



[LINK TO PHOTOS](#)

[LINK TO B-ROLL](#)

[LINK TO TRAUMA INFORMED CARE FACT SHEET](#)

[LINK TO GATEWAYS FACT SHEET](#)

MEDIA CONTACT

Sydney Kovach

sydney@elevatepublicaffairs.com

480.392.7978

UCLA and Gateways Study Finds 94% of Mental Health Patients Experienced at Least One ACE, Before Adulthood

New Study Outlines the Urgent Need to Incorporate Trauma Informed Care in Mental Health Care

On Thursday, September 5, Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers unveiled its newly published study, in collaboration with UCLA, "[Applying Adverse Childhood Experience \(ACE\) Screening in Adolescent Inpatient Mental Health](#)." This event is a significant milestone in understanding and implementing trauma-informed approaches in mental health treatment.

As California faces a severe mental health crisis, Gateways is serving the most vulnerable communities, including individuals experiencing homelessness. To best understand these individuals and create the treatment that will support them in the most meaningful way, it is crucial to understand their trauma history. Trauma has a severe, lasting impact on an individual's physical and mental health, increasing an individual's likeliness to have a stroke, cancer, or heart disease. Knowing a person's past traumas allows their provider to contextualize behaviors and assess their overall health needs.

"By looking at care through the lens of trauma, we get to the deeper root of our client's needs. Our study informs how trauma-informed care and ACE screenings can be implemented at mental health care centers across Southern California, using insights from the inpatient adolescent setting at Gateways," said Meredith Mead, Senior Director of Clinical Services at Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers. "We've seen how these services can best serve Gateways' client population, and considering the prevalence of trauma throughout our communities, we know that this research has the capacity to enhance mental health care both at Gateways and beyond."

This study outlines the crucial role of Adverse Childhood Experience Screenings (ACES) and trauma-informed care in providing comprehensive care services. By assessing Gateways' client population, the study's authors found that 94% of the sample had experienced at least one ACE, and 56% reached the threshold for high risk of toxic stress requiring intervention. Having this research offers a deeper understanding of client needs and the innovative treatment methods needed in comprehensive care.

"UCLA is grateful to partner with Gateways on this research, so that we can inform the successful implementation of trauma-informed care at mental health centers throughout Southern California. Our university is committed to expanding community partnerships that enhance the quality of life for every Angeleno," said Dr. Kristen Choi, Associate Professor of the University of California, Los Angeles School of Nursing. "By working with Gateways on this research, we know that these findings will be implemented in the clinical inpatient setting, and will directly support those who need this care the most."

Senator Alex Padilla championed a \$500,000 funding allocation from the \$1.2 trillion FY 2024 Consolidated Appropriations Package to expand Gateways' and UCLA's training initiatives for mental health professionals in Trauma-Informed Care, with a focus on specialized training in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). As a result, more individuals who have experienced trauma will have access to comprehensive and trauma-informed mental health services.

"Barriers to accessing mental health treatment and screenings are still too high for young people in California and throughout the nation," said Senator Padilla. "I'm glad to have local partners like Gateways Hospital and Mental Health Center and UCLA who are working to combat this crisis head-on by providing trauma-informed care to those who need support. I co-founded the bipartisan Senate Mental Health Caucus because I know partnerships like these and additional federal funding are critical to ensure everyone can access high-quality mental health care."

With the support of this funding allocation, Gateways hopes to reach an additional 250 youth within one year. This includes extending ACEs screenings for adolescents, aged 13-17 and transition-age youth, aged 18-26. Resources will be allocated to expand telehealth services, to provide even more screenings throughout our outpatient and inpatient service lines.

"For the past seventy years, Gateways has remained committed to providing the highest standard of innovative care to the individuals who urgently need mental health services, regardless of their ability to pay. We are grateful for the support of Senator Padilla and for the collaboration with UCLA, both of which provide us with the resources to strengthen our services and make them accessible to even more individuals in our communities," said Dr. Phil Wong, Chief Executive Officer of Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers."