

## Adverse Childhood Experiences in Oklahoma

A Pediatrician's Point of View 20 Years after the Important Study by Felitti and Anda

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### Facts:

ACE data is available and reliable: Oklahoma's Children are High Risk.

In addition to the 10 areas explored in the study, Oklahoma children must deal with poverty, food insecurity, drug and alcohol issues, inconsistent and often poor education opportunities, and a future with high probability of incarceration for those at highest risk.

Professor James Heckman's explanation of "rate of return" for childhood investments is an explanation for some of the state's problems. He has shown that the greatest return for our money is investing in children as early as possible. But that's not what we do in Oklahoma. For example, education spending is somewhere between \$7,000 and \$12,000 per child per year, while spending on incarceration approaches \$25,000 - \$30,000 per prisoner per year. Oklahoma City District Attorney and I share the same thought: When we see a convicted criminal leave the courtroom, our thought is, "There goes a CHILD in adult clothing." David Prater

"Fair" is not equal. Fair is appropriate support to match needs – higher for some children and not so high for others.

Questions, and hopefully, answers.