Abstract

Adolescent alcohol use is a major public health problem that affects millions of youth in the United States annually. High prevalence rates of youth alcohol use are related to many factors; one direct influence is the effect of adverse childhood experiences and the substantial impact on brain and behavioral development. This study assessed the relationship between the effects of adverse experiences and specific protective factors on the development of alcohol use in middle school students. Utilizing a cross-sectional design with the administration of a self-completed survey, the outcomes show a relationship between higher adverse childhood experience scores and an increased prevalence of 30-day alcohol use. Additionally shown is a decline in use by students who report having a higher incidence of protective factors. This study will be utilized in building community awareness, adaptations to educational processes, creating community wide strategies and innovative public health approaches for prevention by understanding the collective impact that adverse experiences have on a child's health in relation to alcohol use.