



200 North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Richmond, VA 23223  
(804) 644-9590

Website: [www.childsavers.org](http://www.childsavers.org)  
Twitter: @ChildSaversRVA  
Facebook: ChildSaversRVA

## ChildSavers 2017 Advocacy Priorities

### CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

1. Continue efforts to improve the safety of child care in all settings - Require national fingerprint/background checks for all employees of early care and education (child care) especially those receiving subsidy. **(State)**
2. Promote Virginia Quality as the Standard for quality early care and education. **(State and Local)**
3. Modify zoning laws to help establish quality in-home early care and education. **(Local)**
  - Eliminate non-refundable application fees.
  - Allow zoning license to match state child care license for the number of children in care.

### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

1. Support General Assembly resolutions to raise awareness about Trauma Informed Community Networks. **(State)**
2. Adopt legislative priorities of Voices for Virginia's Children with focus on **(State)**:
  - Continue to push for a transformation of Virginia's mental health system that better addresses the needs of children and parents.
  - Educate lawmakers on brain research about the effects of children growing up in environments of toxic stress and trauma, and about the efforts of a growing number of Virginia communities encouraging resilience and addressing trauma in children and families, laying the groundwork for more evidence-based state policies.

Childsavers.org | (f) (t) ChildSaversRVA | (804) 644.9590

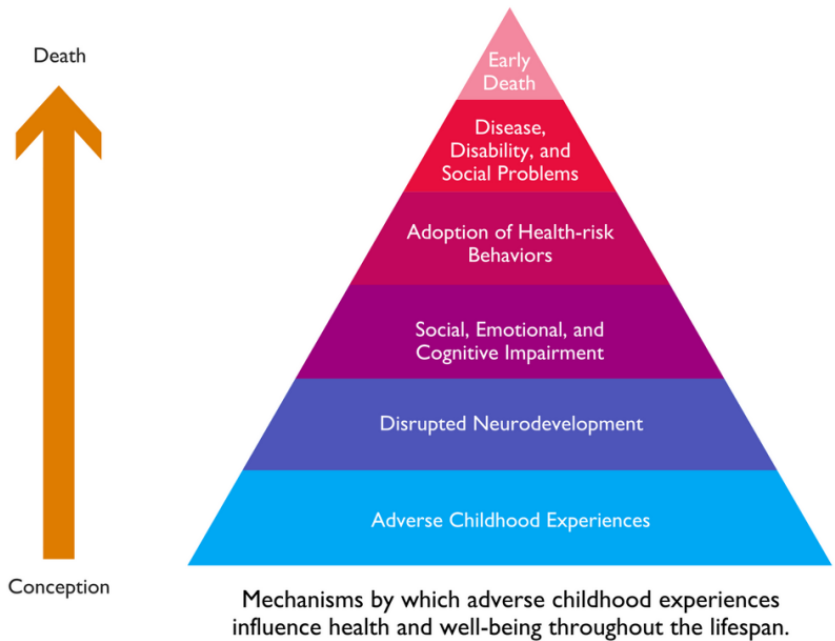
**MISSION:** To guide our community's children through life's critical moments with trauma-informed mental health and child development services

**VISION:** All children can be safe, happy, healthy, and ready to learn.

## 2017 ADVOCACY - VIRGINIA FACT SHEET

### Children’s Mental Health

- The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACEs) shows that people who have experienced **trauma\*** have a huge risk of adult onset of chronic health problems including heart disease, cancer, mental illness, diabetes, suicide, and alcoholism.
- **Resilience\*\*** counteracts the effects of trauma. The young brain is elastic and can heal with therapy, healthy and nurturing adult relationships, and with the help of schools that integrate trauma-informed and resilience-building practices. Schools that do so result in an increase in students’ scores, test grades, and graduation rates.



### Children’s Early Care and Education

- There is a \$7 to \$10 ROI for quality early care and education
- Kids Count Data reported that 53% of children ages 5 and below are not in school and in 2016, 13.8% of kindergarteners PALS-K scores were below kindergarten readiness levels. Studies have shown that quality ECE has the power steer a child onto a path of success.
- The Center for Public Education studies compared outcomes for at-risk children who participated in high quality ECE to control groups who did not. Findings showed participants: had better language and cognitive skills in the first few years of elementary school; were more likely to score higher on math and reading tests; and were less likely to repeat a grade, drop out of school, need special education or remedial services, or get into trouble with the law in the future. received quality ECE, 65% graduated high school and they were less likely to be arrested for violent or drug crimes

### In our Region

- According to SAMSHA, 20% of children will experience a mental health issue by age 16. In Virginia, approximately 1.8 million children will require mental health services and approximately 58,000 of them live in poverty.
- The lifetime cost to the state for **one** child who experiences abuse and neglect is \$210,012 (includes child health care cost, adult medical cost, productivity loss, child welfare cost, criminal justice cost, and special education cost – according to CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control)

\*Trauma is a painful emotional experience caused by an event or events that challenge a person’s sense of safety. ACEs measures trauma by looking at physical, sexual, and verbal abuse; physical and emotional neglect; living with a family member who is depressed, diagnosed with other mental illness, addicted to alcohol or other substance, or in prison; witnessing a mother being abused; and losing a parent to separation, divorce, or other reason.

\*\*Resilience is the ability to recover quickly from difficulties or adversity. Studies show that resilience can be acquired through healthy habits such as mindfulness practices, exercise, good nutrition, adequate sleep, as well as healthy social interactions with adults and peers.