



GRANTEE



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## Health Improvement Partnership of Santa Cruz County Welcomes ACEs Aware Integration Cohort

**Santa Cruz County:** The Health Improvement Partnership of Santa Cruz County (HIP) is pleased to announce that they are welcoming three clinics, totaling eleven sites, to their Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Integration Cohort as part of the state's ACEs Aware initiative. This work is a collaboration between HIP, County Health Services Agency, and First5, funded by the California Surgeon General (CA-OSG) Office and the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). HIP welcomes Doctors on Duty, Salud Para La Gente (Salud), and Santa Cruz Community Health (SCCH) to their cohort.

Each clinic site has identified a multidisciplinary team of providers, front line or clinical staff, clinic leadership, and data or Quality Improvement staff to participate in the integration cohort. This cohort aims to train and integrate sustainable ACEs screenings centered on trauma-informed care. This work is critical as Dr. Devon Francis, *Assistant Chief Medical Officer, Pediatrics* at Salud, states: "Evidence has demonstrated the link between ACEs and various adverse health outcomes in later adolescence and adulthood. That evidence alone is compelling enough to screen and treat for ACEs."

This work's timing is relevant, as we all experience stress and fatigue from the COVID-19 pandemic. "We are all under tremendous stress, whether it is economic, related to illness in ourselves or loved ones, or stress due to the loss of our usual daily lives, which for children includes the essential role of everyday childhood learning and play that happens when children are in schools. High ACEs scores in children or parents can make it more challenging to cope with these new stressors we face. As clinicians, we want to help our families employ self-care techniques, including good nutrition, exercise, sufficient sleep, and mental health support when needed," Dr. Francis adds.

To accomplish the integration of ACEs screenings, HIP will provide four peer-to-peer learning sessions to the cohort. These sessions will focus on assessing each clinic site's capacity and developing workflows so that each site can soon be an ACEs screening provider. Through this initiative, HIP hopes to extend the reach and impact of the ACEs screenings in Medi-Cal providers to serve low-income, underserved, and uninsured communities.

For more information, visit the Health Improvement Partnership of Santa Cruz County's [ACEs Aware Website](#).

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