specific communities in each city ex: Schools, businesses healthcare providers, etc are unique to the community
  - Holly White-wolf works in Sonoma County ACEs connection. Gail read some words from Holly: after Tubbs fire, senior housing lost the community has a shared experience. There is no data on individuals to determine ACE score to fire experience. Sonoma county knew vulnerabilities prior to disaster (homelessness, poverty)
    - 1 in 5 Sonoma County residents have an ACE score of 4 or more
    - Post traumatic growth: Trauma happens – how can we grow resilient out of it and become better because of it?
    - Mental Health Resiliency Summit was hosted in Sonoma County in February
- Donielle Prince (DP)
  - Focuses on the bay area. Her goal is support communities to have an active ACEs community like Sonoma County. She is interested in the connection of ACEs and climate resilience
    - If communities are more resilient, they can be prepared to address the community's needs more quickly in a climate situation
  - ACEs are so prevalent that it is not just an underserved communities story, but a story for everyone
- Vanessa Toro Barragan (VT)
  - EJCW work with vulnerable communities – think about trauma that exists in communities and their ability to heal themselves
  - More conversations around climate change – accept responsibility through privilege - Most vulnerable communities tend to suffer the most
    - Switch the conversation from: Why did this happen to what happened in the community?

Importance of a social network

- Judy asks the room who knows 8 or more of their neighbors? It comes down to knowing your neighbors and community
  - Check on your neighbor – if there is a relationship established, there is more support in the community.

### How did you get started on ACEs?

- VF: starts with school climate, getting to know teachers, class – ensure it is a safe environment for everyone in the community
  - Asking permissions – can I hug you?
    - Help establish safety and help the staff understand good intentions can be harmful to students
  - Schools are beginning to understand the science of the brain and understand what is going on with student and their brain development
- GK: Inspired by Jane Stevens – met with her and discovered the ACEs framework. Caused Gail to change what she wanted to do as a health professional
  - Wants everyone to know about ACEs.
  - We need to begin our awareness with self-care – put your mask on first
  - Principles of what happened to you – not what’s wrong with you.
  - GK’s family lost homes in Thomas Fire – think about the trauma and how that effects each relationship. Ex: calling the insurance agent, FEMA, etc.
- DP: Used to study teacher-education program. Trauma wasn’t as elaborate as it is today. Teachers are not trained in child development. Teachers don’t understand how human development is affected by trauma – inspired Donielle to become a part of Resilient Sacramento and ACEs connection.
  - People are experiencing various forms of oppression – direct and indirect. Problem in American society – we don’t talk about race. Once we do, we can then connect why we have disparities and address it – lack of knowledge prevents this .
  - Trauma-transform - Changes organizational culture – difficult to self-examine your organization. Understand how humans work and the history of America has affected various populations. What does it mean to implement after your are educated?
- VT: Carbon markets in Costa Rica – carbon stock in rainforest, then pay landowners to maintain, then carbon will be sequestered and a profit will be made. Costa Rica framework: how has it sold a myth (whiter than other nations nearby) creates tourism, etc.
  - Need to have historical framework - History of genocide, racism, federal policies
  - Resilience is when communities can organize – that’s where the real power is

### Participant Questions:

- Womens role and womens place in society – how does the ACEs framework fit into this when we talk about cultural and organizational change?
  - GK: things happen in childhood and because of that, more likely of other things happening in adulthood. Those that have had exposure to violence in the home are more likely to be perpetrators or victims as adults. There is a different lens of how we are working with trauma and how those are occurring in all levels of society. The more we can understand relationships and have open dialogues, our resilience will build. But, we have to be able to find our care for ourselves as well
  - DP: witnessing and experiencing are different. Opportunity later, access to resources, opportunities to cope, develop leadership, escape domestic violence
    - As an adult male, there is more agency to choose how you cope. Ex: violence as a coping strategy
- How do we get more ACEs first responders (front line staff, office staff, property managers, etc) to help build community resilience?

- VF: getting time in front of a teacher is difficult. Implement youth mental health first aid – training around recognizing and being responsive for teachers
- GK: Mayor of Davis wants to have City Manager and first responders understand and bring people together to provide trauma-informed training
  - Not a lot of support internally to provide for police officers
    - Care for the caregivers
  - Need to have leadership support – cultural shift
- DP: Leadership position – train the trainer. We need collaborative trauma-informed practices
- VT: We need to address what has happened (trauma) and address it in a humane way. Need to think structurally where to go forward
  - Policies are designed to criminalize types of behavior – challenges are overlooked
- How do we address this and frame the story?
  - Spending money in a way that will meet people’s needs
  - Find the commonalities
  - Connecting on climate-related events
  - We don’t have the answer, need to come together to find the commonalities
  - Sonoma county shifting the value of life over \$\$
  - Streamlining building homes when they don’t include more resilient and updated building codes
- Example of a neighborhood-level ACEs intervention or model that can be leveraged? Community cohesiveness to address ACEs issues?
  - This is what Resilient Sacramento is working to do
  - Examples of teen pregnancy being reduced after intervention
  - Be cautious of over-surveying communities – that can bring their own trauma
    - Trauma-informed approach is assuming every one has experienced trauma
    - Don’t want to approach communities as victims – reframe to look at assets of community and how to expand them
    - Trauma makes sense to people when they hear about it

## From Self-Care to Social Cohesion

Commitments from participants on supporting greater access to resources and supporting community-wide social cohesion:

- Aid my own family and friends in accessing healthcare and especially mental healthcare
- Link with my neighbors to discuss homelessness and how we as a neighborhood or apartment complex can support them as neighbors as well
- Work with the engineering and environmental science discipline to prioritize environmental justice with science models
- Addressing/researching gaps and transitions in youth to adults
- Connect ACEs with Placer and El Dorado groups
- SMUD customer service training
- Support Living Futures projects in the region
- ACEs connection clubhouse?
- Expand access to helpful experiences and information

- Incorporate ACEs training in the police force at the City of Chico as an adaptation strategy in our General Plan – mental health among homeless is a huge issue – being homeless is traumatic so our police force should be able to understand why the homeless react the way they do
- Access to resources in consumers' primary languages
- SHRA to follow up with Living Futures at SMUD
- Increase access of healthy foods to under-invested populations
- Help students learn mindful moment
- Create centers for youth to be empowered – save zones neighborhood
- Think outside the box: third spaces – libraries, bars, local book club
- Engage with the world with a “what happened to you” lens (compassion) and lead this
- Build land-based relationships –Woodland Regional Parks