



**UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY**

State University of New York

# **Minority Health Disparities Research Study**

**Remote Schooling and Adverse Childhood Events during COVID-19  
Engaged Researchers Meeting**

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# Research Team

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# Study Purpose

- To examine the effects of remote schooling on the occurrence of adverse childhood events, including trauma and injuries, among school-age children in NYS
- To understand how parents and caregivers coped with remote schooling and the challenges that families faced
- To understand what teachers, support staff, and school administrators experienced in meeting the challenges of children, parents, and caregivers remote schooling
- To elicit community-informed recommendations to develop trauma-informed interventions in schools

# Why Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs)?

- What are ACEs? ACEs include:
  - Exposure to violence;
  - Emotional, physical, or sexual abuse;
  - Deprivation and neglect;
  - Family discord and divorce;
  - Parental substance abuse and mental health problems;
  - Parental death or incarceration
- Prolonged remote schooling may have increased exposure to ACEs as households faced increased social stress.
- At the same time, reporting of ACEs may have declined as students were not in school.

## ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES - ACEs

What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?  
ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur in a child's life:



Physical Abuse



Emotional Abuse



Sexual Abuse



Domestic Violence



Parental Substance Abuse



Mental Illness



Suicide or Death



Crime or Imprisoned Family

Causing lifelong medical, mental & social suffering

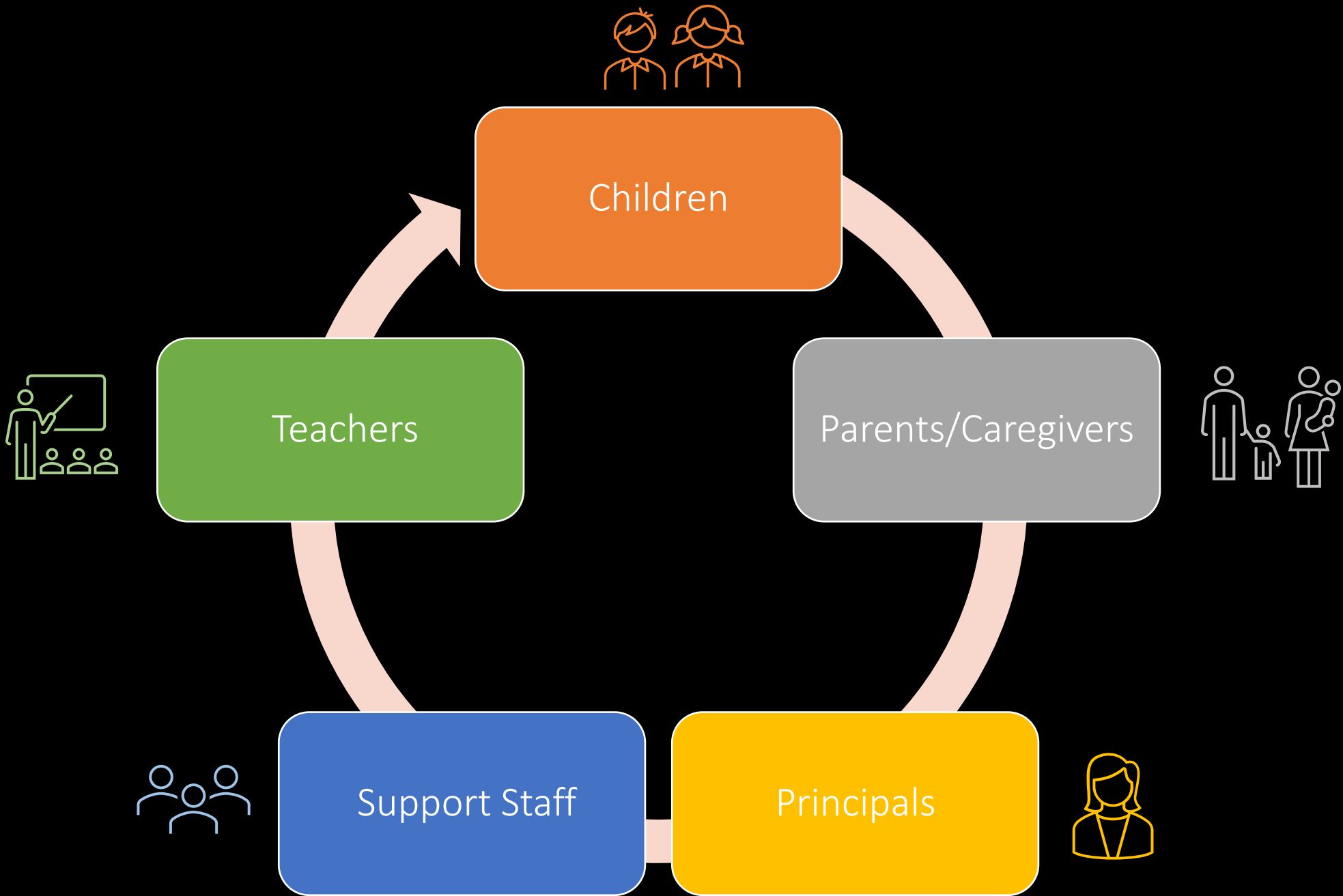
# Research

# Design

1. Use data on emergency room visits and hospitalizations from across the state to examine whether visits/stays related to trauma and injury (ACEs) have increased since the start of the pandemic beyond "typical" levels.
  1. Examine whether there are socio-economic and race-ethnic disparities in the changes in ACEs.
  2. Generate district-level estimates of the occurrence of ACEs over time.
2. In-depth interviews (N=20) with educators, counselors, administrators, and parents/caregivers to understand:
  1. How have school closures created challenges for parents/caregivers and their children?
  2. How have these challenges affected their health and well-being and what are some of the corresponding adaptations and coping strategies that parents/caregivers and their children have employed?
  3. How have educators experienced challenges among their students and what strategies have school administrators and educators employed to mitigate these challenges and reduce inequalities among students based on SES and race/ethnicity?



# Preliminary Findings





# Sample

<b>Parents/Caregivers</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Principal(s)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Elementary School Teachers</b>	<b>4</b>



# Preliminary Findings

(Parents)



*"Having the kids home all the time, increases the parenting workload because they're not in school. They're just there. And so you can't feel like you're doing a good job parenting when you're supposed to also be doing work. And you can't do a good job working when you feel like you should be parenting at the same time."*

(Parent, 4.4.2022)

# Preliminary Findings

(Principal)



*"I tell my staff all the time that the thing I have learned the most during this time is that before I was a principal that took care of our students as the number one priority and then the COVID-19 pandemic hit and it taught me that my most important job is taking care of my staff. And if I do a good job and take care of my staff, then they will take care of my students."*

**(Principal, 4.1.22)**

# Preliminary Findings

(Support Staff)



*"All of our roles involve children dealing with acute traumas and chronic toxic stress. Some of the most intense work we'd have to do with families would be those children dealing with chronic toxic stress. So not pinpointing at any one acute incident but just this ongoing impact. It's very stressful-- numerous adverse childhood experiences."*

**(Support Staff, 4.5.2022)**

# Preliminary Findings

## (Teachers)



*"it's a huge shift and our kids are... no longer learning to read. They're reading to learn, and I think that we had this year like some of our students like weren't into books. And so, you know, we're trying to catch up. We're teaching them to learn, but we're also getting them to learn to read separately... I also think with math, we have some unfinished learning that, you know, I think of my third graders, they had almost three or four months of first grade, and then they had all of a second grade and now we're coming in third grade..."*

(Teacher, 4.5.2022)

*"It's like they literally don't know how to have a conversation with each other. And it's sad. That group looks very sad all the time and it's heartbreaking because I've seen them when they were in third grade also and then it was not like that. And they look so sad. And I think about like who's so and so's friend and I talk to their classroom teacher. They don't really have a lot of friends. It's really sad"*

(Teacher, 4.5.2022)

# Implications



These findings call for ...

- Enhanced understanding from state policymakers about needs to adapt timelines and expectations to meet academic targets in the near and long term
- Enhanced focus on social-emotional learning and mental health as well as preparation and hiring of staff who have the expertise to do this work
- Enhanced efforts to engage the hardest to reach parents and those most vulnerable to ongoing negative impacts of the pandemic

*“We were living in a pandemic situation prior to our pandemic, immense poverty, immense amount of doors closed, obstacles in their [children’s] way to give them a chance in the future to compete with kids and families who have overwhelmingly more options.”*

(Support Staff, 4.5.22)



Thank you

Questions?