

The US economic burden of child maltreatment, child sexual abuse and their ramifications is staggering.

- Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, are events that occur in childhood (0-17 years) which can include experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect ([CDC, 2019](#)).
  - The estimated annual U.S. population economic burden of child maltreatment alone, which is a major contributor to ACEs, was \$428 billion ([Peterson et al., 2018](#)).
  - In 2017, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) among Tennessee adults led to an estimated \$5.2 billion in direct medical costs and loss of productivity from missed work ([Sycamore Institute, 2019](#)). The report also stated that over half of the adults reported at least one ACE between 2014 and 2017. Roughly 17% experienced four or more ACEs.
  - The National Institute of Justice reports that abuse or neglect in childhood (ACEs) raised the chance of juvenile arrest by 59%. The likelihood of criminal behavior as an adult increased by 28%, and violent crime 30% (CDC, 2019). In 2017, the economic cost to house one inmate in California was over \$81,000 a year, more than a year's tuition at Harvard. Repetitive traumatic exposure as a child increases the likelihood of poor health outcomes, encounters with the criminal justice system, and the potential to become a victim of adult sexual assault, sex trafficking, or struggle with opioid addiction. All economic and public health disasters combine into a perfect storm for economic collapse.
- An article published in Penn Today (2019) highlighted that researchers discovered that adverse outcomes resulting from a lack of treatment for children exposed to crime cost society more than \$458 billion each year ([Berger, 2019](#)).
- Letourneau et al (2018) conducted a study to estimate the U.S. economic impact of child sexual abuse (CSA). Their findings showed the total lifetime economic burden of child sexual abuse was estimated to be at least \$9.3 billion ([CDC, 2021](#); [Letourneau, 2018](#)).
  - The lifetime cost for victims of fatal CSA victims is approximately \$1.2 million.
  - The average lifetime cost for victims of nonfatal CSA is \$282,734 per female victim, and \$74,691 per male victim ([CDC, 2018](#)).
  - The article suggested that prevention programming is still a need that is not being addressed and could prove cost-effective ([Letourneau, 2018](#)).
  - The EARN IT Act would go a long way in the prevention of controversial child sexual abuse material (CSAM) from causing irrefutable harm to child survivors by continual revictimization —furthermore, impacting the economy by decreasing healthcare costs, recidivism, and associated government subsidies.