

What if we shift the question from "What's wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?"

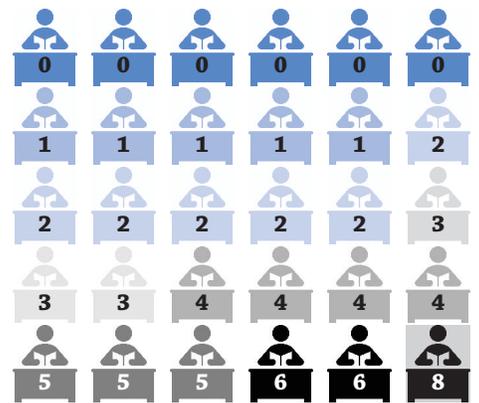
This is the shift sparked by "the largest public health study you've never heard of" — the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. This landmark project, a collaboration between the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente in San Diego, is one of the largest investigations ever conducted to assess associations between childhood hardships and our later well-being.

For the original inquiry, researchers surveyed more than 17,000 adults about their childhood exposure to 10 specific traumas, including neglect, abuse, and other forms of serious household dysfunction. When each type of experience was scored with one point, the correlation was undeniably clear: the higher the ACE score, the greater the rates of heart disease, drug use, depression, violence, poverty, and even early death in adulthood. Since the original findings were published in the late 1990s, Washington and 17 other states have conducted their own ACE studies and have uncovered the same result: the more traumas we experience in our early years, the greater the risks to our social, emotional, and physical health across our life span.

Why? To answer this question, researchers focused on our physiological responses to stress. In unsafe situations, our brains become flooded with cortisol, the hormone that triggers our fight-or-flight-or-freeze defense mechanism. Although this is an essential survival response, repeated occurrences in a young, developing brain can damage neural pathways, affecting both physical and emotional functioning. Recurring stresses and traumas particularly affect the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for self-control, impulse control, certain kinds of memory, and reasoning.

For Gabe, a five-year-old at Jumping Mouse who had witnessed domestic violence repeatedly as a young child, the natural response to powerful emotions was a fight-or-flight response. When Gabe entered school, he struggled to meet the expectations of the classroom. If a teacher or other adult showed anger or other intense feelings toward him, Gabe responded by running off school grounds or angrily turning over shelves and tables. As adults, we recognize this as unsafe behavior. But from Gabe's perspective, he was vigilantly protecting himself from harm.

ACEs findings now provide a deeper, shared understanding of these patterns — as well as strategies to halt and repair them — among doctors, teachers, counselors, parents, and everyone concerned with the well-being of children. When adults understand the underlying reasons behind the behavior of a child like Gabe, they can respond with consistency and compassion.



Adverse childhood experiences, as measured by ACEs, are common. In an average Washington classroom of 30 students, 24 will have experienced at least one childhood trauma and 10 will have experienced four or more traumas.

Source: Washington State Family Policy Council

Jumping Mouse Gets Ready to Grow

Our greatest challenge at Jumping Mouse has been the ever-increasing demand for our services, which currently outstrips our physical and staff capacity. Every week, we receive calls from doctors, teachers, parents, and others who want to connect a child with a Jumping Mouse therapist. We consistently have a waiting list of children, and we know many more kids in our community need our help.

In August 2012, with the help of bank financing, we were able to purchase the house directly behind our building on Sheridan Street. With this additional building, Jumping Mouse gains space to see more children and to meet with more caregivers (including parents, foster parents, and grandparents), teachers, mentors, or other important adults in our children's lives. Board and staff met this fall to develop a strategic plan for growth, beginning in 2013. We intend to greatly expand our reach to children and families in Jefferson County.



Thank you to Matt Wallace and Cherry Street Roofing for donating their labor to replace the roof on the Jumping Mouse house in April.

An overview of our three-year plan (2013–2015):

OUR KIDS

Our child-centered therapy model remains central to our program, in which we see kids for as long as they need to heal. We intend to double our services to children incrementally over the next three years, increasing from seeing 50 children weekly to seeing 100 children weekly in 2015.

OUR PARENTS

With more children in our program, we also will be serving more parents and caregivers, offering education and support on a monthly and on-call basis. We will be expanding our Securing Connections parenting program, an intensive

weekly program offering one-on-one mentoring, education, and support to parents. In addition, we look forward to utilizing our new space for group work.

OUR SCHOOLS

Our therapists currently meet with teachers and school counselors to help them understand the needs of traumatized children. Over the next three years, we will be reaching out to our school districts to increase specialized support to our county's teachers, school counselors, and afterschool caregivers.

continued on page 3

“What Happened to You?” *continued from page 1*

The growing body of research further confirms a pattern we see at Jumping Mouse: childhood events commonly recur across generations. Two-thirds of our children in therapy have a caregiver who experienced domestic violence, and nearly half have a caregiver who has been sexually abused. Clearly, our integrated approach of helping children *and* parents heal is key to ending this cycle and preventing future ACEs in the generations to come.

At Jumping Mouse, we're heartened to join other agencies, schools, clinics, and courts across the state who are using ACEs screening to better understand the effects of childhood trauma and deepen our interventions. The

What is your ACE score?

To find out, visit acestudy.org

common language and shared understanding of ACEs supports community-wide cooperation and caring on behalf of our children and families.

Jumping Mouse Children's Center knows that early intervention can catalyze intergenerational change; the ACE Study findings corroborate and affirm our work.

The 10 Adverse Childhood Experiences

ABUSE

- Emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

NEGLECT

- Emotional neglect
- Physical neglect

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION

- Mother treated violently
- Household substance abuse
- Household mental illness
- Parental separation or divorce
- Incarcerated household member

OUR COMMUNITY

To prevent childhood traumas such as abuse and neglect, we must ensure that the systems that care for children nurture their well-being. Children need love, safety, and to be valued as individuals. This core principle guides our work in the community, where we serve as a resource for numerous agencies, including the medical community, schools, Dove House Advocacy Services, the Department of Health and Human Services, the courts, and others invested in the well-being of children. Jumping Mouse intends to lead the way in working together with our partners to build a community where every child is valued.

Jumping Mouse Welcomes New Board and Staff

We are delighted to welcome new staff members Candy Carter, office specialist, and Gila Fein, therapist. Candy is responsible for managing billing and the day-to-day office functioning. She grew up in the area and lives in Port Townsend with her husband and two children. Gila was an extern therapist at Jumping Mouse before joining our staff in January 2012. She commutes weekly from Seattle because the work that Jumping Mouse is doing is unique in our region.

In addition, our diverse board welcomes four new members:

JUELIE DALZELL, a resident of Port Townsend since 1982, has served in various public service roles. She was a social worker for Child Protective

Services for seven years. After her work with child victims of sexual abuse, she decided to become a deputy prosecuting attorney. Later, she served three terms as the elected prosecuting attorney for Jefferson County.

KITTY KNAPP began working with children in 1970, as a Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) volunteer and a Head Start teacher on the Skokomish Reservation. Most recently, she taught for 16 years at Grant Street Elementary before retiring.

JOE MATTERN, MD has been practicing family medicine and obstetrics at Jefferson Healthcare Primary Care since 2003. He is now

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!
You can find the latest news, sign up for our e-newsletter, make a donation, or apply for a therapy internship on our new website, www.jumpingmouse.org. Parents and professionals also may refer a child or find helpful resources for addressing childhood stress.

serving as chief medical officer at Jefferson Healthcare, where he is dedicating attention to improving patient safety and experience as well as expanding and sustaining medical services in Jefferson County.

JOHN NOWAK is a lifelong resident of Port Townsend and currently works at Jefferson Healthcare in performance improvement. During his 30-year employment at Jefferson Healthcare, he has served in many capacities. He has worked as a staff nurse and has managed several departments, including the Emergency department, ICU/Critical Care, and the Family Birth Center.

<p>Jumping Mouse Children's Center 1809 Sheridan Street Port Townsend, WA 98368 (360) 379-5109 www.jumpingmouse.org info@jumpingmouse.org</p>	<p>Staff FOUNDER AND CLINICAL DIRECTOR Dott Kelly EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Kris Becker OFFICE SPECIALIST Candy Carter DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR Jenny Manza</p>	<p>THERAPISTS Lisa Madelle Bottomley Gila Fein Catharine Robinson Llory Wilson VOLUNTEER THERAPISTS Brigid Mosher Autumn Piontek-Walsh Steve Roe Jean Scarboro</p>	<p>TREASURER Aldryth O'Hara SECRETARY Teresa Janssen MEMBERS Juelie Dalzell Ann Emineth Kitty Knapp Sharon Kuznetsov Joe Mattern John Nowak Bob Slater</p>
<p><i>Jumping Mouse is inspired by a Native American legend of a small creature who dreams of a new way. He journeys into the world beyond the familiar, with compassion and awareness. He grows, discovers his strengths, and transforms into Eagle. Like the myth, our children's center is about offering the tools that will assist each child in meeting the challenges of daily life.</i></p>	<p>Board PRESIDENT Chris Pierson VICE PRESIDENT Jan Garing</p>		



You Can Be a Part of Something Big

The good news is that Jumping Mouse has the ability to help our children heal from trauma *and* to halt the cycle of violence and neglect, improving the lives of generations to come. When you support Jumping Mouse, you help change the trajectory of many lives for the better. You help build a community where the well-being of children and families is a priority. Your donation, large or small, has an exponential impact that makes a lasting difference. ***Donate today and tell kids they matter.***

“The solution to adult problems tomorrow depends in large measure upon how our children grow up today.”

– Margaret Mead, anthropologist

Jumping Mouse Children’s Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Donations are accepted directly to JMCC.

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