## **ACEs**

# The Effect of Long-Term Adverse Childhood Experiences

#### What is Trauma?

"Trauma is an exceptional experience in which powerful and dangerous events overwhelm a person's capacity to cope" (Rice & Groves, 2005). Keep in mind that the experience doesn't have to be life-threatening to trigger a trauma response. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can have a significant impact on child development.

### Ten ACEs

- Psychological Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Neglect
- Physical Neglect
- Loss of a Parent (for any reason)
- Mother Treated Violently
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Illness
- Criminal Behavior in the Household



\*\* Note that it's the child's response and interpretation of the event that creates the harmful impact and matters most, not the event itself. \*\*

#### **Five Fundamental Truths**

- 1. Trauma is real.
- 2. Trauma is prevalent. In fact, it is likely much more common than we care to admit.
- 3. Trauma is toxic to the brain and affects development and learning.
- 4. Educators need to be prepared to support students who have experienced trauma, even if we don't know exactly who they are.
- 5. Children are resilient, and within positive learning environments, they can grow, learn and succeed.

Students exposed to trauma and toxic stress are more likely to struggle with academic success. Trauma doesn't discriminate. It happens across all communities and all cultures.