

# ACE Support Hub

Annual Report 2020-21



PROFIADAU NIWEIDIOL MEWN PLENTYNDOD  
ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

# Ministerial Foreword

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**2020-21 was one of the most challenging periods we have faced for a long time. While the long term impact of the COVID pandemic remains uncertain, we do know that it has increased pressure on communities, families and individuals, and on the services which support them. We also know the impact has been felt most by the more vulnerable members of our society. The need for support has never been greater, including preventing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and wider childhood adversity and mitigating their impact.**

I am pleased that the ACE Support Hub has continued to play an invaluable role towards tackling ACEs during the year. In spite of the pandemic and the challenges of adapting to a very different way of working, the Hub has delivered high quality advice, support and learning to public services, the third sector and individuals. This year's annual report demonstrates not just how much the Hub achieved last year, but the breadth of its work and the level of engagement and collaboration with our partners in Wales and further afield.

In March 2021, I published a report on the review of the Welsh Government's policy on ACEs.

As part of the review we spoke to a wide range of stakeholders who expressed their support for and appreciation of the Hub's work. They also wanted the Hub to continue this work, and I am pleased the Welsh Government has extended its funding to the Hub for another year, 2021-22.

The ACE Support Hub continues to make an important contribution to our work on ACEs. Earlier this year I established an expert ACEs task and finish group to help take forward the findings of the review. The Hub has made a significant contribution to the group's work in shaping and informing the Welsh Government's future ACEs policy.



**Julie Morgan MS**

*Deputy Minister for  
Social Services*

# Welcome

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## **Welcome to our 2020-2021 annual report sharing the highlights, achievements and impact of our work from the past year.**

This year things have looked a bit different living and working during a pandemic.

We believe taking a trauma-informed approach and the work of the ACE Support Hub has never been more important given the collective adversity we are all experiencing in different ways through the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Our work is reliant on engagement, relationships and making connections, all of which have been very difficult to establish and sustain through our computer screens. However, in an effort to continue with business as normal we have moved our work to online platforms where possible to ensure the impact can be maintained which we hope to share with you throughout our 2020-2021 Annual Report.

We have prioritised one another's wellbeing with regular check ins and have learnt to adapt and change despite the challenging circumstances. We are passionate about using this experience of collective adversity and trauma as an opportunity for growth and transformation.



# A note from...



## **Jo Hopkins** - Programme Director ACEs, Criminal Justice and Violence Prevention

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It has been a privilege to lead the ACE Support Hub through another year, and I am so proud to see in this report the depth and breadth of what was achieved, despite everything this year entailed. Not only did we have the COVID-19 pandemic to contend with, but also a very welcome independent review of our work via the Welsh Government review of ACEs policy. It is a testament to the hard work of the team, our valued partners and colleagues, and people across Wales, who continued to prioritise the prevention and mitigation of ACEs. It was great to see the support for our work captured in the review report. Particular thanks go to those in the team who have moved on at the end of March 2021. Without you, this year simply would not have been possible. And a huge welcome to those who have joined and take us forward into a new phase of work, in line with the Deputy Ministers' principles.



## **Tracey Cooper** - Chief Executive, Public Health Wales

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I am delighted to see the continued progress made by the ACE Support Hub during 2020-2021. A time when the team not only focussed on delivery during the significant challenges that we faced in Wales, but also contributed to the wider efforts across the organisation to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The achievements of this small team, to continue to raise awareness of ACEs and to drive forward transformational change, are incredible. I was delighted to see this not only in the Welsh Government review of ACEs policy but also in the feedback from Ministers and partners throughout the year. Hugely well done to Jo for her exceptional leadership and to all of the Team for their dedication and expertise, and we are all looking forward to another year of exceptional delivery, including the Hub's key contributions to our commitments to Building a Healthier Wales.



## **Professor. Mark Bellis** - Executive Director of Policy and International Health/Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre

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I am delighted to see all the achievements of the ACE Support Hub during 2020-2021, a year like no other. We saw huge demands on our public health services including the need for our ACE Support Hub staff to take on additional roles to support the health protection response as well as undertaking vital work to understand the impact of ACEs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The breadth of what has been achieved is a testament to the hard work of the team and has certainly contributed to our knowledge of, and response to, the broader harms of COVID 19 and their impacts on children, young people and some of our more marginalised and disadvantaged communities. I was also very pleased to have formally welcomed the Hub into the WHO Collaborating Centre during this year, and look forward to seeing how the Hub will further contribute to international efforts to prevent and mitigate ACEs as Wales continues to lead the way in developing a vision of a trauma informed nation.

# All about Adverse Childhood Experiences

**Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences that occur in childhood and are remembered throughout adulthood.**

These experiences range from suffering verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse, to being raised in a household where domestic violence, alcohol abuse, hostile parental separation or drug abuse is present.

## What is the ACE Support Hub for?

The ACE hub has been established to help tackle ACEs. We help create the environment for change and support individuals, communities and organisations to help create an ACE aware society.

### PREVENT

ACEs from occurring in children's lives.

### SUPPORT EARLY INTERVENTION

when children are experiencing ACEs to minimise their impacts.

### BUILD RESILIENCE

in adults who have experienced ACEs to stop them being passed on through generations.

## Things that we believe in are:

- 1 Promoting and building resilience
- 2 Challenging structural inequalities
- 3 The power of relationships
- 4 Being inclusive to all communities
- 5 Promoting kind and compassionate services and society

## Our focus:



Spreading information and knowledge about ACEs



Sharing evidence about what organisations can do differently to help prevent and mitigate ACEs



Developing knowledge and skills amongst professionals



Pull learning from individuals, communities and organisations and share it



Drive change and system transformation at local and national levels.

# Communications

Our communications ethos has always been about positive, continuous, inspiring, and motivational messaging around ACEs and what helps to build resilience; capturing the momentum of the work happening in Wales.

It's  
#TimeToBeKind

## #TimeToBeKind Campaign 2021

The 'Time to Be Kind' 2021 public awareness campaign concluded in May 2021. The goal this year was to drive awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and support the young people who have experienced difficulties over the last year by encouraging kindness throughout the nation.

Life has been hard recently, especially for our young people, with many experiencing isolation, stress and anxiety. COVID-19 has exacerbated the experience of children who are at risk of ACEs or are experiencing them in the home. Lack of access to school friends, teachers, social workers and the safe space and services that schools provide may mean more children are unable to have their voices heard or access support/protective factors.

## Key stats from the campaign:

**6.4m**  
total campaign reach

**52%**  
increase in website traffic

**227,000**  
social video views and

**660**  
posts containing #TTBK

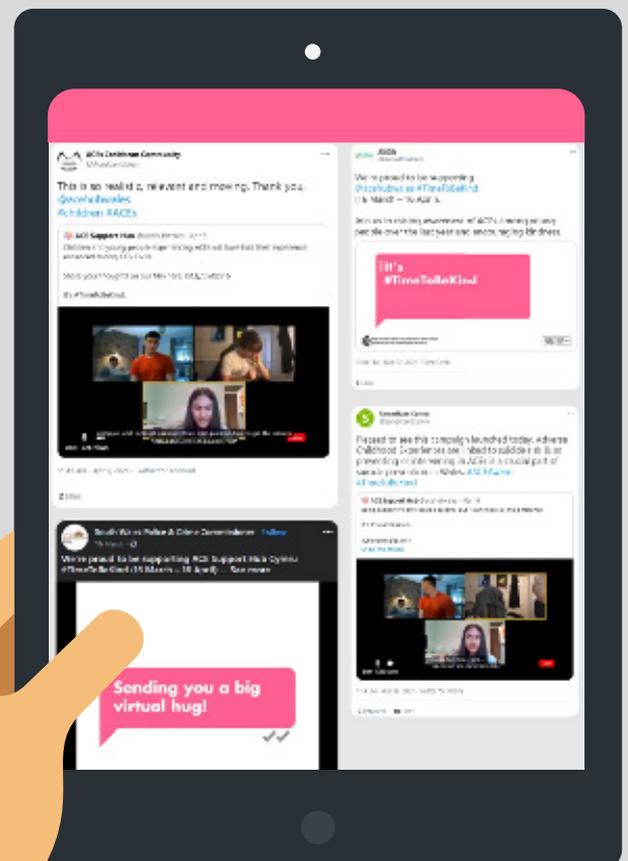
**176**  
posts shared from our stakeholders

**305**  
engagements and  
**152**  
new followers on Instagram

**8,665**  
page views to the #TimeToBeKind campaign microsite within ACE Aware Wales website

**48**  
stakeholders sharing message

**15**  
kindness stories submitted



Children and young people experiencing ACEs will have had that experience enhanced during COVID-19. The full extent of this is not yet known.

We called on Wales to be a kinder nation and spark local action. This was to play a part in our wider ambition to break the cycle of ACEs across the country and to build a kinder society in Wales, one which is trauma- and ACE-informed.

We now begin to emerge from the pandemic and with this change, we must take time to understand that to some, this experience has meant that they have and are still experiencing trauma. Behind closed doors, there might be a child and family who are struggling. Reaching out only takes a second, but it can make all the difference.

Relationships and kindness are the most powerful forms of human therapy, and can have a healing effect on anyone, which is why we continued with our #TimeToBeKind message.

The campaign included bi-lingual 30 and 60 second film adverts that were shown on ITV and S4C for 2 weeks, with the advert sitting in between primetime programmes like The Chase, Coronation Street and Six Nations rugby matches.

To access the bi-lingual campaign ads, please click [HERE](#) to find them on our YouTube channel.

The advert was also promoted via social and digital advertising on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok for 6 weeks, as well as the involvement and support of 48 different stakeholders across Wales.

Highlights from the campaign include launch coverage with a 4-minute broadcast piece on S4C's Prynawn Da programme, featuring two of the actors from the TV advert about the importance of the kindness message.

We then had a BBC Radio Wales story interviewing Director Jo Hopkins about the campaign and teaming up with Positive Futures in Newport to report about the exacerbation of issues for children experiencing difficulties at home during the pandemic and the power kindness can have.

The campaign's media coverage concluded with a local media piece and a story on ITV Wales sharing two schools in North Wales, Ysgol Bryn Coch and Ysgol San Sior who developed and promoted their own resources to spread the message about kindness and compassion.

You can take a look at the North Wales media coverage [HERE](#) in the [Leader](#) and [North Wales Pioneer](#).

**We are delighted with the positive impact our campaign has had and we look forward to learning the full outcomes of the survey we ran with PHW and Bangor University researchers.**

**This survey was to measure the impact of the TV film on viewers and understand the public response. This survey ran across the campaign period and was completed by 399 respondents.**

**A full report of the survey findings will follow shortly.**

## Our Principles



We're human, social and helpful.



We're visual, using imagery and video to tell stories and build emotional connections.



We celebrate success stories.



We talk about serious issues but we are optimistic and excited for change.



We're positive, we inspire and motivate.



We're inclusive, building a team, a movement. We start a conversation and encourage the sharing of ideas.

# Podcasts

**This year we developed our own podcast, KindTalk, hosted by Sarah Ingham, Communications Lead.**

## KindTalk

Over the past few years, we've met hundreds of inspirational people with incredible stories to tell. Each episode of the podcast aimed to feature guests who are doing wonderful things within their communities.

We wanted to join the dots between Adverse Childhood Experiences, trauma-informed practice and the mechanics of kindness, learning how every single one of us can do more, and make a difference to the lives of others.

Guests on episode #1 were Lucy Donovan from Positive Futures and Laura Tranter, Community Lead from the ACE Support Hub. Positive Futures is an organisation working with young people from disadvantaged and deprived areas of Gwent, providing alternative education, mentoring and community provision.

Lucy talked to us about the challenges of working in this space and how they've adapted through the lockdown period and the power of kindness and relationships.

During episode #2, we spoke to Clare Budden Chief Executive of Clwyd Alyn Housing Association, Suzanne Mazzone, Executive Director of Housing Services and Elaine Gilbert, Executive Director People/Communications and Marketing. Clwyd Alyn is Housing Association in North Wales, they have almost 800 employees, more than 6000 homes and they run care homes, homeless hostels, domestic violence refuge and provide housing for people with learning disabilities along with those who have lost ordinary houses and apartments.

During this podcast we heard about Clwyd Alyn's mission "to work with others to beat poverty" and how they are developing trauma-informed practice and are truly living their organisational values of hope, trust and kindness.



**These KindTalk podcasts are available to listen on iTunes and Spotify.**

# A National Survey

## Knowledge and awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in the public service workforce in Wales - **Genevieve S. Riley, James W. Bailey, Diana Bright, Alisha R. Davies**

**At the beginning of 2020, a national survey produced in partnership with the Research & Evaluation Directorate of Public Health Wales was released.**

The purpose of this national survey was to understand knowledge and awareness of ACEs amongst the workforce working within the sphere of public services in Wales (including those delivered in third sector or charitable organisations).

A cross-sectional bi-lingual online survey of the public sector workforce was conducted by Public Health Wales over a four week period in May/June 2019.

When the report was released, it provided an insight into the levels of ACE-awareness, knowledge and understanding amongst respondents from across public services in Wales, to help us assess where we are. More importantly it highlighted that there is more to do to achieve the longer term outcomes of the ACE Support Hub so that ultimately fewer people in Wales experiencing ACE-related harm.



**67% of respondents indicated that they had seen information on ACEs, and mostly reported seeing information on ACEs through research evidence (55%), videos (54%) and reports (52%).**



**Most respondents agreed that currently within their roles, they felt able to interact with vulnerable people (83%), understand what ACEs are (78%) and respond to those who may have experienced or been experiencing ACEs (66%).**



**However, this was different for the prevention and mitigation of ACEs, with 36% and 48% of respondents respectively, agreeing.**

Respondents from youth services, housing and education were most comfortable in their role to mitigate and prevent ACEs, whereas those within sport, fire and rescue and the Welsh Government were least comfortable.



**47% of respondents were unsure whether leadership within their organisation allowed for resourcing of ACE-informed practice, and 44% were unsure as to whether their organisation had ACE-informed practices supported by senior leadership.**



# Education

## Strong, inclusive, trauma-informed schools

**This year we have continued to deliver training to make the whole school ACE aware, and confident to respond to trauma.**

This aligns with the Welsh Government ambition to develop a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

We have been really pleased with the continued roll out for schools and to date over 600 schools have received Phase 1 training and we now have 432 trainers able to deliver at their school settings.

This year we released the evaluation of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)-Informed School Approach in three secondary schools in Wales, carried out by the Research and Evaluation Division in Public Health Wales.

Schools play a vital role in helping to mitigate the traumatic impact of ACEs.

The ACE-informed whole-school approach was initially designed and piloted within three primary schools.



**600**  
schools have  
received Phase 1  
training



**432**  
trainers able to  
deliver at their  
school settings.

The programme included ACE-Awareness training across school settings and encouraging them to adopt an ACE-informed approach to improve the awareness, knowledge and skills of all school teaching and support staff.

As part of our delivery plan for 2020/21, Sian Griffiths, the ACE Support Hub Education Sector Lead, co-ordinated the implementation of an adapted training package for secondary schools which was piloted in three sites across South Wales over the duration of the 2018/19 school academic year.

The evaluation aimed to assess the levels of knowledge, awareness and attitudes of staff following receipt of three phases of ACE-informed training, as well as seeking to understand how the training programme worked, for whom, and in what circumstances.

Our report highlighted that the ACE-informed whole-school approach equips school settings with relevant knowledge and skills to identify and respond to children who experience ACEs and trauma.

The pilot in secondary schools illustrates the potential for ACE-informed whole-school approaches to build this knowledge and understanding within secondary school staff, but it also highlighted the importance of school leadership teams to create and sustain change. Building understanding of the impact of ACEs on child health, wellbeing and educational outcomes is also important to support changes to practice in education.

The evaluation highlighted the beneficial impact that the ACE Support Hub has had on increasing the knowledge and skills of professionals within the schools involved and offers insight on the implementation of an ACE-informed school.

## **During 2020 we worked with Gillan Grenfell, Workforce Development and Communications Officer for Torfaen County Borough Council and Torfaen Flying start to develop the Early Years training presentation.**

This package was tweaked from the Primary School training and is made up of Phase 1 ACE Awareness and Phase 2 Trauma-Informed Practice in a pre-school setting.

**“ It was a pleasure to be part of the development of the Early Years ACE Awareness and Trauma-Informed Practice Training and to have the opportunity to be able to contribute an Early Years perspective on the content of the training.**

**Torfaen Flying Start were very pleased to be able to contribute to the pilot, to raise awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences and to shape the training for the Early Years Sector. It is so important that all staff that come into contact with young children recognise the impact they have in their day to day roles that makes a difference for these children - providing them with the best possible start.**

**(Gillan Grenfell)**

**Phase 1** was delivered remotely during June and July 2020 as a pilot to six teams from pre-school and early years settings across the Torfaen Local Authority.

**Phase 2** was also delivered to the same six teams and was completed in December 2020. This training is now available on the ACE Support Hub website for training other Local Authorities to use.

This year we have also worked with Pobl to co-produce the Parenting training package. The package which was trialled by HomeStart Cymru is a one hour presentation covering general ACE awareness.

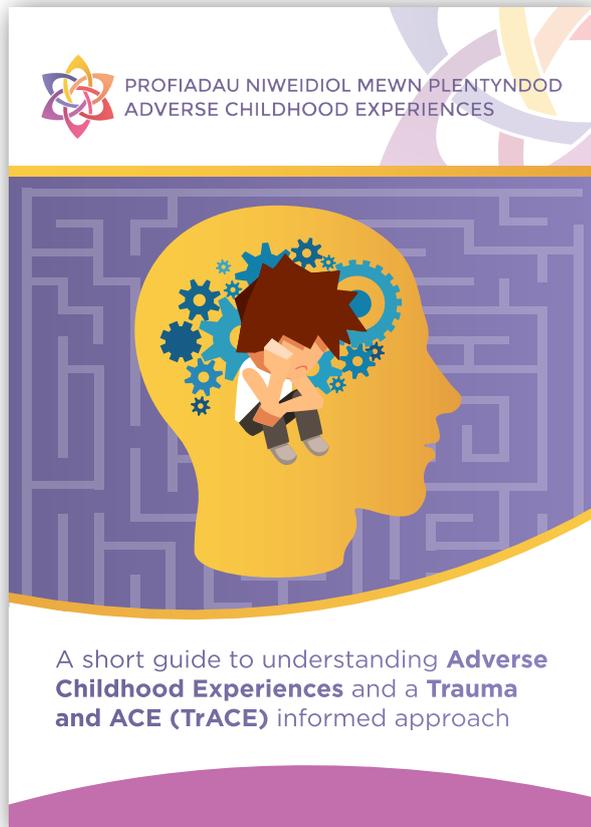
This training can be found on our website and is for use within third sector parenting groups and parents

within schools settings, but must be completed within a support setting.

Following on from the success in other areas of Wales, we engaged with both Wrexham and Flintshire Local Authorities to roll out the Trauma-Informed schools training to make the school environment ACE aware and be able to confidently respond to trauma

We worked alongside Educational Psychologists in Wrexham and Flintshire to support the roll out of training from the Autumn 2020, whilst working under COVID-19 restrictions.

# ACE Informed Infographic



**This year we developed a short guide to understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences and a Trauma and ACE (TrACE) informed approach.**

The guide covers: what ACEs are, what you can do to become TrACE informed, what happens if we do nothing, intergenerational cycles and what it might look like if we achieve a TrACE informed society.

## What are ACEs?

**Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences occurring during childhood that cause children to repeatedly suffer.**

The experiences can directly harm a child (e.g. abuse) or can indirectly affect a child through the environments they live in (e.g. growing up in a house with domestic violence.) The resulting trauma can continue to affect people as adults, long after it has happened.



**Almost half**  
the people in Wales have an ACE.

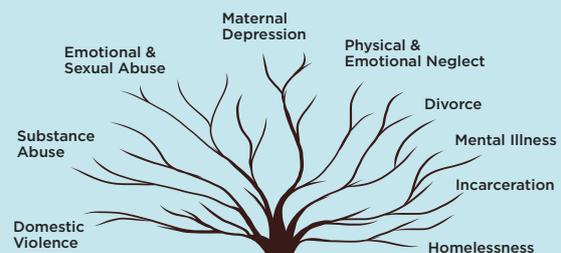


**One in seven**  
people in Wales has had  
more than four ACEs.

ACEs affect us all, they aren't just about children; they affect people of all ages and cross every social boundary.

There is a close relationship between Adverse Childhood Experiences, what happens within a family, and the context in which these happen in Adverse Community Environments. Living in Adverse Community Environments will usually exacerbate the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on families and individuals. Those living in Adverse Community Environments are less likely to have access to things that can help overcome (resilience resources).

## Adverse Childhood Experiences



## Adverse Community Environments



The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic is an example of a trauma that is happening to everyone, but some individuals who are already vulnerable and some groups in society are disproportionately affected.

# ACEs and Trauma-Informed Organisations

## E-Learning

Last year we were very pleased to be able to launch our 'Introduction to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)' e-learning package which is accessible at Learning@Wales, our ACE Aware Wales website, or via our YouTube channel.

The e-learning course is for all staff within public services and third sector organisations in Wales.

The course covers:

- What ACEs are
- The prevalence of ACEs in Wales
- The risks associated with ACEs and impact across the life course
- What to do to prevent and respond to ACEs.

The e-learning can either be accessed as a brief introduction to ACEs or as a precursor for subsequent training.

Examples of sector specific training packages are described in the ACE Hub Training Prospectus; these packages build on the fundamentals of ACEs and explore what trauma-informed means for the sector in practice.

Throughout June 2020 we worked with 5 organisations to enable them to have user self-registration access allowing them to monitor uptake and progress across their workforce.

## TrACE Informed Organisations Toolkit

In 2020 we launched the ACE Support Hub's Self-Assessment Tool for Trauma and ACE (TrACE) Informed Organisations. This tool aims to help organisations to reflect and understand the progress they are making from both an individual and wider partnership perspective in embedding trauma- and ACE-informed practice. As with any transformation programme or improvement activity, a process should be followed.

The tool aims to support organisations to reflect on current culture, practice and process and identify activity to implement more trauma-informed and trauma responsive approaches resulting in increased ownership for transformational change within their setting.

The tool should assist in identifying strengths and successes, whilst also highlighting opportunities for improvement.

A guidance document has been produced to describe a suggested process for making the most of the self-assessment of TrACE informed practice across implementation domains / areas as part of a change management initiative.

These toolkit documents and additional resources can be accessed via our ACE Aware Wales [website](#).

## TrACE Toolkit Webinar

### It's not about doing more work, it's about working differently

On the 10th March 2021 we hosted a webinar looking at the how the TrACE Toolkit can support organisations to become (more) trauma- and ACE-informed.

There has never been a more important time to be a trauma- and ACE-informed organisation. Every single person in Wales has a role to play in tackling, preventing and mitigating ACEs. Being a trauma- and ACE-informed organisation has benefits for the organisation, its customers, staff wellbeing, and the people of Wales as a whole.

The policy context in Wales is highlighting the need for a more professions and organisations to be ACE-informed and to consider their role in preventing, mitigating and tackling ACEs, to ensure an integrated and innovative approach to health and wellbeing generally and support prevention and early intervention.

It is vital that organisations and staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to consider their impact on the people experiencing them and ultimately on future generations living in Wales.

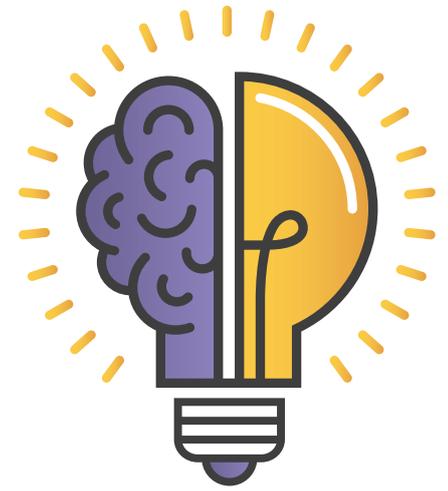
We need ACE awareness to be about more than just training. Before organisations invest resources in staff training, there must be organisational wide sign-up to undertaking honest reflection and acting on any action / improvement activity needed.

GWEITHIO I DDOD  
Sefydliad Gwybodus  
**TrACE**  
2020



WORKING TO BECOME  
**TrACE**  
Informed Organisation  
2020

# Trauma-Informed Universities: Further Education & Higher Education



## Trauma and ACE (TrACE) Informed Further Education (FE) – the journey continues

**Throughout 2020-21 we received Welsh Government funding to develop the ACEs and FE offer.**

The purpose of project is to raise awareness of ACEs, their prevalence and potential impact and the role a whole college and whole system approach can play in responding to ACEs in preventing, tackling and mitigating ACEs. Focusing on a universal, strengths based approach that can benefit everyone (regardless of whether they have experienced ACEs or not) through kindness, compassion and maximising opportunities for building resilience through embedding principles of safety, choice, collaboration, empowerment and trust in everything we do.

We are keen to explore what more can be done to include ACEs within other areas. More than that, we are keen to explore opportunities for a more trauma- and ACE-informed FE and HE sectors in Wales. How can we facilitate a whole-institute approach to being trauma- and ACE-informed; an approach that is as much about staff wellbeing as it is student wellbeing and about the content of the courses/qualifications offered?

We have begun to explore this with Universities Wales and other stakeholders, and have agreement to develop a framework and set of principles for HE institutions. A parallel work stream is currently being explored for FE too in order to inform the development of sector relevant training and versions of the resources listed below and towards an embedded trauma- and ACE-informed approach across the sectors.

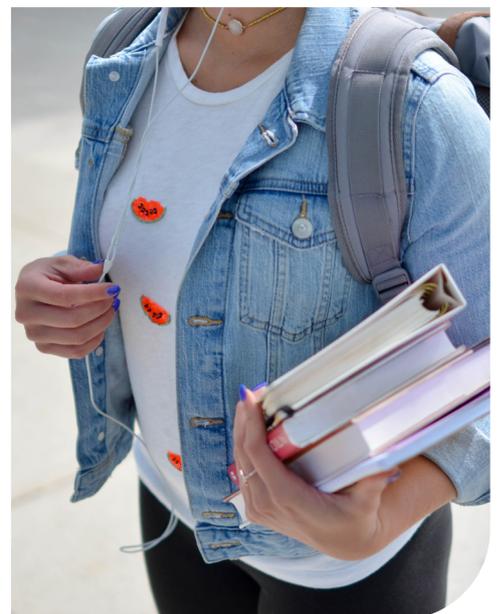
Since April 2020, led by Matthew Morgan our FE Sector Lead, we have convened an Expert Reference Panel and Trainers Group and worked to further develop the Community of Practice through trialling an action learning approach to sharing experiences and learning.

In October 2020, we held a screening of the RESILIENCE film for Further Education staff in Wales. The RESILIENCE film is a one-hour documentary that delves into the science of ACEs and the birth of a new movement to treat and prevent Toxic Stress.

Following the screening, we held a Q&A panel with Ian Dickson, Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate For Education and Training in Wales, Joanne Hopkins, Director of the ACE Support Hub, and Dr Caroline Hughes, Associate Dean Student Engagement, Faculty of Social & Life Sciences; Senior Lecturer, Criminal Justice. The screening was very well attended with positive feedback from those who joined.

We are working collaboratively with the FE sector to produce playlist of training resources that aim to raise awareness of ACEs, created a shared understanding and promote a whole college approach to trauma and ACEs.

Furthermore, we are delighted to have further Welsh Government funding agreed for 2021-22 to roll out the resources and to support the embedding TrACE across FE.



# Higher Education Pilot with Wales Glyndwr University (WGU)

**We were thrilled to announce that we collaborated with Glyndwr university to develop a model for trauma-informed universities, to respond to COVID-19 and embed a whole systems approach in education.**

We are already on the journey to realising one of our ambitions to ensure that every school in Wales is strong, inclusive and trauma-informed, helping children to flourish and have the best start in life.

We recognise that Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) are vital parts of the whole education system and are embarking on co-producing and working with Welsh Government, HE Institutions (HEIs) and FE Colleges to develop a whole system approach that works across sectors and delivers on key priorities.

The unprecedented context in which we all find ourselves operating at the moment has led to a renewed focus on the impact of trauma and adversity and the need to be able to respond effectively to that, as well as to the specific needs of individuals.

We all now have an experience of adversity due to COVID-19, and some a real experience of trauma such as bereavement, isolation or anxiety that provokes a normal reaction to coping. But on top of that is the ongoing adversity that some people were already experiencing such as domestic abuse in the home, or drug and alcohol dependency that may have been exacerbated by social distancing measures, unemployment and inequality, and we are yet to know the full effect of this psychologically on children and young people.

The current pandemic has prevented children and young people from experiencing transition to HE and FE in a way that they may do otherwise, and as a result we felt we needed to move more rapidly into piloting an approach this year that takes account of these circumstances and enables us to focus effort where it is needed most.

We are excited that Glyndwr University agreed to be a flagship university and work with us, to test and evaluate our concept which can then be scaled up as relevant, with the aim of an All Wales approach but implemented in line with local needs and priorities.

# Wales Glyndwr University Ministerial Visit

**On the 23rd March 2021, we were delighted to be invited to join Wales Glyndwr University (WGU) in a virtual visit from Kirsty Williams MS.**

The purpose of the visit was for WGU to be able to share their co-created Civic Mission reflecting with partners and students the impact and future sustainability of this work. The Trauma and ACE informed (TrACE) University project that we have embarked upon with WGU was spotlighted as a core work programme at the heart of the Civic Mission.

We shared our journey so far with the MS and our ambitions beyond the walls of the University to co-create trauma-informed communities which celebrate strengths and resilience and where every member thrives. Our own Vicky Jones joined WGU colleagues including Claire Taylor, Vice Chancellor and Nina Ruddle, Head of Civic Engagement to bring to life the work highlighting the importance of trauma-informed practice on an organisational level and the importance of placing staff and students wellbeing front and centre of policy and practice.

The discussion also focused on the 2025 movement and was joined by Clare Budden, 2025 Chair and CEO of Clwyd Alyn Housing Association to present how we are working across organisational boundaries, using the University as a bridge, to tackle inequalities across North Wales and ensure that each and every member of society can reach their full potential.

Students are key to sharing their experiences and presented on the Kindness Champions programme that is being set up alongside an animation created in collaboration with students to support a better understanding of what it is to be trauma-informed and which will define our approach.

There will be further updates to come on the work to support WGU become the Anchor institution, Lighthouse University and beacon of hope!



# Events/Webinars



## Webinar: Trauma-Informed Approaches in Wales: Evidence into Practice

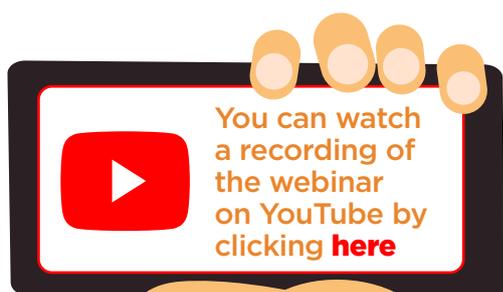
In October 2020 we hosted a joint webinar on trauma-informed care in Wales, in partnership with the Wales Violence Prevention Unit, the Early Action Together Programme and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Investment in Health and Wellbeing in Public Health Wales.

The webinar explored the development of the evidence base for trauma-informed practice in Wales, and the translation of this evidence into practice as we work to break the intergenerational cycle of trauma and violence.

The webinar examined the breadth of research that has been undertaken in Wales on the prevalence and impact of ACEs, findings of the Home Office funded police and partners Early Action Together Programme and the work of the Welsh Government funded ACE Support Hub to implement systems change to make public services, the community and society in Wales ACE aware and trauma-informed in practice.

We have brilliant examples of co-produced transformation in housing, education, youth work, sport and a ground breaking public awareness campaign #TimeToBeKind which we wanted to share.

The webinar interested over 120 professionals working in Violence Reduction Units, policing, health, social care and those in public service, voluntary and community sectors with an interest in developing systems change to prevent trauma and organisations that are informed, compassionate and responsive to break the cycle of violence, abuse and the impact of wider determinants of health.



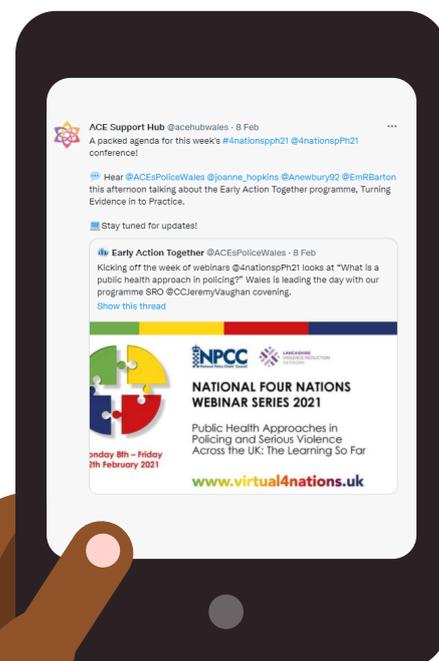
## National Four Nations Webinar Series 2021: Public Health Approaches in Policing and Serious Violence Across the UK: The Learning So Far

In February 2021 we were involved in the National Four Nations Webinar Series. Jo Hopkins, Director, and Vicky Jones, North Wales Lead, hosted a session on “A trauma-informed Nation”.

Jo also hosted a session on “Turning Evidence into Practice” with the Early Action Together Programme in Wales accompanied by Emma Barton and Annemarie Newbury from the Wales Violence Prevention Unit.

These sessions formed part of series of webinars which had a strong focus on learning from practice that is currently being tried, tested and delivered across the four nations.

The materials were structured to benefit a variety of multi-agency sectors. Including law enforcement and public health practitioners, policymakers and researchers from public health teams, response policing professionals and leaders, Violence Reduction Units, multi-agency system leaders, future /horizon scanners and early intervention/prevention specialists.



# LEPH international conference

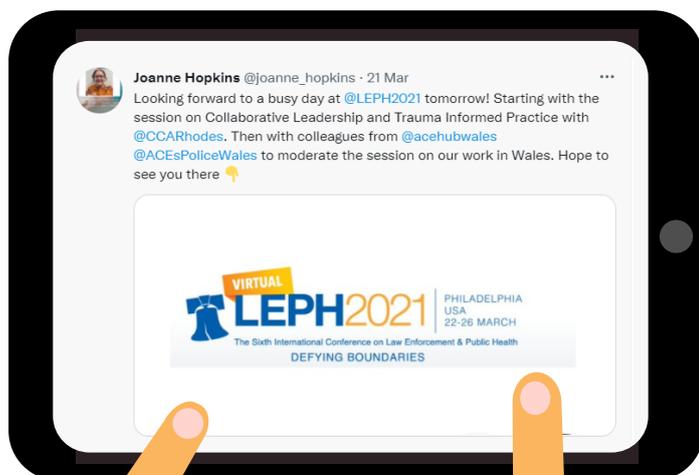
**The Wales Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) and ACE Support Hub have been working together to support partners in embedding trauma-informed approaches in the work they deliver to support people and communities across Wales.**

On the 22nd March 2021, Jo Hopkins and Vicky Jones hosted a session on Responding to and Preventing Adversity and Trauma in Wales: Evidence into Practice at the Law Enforcement and Public Health (LEPH) conference.

The session explored the development of the evidence base for trauma-informed practice in Wales, and the translation of this evidence into practice as we work to break the intergenerational cycle of trauma and violence.

Jo and Vicky also examined the breadth of research that has been undertaken in Wales on the prevalence and impact of ACEs, findings of the Home Office funded Early Action Together Programme, and the work of the ACE Support Hub funded by Welsh government to implement systems change to make public services, the community and society in Wales ACE aware and trauma-informed in practice.

The presentation aimed to be of interest to professionals working in policing, health and social care, and those in public service, voluntary and community sectors, and with an interest in developing systems change to prevent trauma and organisations that are informed, compassionate and responsive to break the cycle of violence, abuse and the impact of the wider determinants of health.





# Sport

## Building resilience and mental wellbeing in individuals and communities

The ACE Support Hub have been working with key partners across the sports sector in Wales to develop a collaborative, and co-produced set of resources that build resilience and mental wellbeing through participation in sport.



“It’s more than just sport”

A cross-sector task and finish group was established to develop a training package that would:

- Raise awareness of ACEs
- Demonstrate the power of sport as a protective factor to prevent, mitigate and tackle ACEs
- Illustrate how coaches can be a trusted adult and create a safe space
- Illustrate how trauma can impact on the wellbeing of coaches and what are the support needs of coaches.

A critical friends training day was held on 14th July 2020 with colleagues from Gwent Community Psychology Service, Newport Live and The Alliance of Sport and Criminal Justice.

We have worked alongside Sports Wales, National Governing Bodies, the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) and the Alliance of Sport and Criminal Justice and developing systems for embedding the training within existing structures and training frameworks.

In addition to the Task & Finish Group, we also worked in partnership with the Public Health Wales Research and Evaluation team to carry out an evaluation of two ACE-awareness workshops to inform the response to ACE prevention and mitigation in the sports sector.

The two workshops were arranged to deliver a one day interactive training session. The training workshops lasted for the day and included a mix of slide presentations, group work and discussions.

This was a non-experimental mixed-methods evaluation using post-training questionnaires and qualitative interviews to follow up with participants. The evaluation aimed to assess how ACE-awareness training had resonated with staff working in the sports sector, the potential to develop the training further in the industry and what (if any) changes had occurred following the training. During the day, participants were asked to fill out a generic training evaluation form at the end of the workshop.

Our evaluation explored the ACE-awareness content and delivery, and the usefulness of specific educational elements to support an ACE-informed approaches in sports settings.

The findings presented in this report offered sector insight to support the future development of ACE-informed approaches that can be sustainably embedded within sport infrastructure.

Based upon the findings of the evaluation and work with the Task & Finish Group, **'It's More Than Just Sport'** training was developed.

**'It's More Than Just Sport'** has now been delivered to Relationship Managers within sports organisations across Wales.

## Sports evaluation report findings:



**57%**

reported having learnt lots of new content from the workshop



**52%**

reported a slight increase in their confidence to implement ACE informed practice within their organisation



**48%**

reported a significant increase in their confidence to implement ACE-informed practice within their organisation



# Communities

## Trauma and ACE Informed Communities in Wales -2025

**The ACE Support Hub has already entered into a collaboration with Wrexham Glyndwr University (WGU) who have agreed to be the first pilot in the UK to become a Trauma and ACE (TrACE) Informed University.**

This project is a key part of the new co-created civic mission for WGU, and the soon to be established North Wales Public Service Lab and we aim to use this as an enabler for the work.

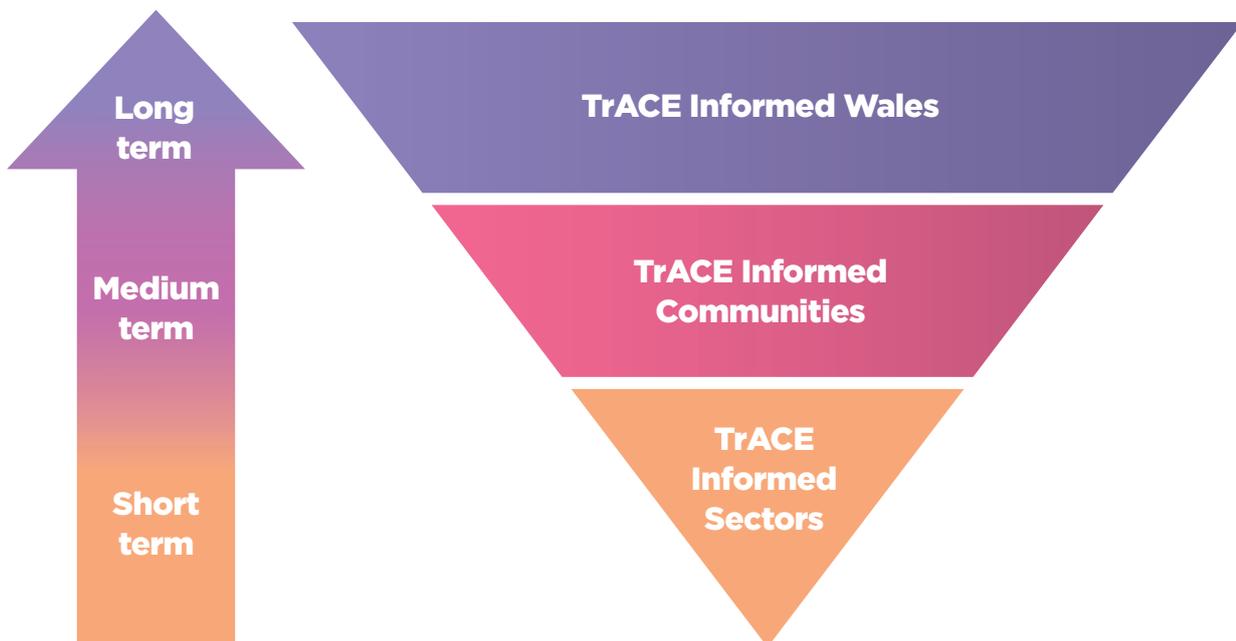
WGU is also involved with the North Wales 2025 Movement which is a movement for change with a collective vision to tackle avoidable health and housing inequalities by 2025 in North Wales.

The approach to building it is founded in systems leadership and social movements resulting in transformational change in the way we work, think and deliver across a region as a collective. It brings together senior leaders and practitioners across a range of organisations covering social housing, local authorities, police and fire services, Public Health Wales, the regional health board and a range of other partners. The Hub hopes to explore how we can expand the project to move towards trauma- and ACE-informed communities.

2025 agreed in September 2020 that TrACE informed Communities would form part of their ambitious work plan, within their Just Do Team structure and this will primarily, alongside the University work, be used as the vehicle to realise the vision. Our intention is to realise a TrACE informed community model.

### TrACE Communities Ambition

#### Ambition - A Trauma and ACE (TrACE) Informed Society



# In embarking on the journey to realising this we will firstly need to explore a number of considerations:



## Definitions and Language

If we are going to engage with the communities we belong to and serve we need to convey a meaningful concept and it's important to address an ongoing debate about the language that we use and how widely understood this is.

The language will need work to support wider communities to identify with it and we will need to seek ways to make it more accessible, to give people greater ownership and convey its absolute simplicity. Largely it's about kindness and compassion, something we can all do and something we cannot underestimate the power of. We will need to work with communities to co-create widely understood terms so that they are able to take ownership.



## Communication and Engagement

This means that we will need a clear platform for Communication and Engagement so it make sense for us to build on our "Time to be Kind" Campaign. Largely this was about key messaging for the public around everyone having the ability to make a change to people's lives through kindness and compassion. It also provides opportunities for us to link into and build upon kinder area work.



## Building on Community Assets

We don't want this to be done in isolation or as a bolt on, it's about building into what already exists, we need to recognise Community Assets and work with them. We also need a clear Community Definition - this is a about grass roots action with and through our peers recognising that we all belong to a community and we can all practice a TrACE approach where we live, work and socialise! Examining place based approaches could support the work effectively.



## Resilience Front and Centre

Given the evidence base on moderating factors, the approach we take has to have resilience front and centre and ensuring access to the protective factors that support mitigation of ACEs and trauma.



## Post-COVID Recovery planning

We need to place this at the heart of community, resilience building and post-COVID recovery planning, it is central to rebuilding the nation and needs to be placed with good governance and connections with existing regional planning mechanisms and boards. The proposal and projects will allow us to connect and maximise impact of all our work within this area from a practical level working with communities through to generating evidence and models that can influence wider policies and approaches in Wales and internationally. This will involve bringing together all of the work that's has taken place to date in each sector and joining it up to effectively to upscale our work within communities in which we live and work to support them to thrive.

**These are all fundamental principles that will critically need to shape our planning.**

# Communities

## Compassionate classrooms, compassionate communities

**We have been eager to explore what could make a difference for people in communities. Specifically, we wanted to test “how compassion and kindness are the antidote for ACEs”, ensuring that young people in particular could benefit from a community-led approach.**

This year Laura Tranter, Communities Lead for the ACE Support Hub, carried out a pilot intervention focused on working with Cyfarthfa High School in Merthyr Tydfil to explore ways of creating compassionate and kinder communities through work with pupils, teachers and the wider community.

The project model was designed to offer a dynamic process that would allow delivery to be flexible and responsive to the needs and direction set by pupils and staff. Through delivering practical creative arts sessions to pupils, and offering a wider package of support, the project team hoped that the experience would promote improved health, wellbeing and learning in the school for pupils, staff and the community. The pilot also tested a model that could then potentially be replicated in other schools across Wales.

This pilot was carried out in partnership with Jain Boon, Theatre Director & Creative Practitioner and Siobhan Parry, Project Manager at Platform.

### The project aspired to improve the mental health of all three of these groups by:

- Developing an understanding of ACEs and their prevalence;
- Understanding the impact of adversity and trauma on wellbeing, learning and behaviour;
- Developing compassion, empathy and tolerance;
- Understanding that resilience is achieved through relationships to others; and
- Developing wellbeing strategies to support co-regulation and the removal of stigma.



During Phase 1 of the project enquiry sessions were held separately with students, teachers, parents and community members. During this phase ideas were developed and discussion around what type of resources and/or products would be produced as a legacy that can be shared with other schools.

During phase 2, interventions and activities agreed upon in phase 1 were delivered to 2 groups of drama students in Years 10 & 11 and 1 non-drama group (teachers, staff and community). Jain Boon used Life Story Theatre, Forum Theatre & Drama to focus on fostering kindness, empathy and understanding around wellbeing issues and highlighting everyday strategies for improved wellbeing and self-care.

# An independent evaluation of the project was completed by BlwBo Ltd which showed:



## Increasing ACE Awareness:

The project clearly increased awareness of ACEs at the school and across the teaching team. Having some clear champions for this work within the school was seen to have been key to this push. Work with parents and other stakeholders in the community could have been incredibly beneficial in terms of helping people understand ACEs and the impact that trauma has on behaviours, the wellbeing of children, and their ability to learn and thrive.

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## Improving people's skills and giving them the tools to deal with those issues and self-regulate:

The pupils engaged and responded positively, showing a willingness to consider the role of compassion and kindness in school, and an empathy towards what other people might be going through. The younger age group (Year 7) were reportedly very receptive to the themes explored, and older pupils (Year 9) also responded positively, in part because many were already experiencing challenges based on their own experiences.

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## Developing a greater appreciation of what kindness and compassion looks like within a school and community setting:

The work with pupils showed a natural inclination towards empathy and a willingness to consider how kindness could be used as a tool to address issues within the school. Pupils also showed great compassion in considering how adverse experiences and problems might affect behaviours at school. This work also has great potential for strengthening the dynamic between pupils and teachers - allowing pupils to appreciate how experiences may impact on teacher's behaviour, health and wellbeing, and improving the understanding of teachers of how problems and challenges shape behaviour and the ability of children to learn.

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## Conclusions/future considerations:

The model and general approach was seen to be valid and effective.

The pilot demonstrated the importance of the 'buy in' from the school, and the need for dedicated champions within the school. As such, any future application of the Compassionate Classrooms model should seek to secure strategic leadership buy in from the outset, and look to follow a Lead Creative Schools approach, where the schools contribute a level of dedicated staff resource to spend time on planning and delivery with project team.

# Communities

PLATFFORM

## Lessons from Lockdown

**Over the past year we have worked with PLATFFORM to explore ways to mobilise conversations with our colleagues from across sectors to understand better impact of COVID-19 and what the future may be look like and how we adapt.**

This aimed to support our recovery plan to build the necessary resilience for our new future. This was about a strengths approach to understand what we have built during this time and what we want to retain.

We worked with PLATFFORM on a lessons from lockdown approach - life has changed, work has changed and we have changed but before the new normal feels normal we want learn and reflect from one another. We want to explore the concept of togetherness whilst being kept apart, how have things changed, has it made us stronger? How do you want this to influence and shape our collective future?

Lessons from Lockdown was an opportunity to think about what's been brilliant and what's been difficult, how barriers have been overcome and what new ones have emerged. We wanted to record, share, learn from and build upon the new ways of thinking and working that we've all had to develop.

**The Lessons from Lockdown sessions are all available to watch on our YouTube channel [HERE](#).**



# Resilience Screening

**On the 8th July 2020, the ACE Support Hub in partnership with Dartmouth Films, held a free Welsh virtual screening of the RESILIENCE: The Biology of Stress & The Science of Hope film.**

The RESILIENCE film is a one-hour documentary that delves into the science of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the birth of a new movement to treat and prevent Toxic Stress. This is now understood to be one of the leading causes of everything from health harming behaviours e.g. substance misuse, offending behaviour, to mental health and wellbeing issues including anxiety and depressions through to physical illness including heart disease, cancer and even premature death.

Extremely stressful experiences in childhood can alter brain development and have lifelong effects on children, impacting on their health and behaviour through the life-course. Whilst the broader impacts of poverty worsen the risk, no segment of society is immune.

RESILIENCE, however, chronicles the dawn of a movement that is determined to fight back- ACE's are not and should not be our destiny. Trailblazers in Paediatrics, Education, and Social welfare are using cutting-edge science and field-tested therapies to prevent and protect children from the effects of toxic stress—and the dark legacy of a childhood that no child would choose.

The virtual screening received extensive attention with in excess of 400 people signing up!

Following the film, we hosted a Question and Answer Panel with some passionate and high profile speakers. This ensured really informative discussions and gave some context to what is being done across Wales in response to adversity and trauma.

## **Panellists included:**

- **Joanne Hopkins, Director of the ACE Support Hub**
- **Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner**
- **Lyndsey Watkins, Head teacher at Millbrook Primary School Newport**
- **Meinir Williams Jones, Barnardo's (North Wales)**
- **Emma Wools, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner South Wales Police**

The Question and Answer session provoked some inspiring discussions with a broad range of issues raised in relation to armed forces, asylum seeker & refugees, education, to what's happening in specific geographic areas across Wales.

**“The key messages are, if you are interested in people and actually improving the lives of people, one of the best interventions we could make is a focus on ACEs. If you're a doctor and you want to improve people's health then ACEs is a significant part of that answer.**

**If you're a police officer and you want to reduce your demand and stop people coming into the criminal justice system, tackling ACEs is your answer.**

**If you are a social worker and you don't want to see the next generation or a particular family you have been working with on your books yet again, then tackling ACEs is the answer.**

**If you're a teacher and you want to spend more time teaching your children rather than having to focus on behavioural issues and those barriers to learning, then understanding and acting on ACE's is part of the answer.**

**If you're a finance director and you are interested in how we're going to meet demand for public services and how we're going to save money, then tackling ACEs is your answer.**

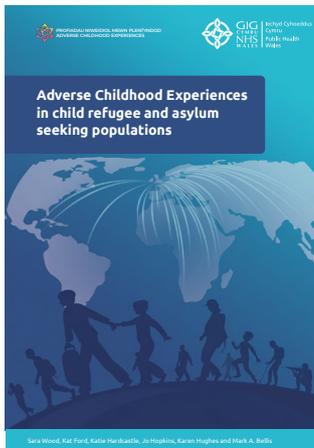
**And if you're interested in being a good ancestor, then the whole system in Wales tackling ACEs is part of that answer too.”**

***Sophie Howe***

# Trauma-Informed Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

## ACEs in Child Refugee and Asylum Seeking Populations

In April 2020, we launched our new report with Public Health Wales which shows the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on asylum seeking and refugee children.



The asylum seeking and refugee child population have very complex adversities, starting out in their country of origin and continuing across the migration journey.

ACEs are world-wide phenomena, with around one billion children (aged 2-17) experiencing violence in the past year in communities across the

globe. However, the report highlighted that child asylum seekers and refugees can be exposed to wider forms of ACEs. These can include: witnessing violence; destruction of homes; severe deprivation of basic necessities; and abuse, neglect or violence from authorities, smugglers, traffickers or within immigration systems or refugee camps.

The report also demonstrated there are other factors on arrival in host countries that increase the risk of experiencing harm from ACEs, such as being unaccompanied [by a trusted adult], perceived discrimination, multiple re-locations within the system, language difficulties and lack of social support. Furthermore, parental stress and trauma from migration can also increase the risk of ACEs occurring within the family during and after migration.

Children who experience ACEs are more likely to adopt health-harming and anti-social behaviours as adults, are at much greater risk of poor health throughout life, and may have greater needs for support from healthcare and other public services.

The report showed that amongst refugee and asylum seeking children specifically, experience of ACEs can increase the risk of mental and physical health problems, affect academic achievement and increase the risk of behavioural problems.

Refugee and asylum seeking communities are also very resilient and according to the report, a good number of refugee children function well, despite their negative experiences. This can be down to a number of factors such as strong early attachment and functioning families as well as having access to wider-relationships and community resources.

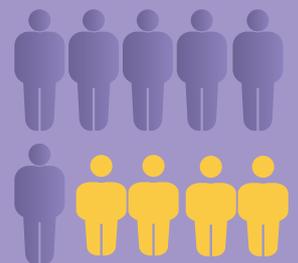
This highlighted that even in the face of prolonged or severe adversity, with enough of the right support and resilience resources, a person can have positive life outcomes; an important message for all families during the challenging times created by COVID-19.

## Applications for asylum in the UK



**29,380**  
people (excluding dependents) applied for asylum in the UK in 2018.

**40%**  
of people granted asylum, humanitarian protection or alternative forms of leave and resettlement in 2018/19 were  
**children**



# Applications for asylum in Wales

**2,842**

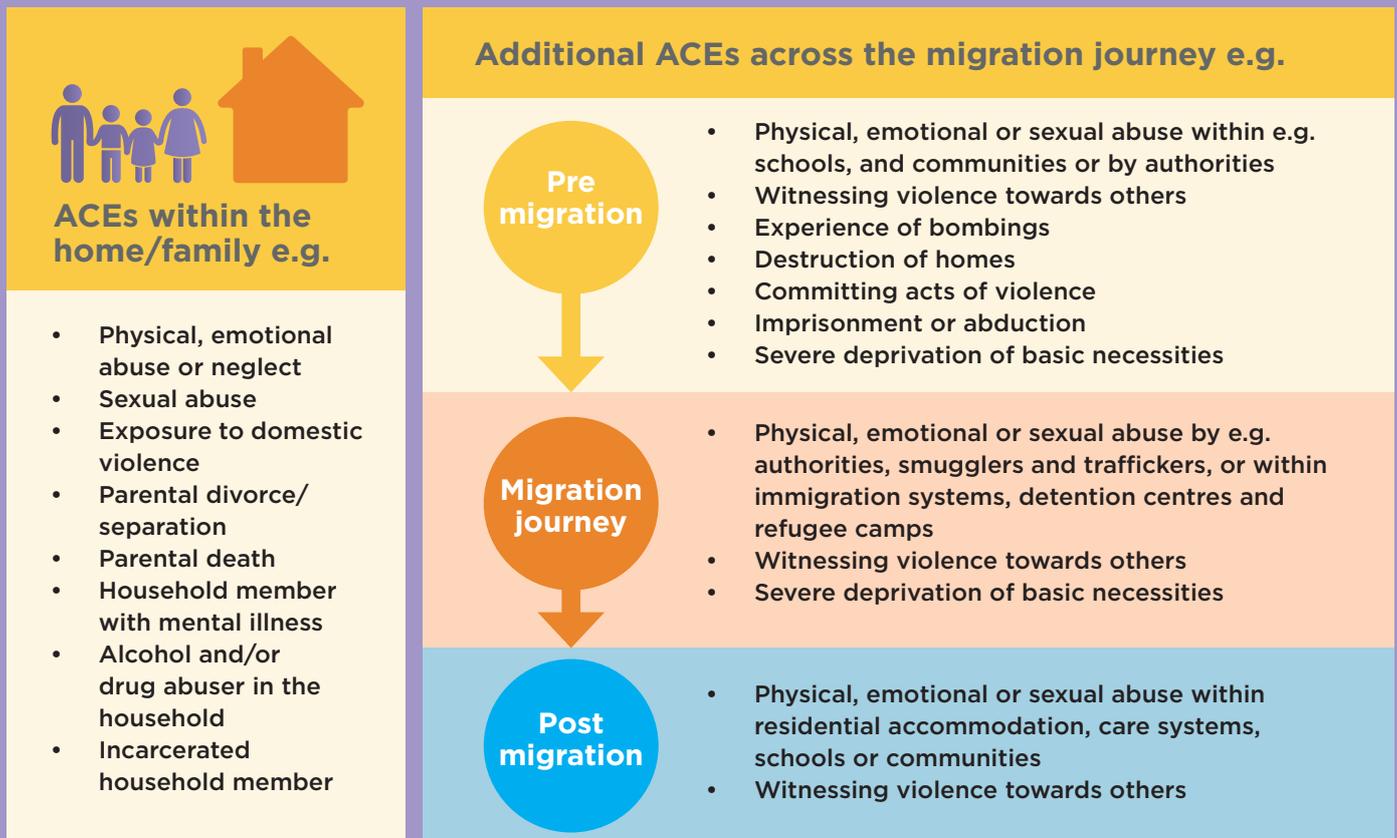
destitute asylum seekers and their dependents were being supported under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 at the end of March 2019



**394**

people were resettled via the Vulnerable Persons'/Children's resettlement schemes in 2018/19

## Children seeking sanctuary may have experienced multiple ACEs across the migration journey



Parental stress and trauma from migration can increase the risk of ACEs occurring within the family during and after migration

## Experience of ACEs among refugee and asylum seeking children can increase the risk of:



Mental health problems such as PTSD, depression and anxiety



Physical health problems including injury and infection



Up to a third of young refugees settling in European countries are thought to be affected by a mental health disorder



Behavioural problems



And can affect academic achievement

# Trauma-Informed Support for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

## Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the Child Refugees of the 1930s in the UK: History Informing the Future

**On the 18th June 2020 we launched a report which examined past lessons of Kindertransport for young refugees today.**

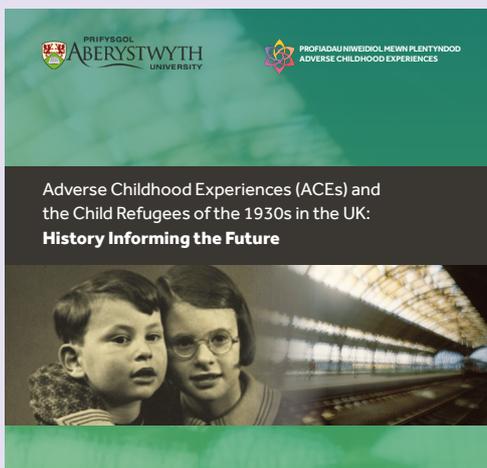
The experiences of children who fled from Nazi Germany to Britain in the late 1930s could help young refugees today.

A new report by researchers at Aberystwyth University examined how these children coped with separation from their family and how they adjusted to life in Britain.

Using oral testimony, interview transcripts and other historic sources, Dr Andrea Hammel and her team studied the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on the 10,000 mainly Jewish children who escaped as part of the UK's Kindertransport rescue mission in the 1930s.

Their findings will help inform and develop strategies for providing social and psychological support to young refugees in Wales today.

**“When i started school that became problematic because I was the only foreign child in the class. There was this sort of xenophobic attitude by the staff, not just children. I mean obviously when the war started they’d say ‘Jawohl, Heil Hitler!’ and stuff like that to you because they didn’t know the difference and neither did I. (...) But I also found that the girls were quite nasty to me on occasion. (...) I was being excluded all the time.”**



# Overview of training developed & delivered to...

Over 2020-2021 we have delivered ACE Awareness & ACE Informed Practice training to Clearsprings staff across Cardiff, Swindon and Rayleigh.

Attendee's job roles across the organisation were vast ranging e.g. support drivers, maintenance operatives, housing officers, HR & Training and safeguarding managers.

We also supported delivery of an Introduction to ACEs training with Home Office staff.

The Introduction to ACEs and Asylum Seeking and Refugee Populations Training package can be found on our YouTube Channel

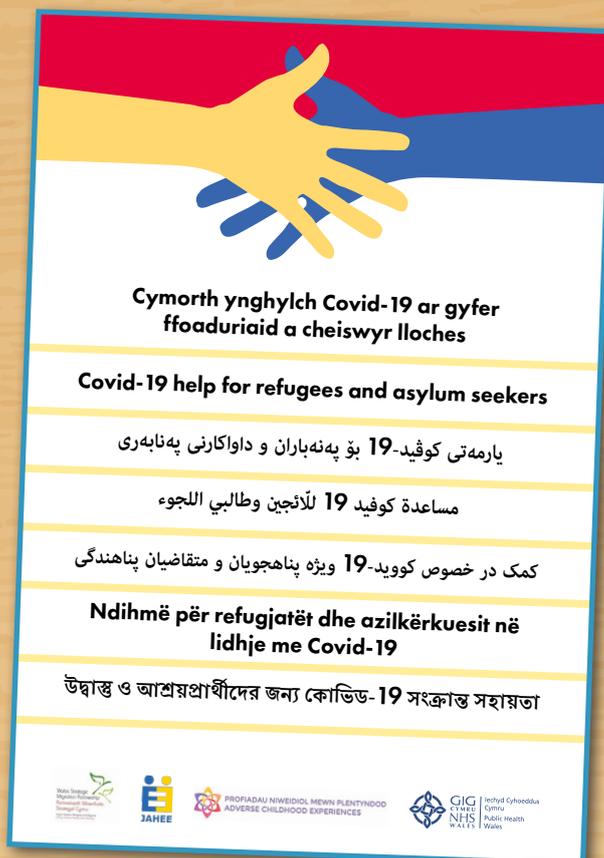
[HERE.](#)



## Multilingual Leaflet

We worked with the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership, JAHEE and PHW to produce a multi-lingual leaflet with COVID-19 help and support for asylum seekers and refugees.

This can be found [here.](#)



# Rapid Review - Unchartered Territory Report

**The COVID-19 pandemic, and the experience of government restrictions, has shone a light on existing inequalities in Welsh society.**

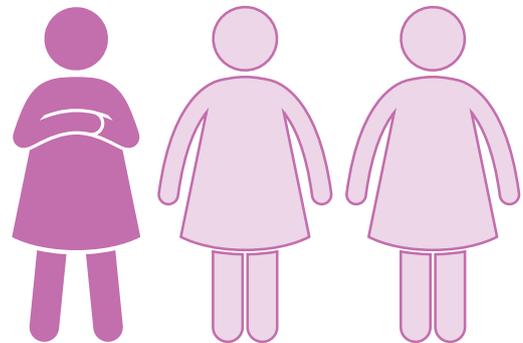
As attention focussed on the expected rise in calls to domestic abuse helplines, the ACE Support Hub wanted to ensure that violence against migrant, refugee or asylum seekers was also a priority.

In 2013, the first 'Uncharted Territory' report was published by the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership (WSMP). That report set out a range of findings and recommendations for Home Office, Welsh Government and partners across Wales in regards to the support needed by migrant, refugee and asylum seeking women and girls in Wales.

The report influenced actions set out within the Welsh Government's Nation of Sanctuary Plan, and Violence Against Women and Girls, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Strategy. But since the publication there has been no systematic review of progress.

The aim of this research was to identify what has changed since 2013, including the introduction of legislation by both UK and Welsh Governments, and developments in policy and practice. The report also looks at the experience of migrant, refugee and asylum seeking women in accessing services during the pandemic, and draws together a set of findings that we hope will inform the refresh of the VAWDASV Strategy in Wales, with a renewed focus on the experience of women and girls from our diverse communities.

This review of the recommendations in 2021 will provide an update on the recommendations of the original report; but



**Yet despite all these efforts, gender-based violence (GBV) or VAWG still affects 1 in 3 women in their lifetime.**

also reflect on the progress made in the light of the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are grateful to Amira Assami, who led this work during the 2020 Winter restrictions, and hope the report will enable further discussion on some of the key outstanding policy areas that have not progressed since 2013.

These are: the ongoing challenges of those who have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF); information and data sharing; cross government and intergovernmental join up and making better use of existing legislation.



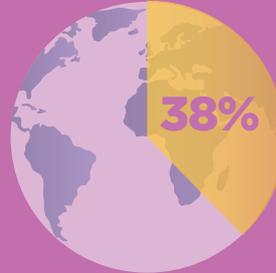
**35% of women worldwide** have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.



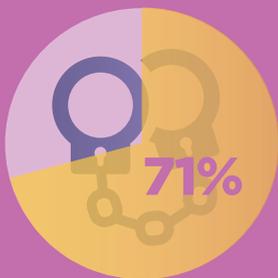
**200 million women** have experienced female genital mutilation/cutting.



**Globally, 7% of women have been sexually assaulted** by someone other than a partner.



**Globally, 38% of murders of women** are committed by an intimate partner.



**Furthermore, it is estimated that 40.3 million people are enslaved** of which **71% are women.**

## Findings

- 1. No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).** The original recommendations of the 2013 report identified recommendations for both the UK Government and Welsh Government on NRPF, and yet this still seems to be falling through the gap of devolved/non-devolved responsibility.
- 2. Data.** There needs to be more work to develop intelligence, surveillance and data sharing systems that can identify and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data to ensure that the experiences of diverse and marginalised communities are not excluded.
- 3. Inclusion of all agencies.** More work is needed to understand what progress has been made in policing in Wales and social services in particular as this evaluation was unable to report on these areas.
- 4. Invisibility of migrant women and girls including those from the Gypsy Roma Traveller community, migrant and seasonal workers, students and others on temporary visas.** This review found little evidence of work that has addressed the particular experience of these groups directly in relation to VAWDASV.
- 5. Lack of join up between the Nation of Sanctuary Plan commitments on VAWDASV and VAWDASV policy in Welsh Government.** There is also a disconnect with the wider equalities work and less visibility on the experience of older, LGBTI, or disabled women and girls, perpetrators, and the experience of hate crime and race related sexual harassment.
- 6. Lack of awareness of Social Services duties under Welsh legislation.** This review finds that there is more work to be done to ensure that there is better understanding of the duties under the Act, which are not mentioned in the updated from Welsh Government in relation to social services and local authorities.
- 7. Lack of joint governance around VAWDASV, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Migrant, refugees and asylum seekers.** Although Home Office attend the Ministerial Taskforce on Refugees and Asylum Seekers, there is no forum that brings together officials of both governments on this specific issue.

# Substance Misuse

**The ACE Support Hub were commissioned by Welsh Government to develop a substance misuse sector specific training package.**

The aim was for the ACE Support Hub to co-produce with the sector a trauma responsive training package for substance misuse staff (to include frontline practitioners, leaders and commissioners).

We understand that working in the substance misuse field means that staff are often working with families and individuals who have experienced both adversity and trauma which makes it a key area for further development of knowledge and skills.

Working alongside area planning board representatives, Welsh Government and substance misuse service providers, we established a task & finish group, conducting a scoping exercise to establish the training needs of the sector and developed the substance misuse training package.

**“Don’t ask the question ‘why the addiction?’, but ‘why the pain?’”**

Dr. Gabor Mate

## The package includes:

- **The main substance misuse specific ACE Awareness presentation**
- **Trauma- & ACE-Informed presentation**
- **Hidden Harm presentation**
- **Trainers pack**
- **Evaluation form**
- **Certificate**

At the beginning of 2021 the package was delivered to Training and Workforce Development Leads within the substance misuse sector across Wales. Train the Trainer Training was also delivered before the end of March 2021.

# ACE Awareness and Trauma-Informed Practice for Careers Wales

**Over 2020/21, the ACE Support Hub along with The Wallich were commissioned by Welsh Government to develop a bespoke training package for Careers Wales.**

The BOSS project delivered by The Wallich aims to re-integrate ex-offenders into their communities.

As set out in Prosperity for All, the Welsh government are committed to “create ‘ACE aware’ public services which take a more preventative approach to avoid ACEs and improve the resilience of children and young people”.

The training will focus on ACE awareness and the Public Health Wales ACEs research on the prison population, relationships and trauma-informed practice. The training has been developed to

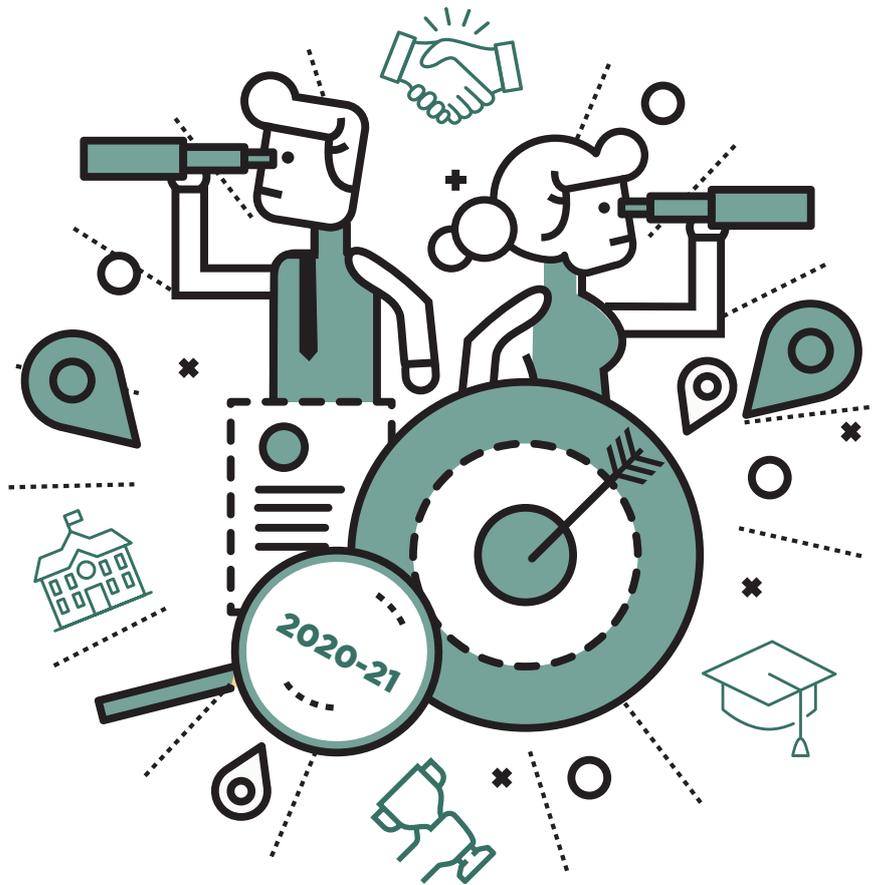
provide Careers Wales with the knowledge, information and skills base to pursue this aim.

In July 2020, Laura Tranter from the ACE Support Hub and David Bennett from The Wallich have delivered the training to senior managers at Careers Wales. The train the trainer model has now been adopted to deliver the training to all Working Wales Advisors across Wales.



# Looking to the future 2021-22

**The Review of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Policy: Report will shape the way in which the ACE Support Hub continue to work over 2021-2022.**



“We will turn our attention to the findings of the review and the principles set out, and will need to focus on new strategic areas of work.

With the completion of our delivery plan for this year, many of the team have now moved on so I am sure you will all join me in thanking them for everything that has been achieved in the last few years.

We will now focus on the policy direction of the Senedd elections, but we do already have a commitment to continuing our work on Further Education, to developing trauma-informed communities and to continuing to drive forward prevention and early intervention through systems transformation.

We look forward to continuing on this journey.”



**Joanne Hopkins**  
Programme Director for ACEs, Criminal Justice  
and Violence Prevention

## ACE Support Hub: Get in touch



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/acehubwales/



@acehubwales