

## INFOGRAPHIC - TOXIC STRESS: HERE TODAY, HERE TOMORROW

# Childhood Toxic Stress

CHILDREN EXPOSED TO TOXIC STRESS CAN EXPERIENCE PHYSIOLOGICAL CHANGES THAT ADVERSELY AFFECT THEIR HEALTH AND WELLBEING FOR LIFE

HERE TODAY, HERE TOMORROW

### Toxic Stress:

"The excessive or prolonged activation of the physiologic stress response systems in the absence of the buffering protection afforded by stable, responsive relationships."

- American Academy of Pediatrics



Overactivation of the stress management system can change the architecture of the brain, disrupt metabolic regulatory systems, and alter the genome.



These changes trigger a cycle of chronic stress, compromise cognitive and behavioral functioning, and lead to chronic disease.



### Childhood

Economic hardship  
Incarceration of a parent  
Abuse  
Neglect  
Divorce/separation  
Parental mental illness  
Parental substance abuse



### Adolescence & Adulthood

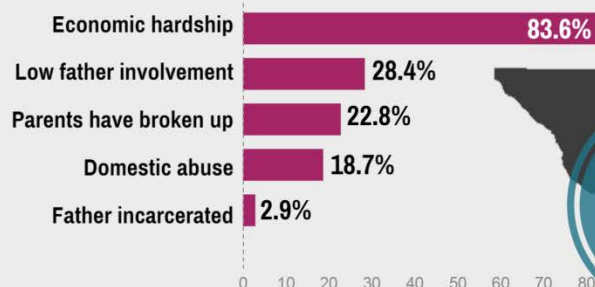
Problems with:  
Learning  
Memory  
Impulse control  
Regulation of emotion  
Depression  
Asthma  
Cancer  
Heart disease  
Autoimmune disease

MORE THAN 2 IN 5 CHILDREN IN THE U.S. ARE BORN TO UNMARRIED PARENTS



Children born to unmarried parents may be at increased risk for negative outcomes later in life because they are more likely than their peers in married households to experience many of the stressors associated with toxic stress. Drawing from research conducted by the Child and Family Research Partnership (CFRP), the graph below illustrates findings on some of those stressors.

### CHILDREN OF UNMARRIED PARENTS IN TEXAS % EXPERIENCING STRESS AT 3 MONTHS OLD\*



90.7%  
experience  
ONE or more  
stressors

34.5%  
experience  
TWO or more  
stressors

\* Source: CFRP PES Study, PES Mothers at 3 months, weighted.

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For Toxic Stress 101, go to <http://bit.ly/145wW0p>.

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