

DART Prevention Coalition

POSITIVE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (PCEs)

In January,
DART is
focusing on
Positive
Childhood
Experiences!



DART Prevention Coalition
Taking Aim at Substance Use in Ocean County

RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

Institute for
Prevention
and Recovery

Want to help spread awareness and share on your own social media?
Make sure to keep an eye out on the **DART Facebook** page for our shareable posts!

PCEs AS PREVENTION ONE-PAGER



DART Prevention Coalition
Taking Aim at Substance Use in Ocean County

Positive Childhood Experiences – Building Healthy Futures Together



Children thrive when they feel safe, supported and well connected. Research tells us that Positive Childhood Experiences, otherwise known as PCEs, can lower the impacts of adversity and long-term health risks while strengthening resiliency. By intentionally creating environments where youth feel valued and included, communities can play a vital role in lowering substance use, reducing mental health challenges and promoting overall well-being.

What are PCEs?

PCEs are the everyday experiences, interactions, supports and opportunities that impact how a child grows. Some examples of PCEs are:

- **Stable Relationships with Adults** - Any relationship with trusted adults, including parents, teachers, mentors, extended family or other community members
- **Connectedness** - Through relationships with peers, school or other community organizations
- **Access to Learning Opportunities** - Both academic and social opportunities
- **Safety** - At home, school or in the community, and ideally in all areas
- **Belonging** - Having their voices heard, feeling included and being part of decisions that impact them
- **Traditions and Cultural Practices** - Helps build personal identity and personal pride

PCEs as Prevention

Incorporating PCEs into prevention practices that support youth can promote healthier individuals and communities. By shifting the focus to address the root cause of negative outcomes for youth, known as an upstream approach, you can support positive areas that help strengthen protective factors, boost emotional regulation and lower the likelihood of youth engaging in high-risk behaviors. Ensuring that youth have PCEs helps create safe, connected communities.

Some concrete practices you can implement to support PCEs for the youth in your life include:

- **Building strong, supportive relationships with the youth in your life.** You can do this by being honest, offering encouragement, modeling healthy communication, listening and checking in frequently.
- **Valuing belonging and inclusion.** When you are in youth-centered spaces, such as home, school or extracurricular activities, make sure you are creating an environment where youth feel seen, valued and included.
- **Encouraging skill building.** Support youth trying new things; this can increase feelings of confidence and resiliency.
- **Strengthening community supports.** Collaborate with youth and youth-serving organizations on initiatives that work to create an environment of support and safety.

Supporting and encouraging PCEs can be as simple as consistently showing up and engaging with youth in meaningful, honest ways. When families, community organizations and schools work together to nurture children, we reduce risk and build healthier futures for everyone.

2026/01/26

rwjbh.org/DARTresources

RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

**Institute for
Prevention
and Recovery**

[Click Here to Download and Share the One-Pager](#)

PCEs BASICS ONE-PAGER



DART Prevention Coalition
Taking Aim at Substance Use in Ocean County



Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic or stressful events, such as abuse, neglect or household dysfunction, that negatively impact a child's development. These experiences can lead to long-term physical, emotional and behavioral challenges and influence health outcomes over time.

What are Positive Childhood Experiences?

Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) are supportive and nurturing interactions and environments that promote healthy emotional and cognitive development for children. These experiences can help buffer the harmful effects of adverse childhood experiences by fostering resilience, building strong relationships and providing a foundation for positive mental health and coping skills.

The Four Building Blocks of Positive Childhood Experiences

A 2017 paper, "Responding to ACEs With HOPE: Health Outcomes From Positive Experiences," written by Dr. Robert Sege and Dr. Charlyn Harper Brown, established four building blocks of positive childhood experiences:

- 1. Relationships:** Positive relationships in a child's life such as a healthy bond between parent and baby, positive relationships with other trusted adults and relationships with peers.
- 2. Environment:** Having a safe, stable and protective environment in which children can live, learn and play. This includes adequate housing, access to nutritious foods and access to quality education.
- 3. Engagement:** Having a connection to the community is important. Children should feel that they belong and that they matter to the people and community around them.
- 4. Opportunities for social and emotional growth:** Children need to have the space to develop social and emotional competencies, which allows them to navigate adversity and challenges.

Source: Responding to ACEs With HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences - PubMed

Positive Childhood Experiences as Protective Factors

Protective factors are conditions that help individuals cope with stress and adversity, reducing the impact of risks, challenges or negative behaviors.

Steps to Help Build Positive Childhood Experiences

- Form strong relationships and meaningful connections
- Cultivate positive self-image and self-worth
- Create a sense of belonging
- Share information about after-school activities where children can connect with coaches, mentors or peers
- Teach skills to cope with stress in healthy ways
- Talk, sing, read and play with your children to help them learn
- Establish routines and structure
- Engage children in family tasks and social connections

To learn more about strengthening protective factors in your community, email dart@rwjbh.org.

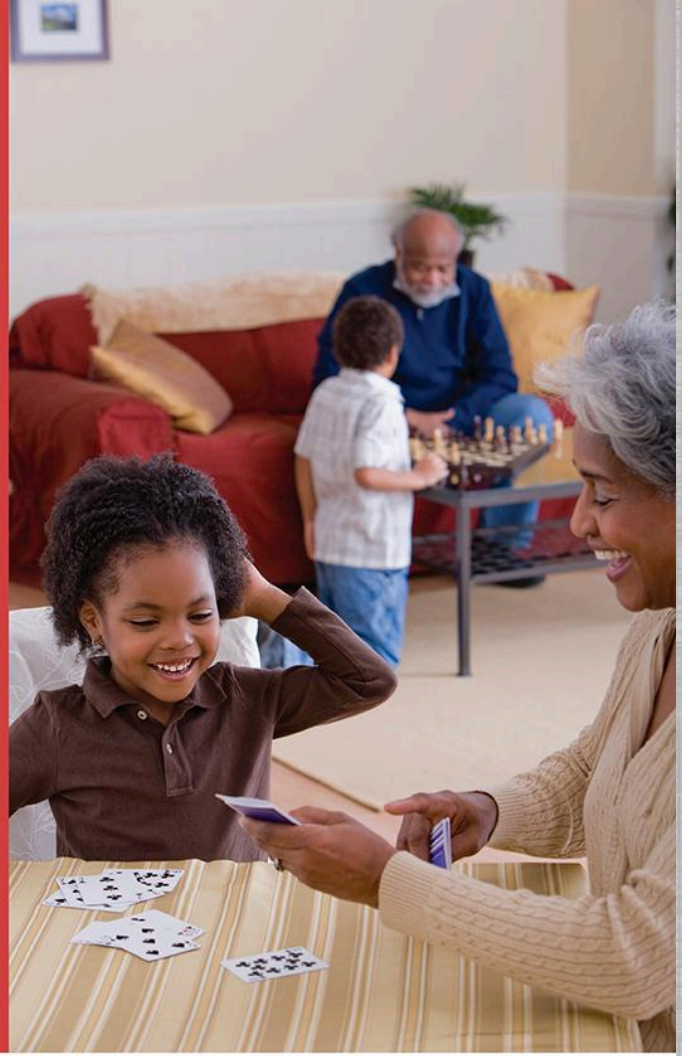
RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

**Institute for
Prevention
and Recovery**

2430706-0V25

[Click Here to Download and Share the One-Pager](#)

Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) are the everyday experiences that impact how a child grows.



DART Prevention Coalition
Taking Aim at Substance Use in Ocean County

RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

**Institute for
Prevention
and Recovery**

**PCEs can lower the
impacts of adversity,
lower long-term
health risks and
strengthen resiliency.**



DART Prevention Coalition
Taking Aim at Substance Use in Ocean County

RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

**Institute for
Prevention
and Recovery**

PCEs include:

- Stable relationships with adults
- Connectedness and belonging
- Access to learning opportunities
- Safety



DART Prevention Coalition
Taking Aim at Substance Use in Ocean County

RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

**Institute for
Prevention
and Recovery**

PCEs can be as simple as consistently showing up and engaging with youth in meaningful, honest ways.



DART Prevention Coalition
Taking Aim at Substance Use in Ocean County

RWJBarnabas
HEALTH

**Institute for
Prevention
and Recovery**



Looking for Previous Awareness Campaign Materials?

Check out our [DART Resources](#) portal page for past awareness campaigns, one-pagers, fact cards, and more! | rwjbh.org/dartresources



Find these Awareness Campaign images (and more) on our Facebook!
[DART Prevention Coalition of Ocean County](#) | facebook.com/DARTCoalition

Amy Piacente-Desch, Senior Prevention Manager
Marlee Kimmick, Prevention Specialist
DART Prevention Coalition of Ocean County
RWJBarnabas Health Institute for Prevention and Recovery
amy.piacentedesch@rwjbh.org | dart@rwjbh.org | rwjbh.org/dart

You are subscribed to The DART Coalition mailing list as .

Please note: If you click "unsubscribe" below, you will be removed from all prevention email lists, including all DART Coalition, Communities That Care (CTC), Mental Health and Awareness Training (MHAT), and SOCIAL Network emails. If you wish to unsubscribe from just one of the above groups, please email us directly for assistance.

DART Coalition of Ocean County | 442 Route 35 South Third Floor | Eatontown, NJ 07724 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!