

# Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and attitudes towards COVID-19 restrictions and vaccine hesitancy

The Childhood Adversity and Health and Wellbeing During COVID-19 study was undertaken in Wales during national COVID-19 restrictions<sup>a</sup>. The national telephone survey asked adults<sup>b</sup> about exposure to ACEs, COVID-19 infection, trust in NHS COVID-19 information, attitudes towards and compliance with COVID-19 restrictions, and COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy

Across all participants<sup>c</sup>

48% reported at least 1 ACE

10% reported 4+ ACEs



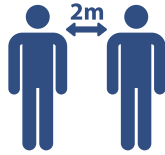
6%

Had **low trust in NHS COVID-19 information**<sup>d</sup>



9%

Felt **unfairly restricted by government**<sup>e</sup>



6%

Thought **social distancing should end**<sup>f</sup>



6%

Thought **face coverings should go**<sup>g</sup>



26%

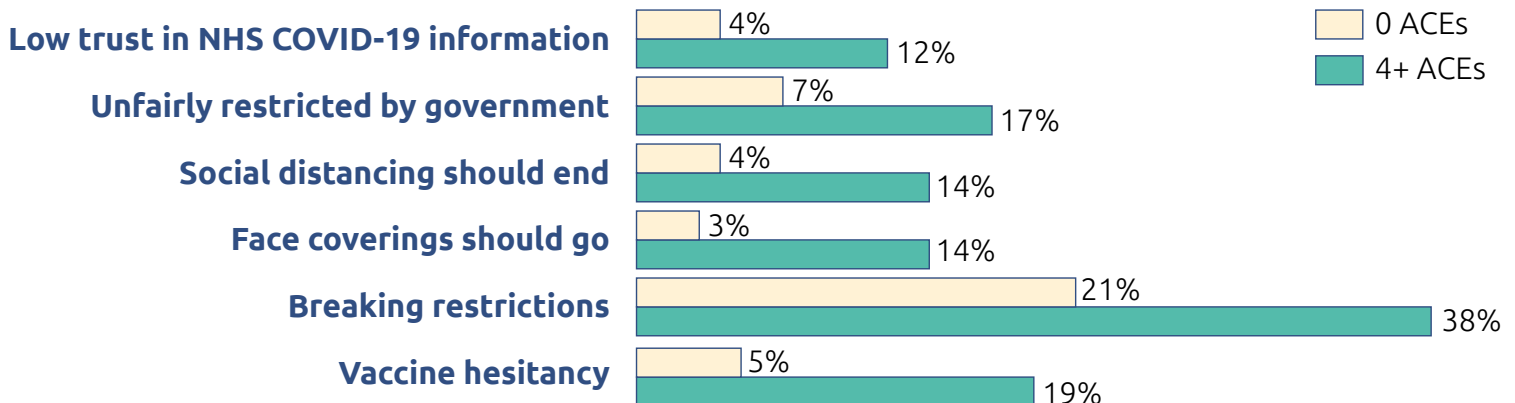
Reported **breaking restrictions**<sup>h</sup>



8%

Reported **vaccine hesitancy**<sup>i</sup>

## Adults with 4+ ACEs were more likely<sup>c</sup> to report low trust in NHS COVID-19 information, aversion to restrictions and vaccine hesitancy



Controlling for other factors<sup>j</sup> those with 4+ ACEs, compared with people with no ACEs, were:

- 2 times more likely to report **feeling unfairly restricted by government**
- 2 times more likely to report **breaking restrictions**
- 3 times more likely to report **low trust in NHS COVID-19 information**
- 3 times more likely to report **vaccine hesitancy**
- 3 times more likely to report **social distancing should end**
- 4 times more likely to report **face coverings should go**

<sup>a</sup>December 2020 - March 2021. <sup>b</sup>Welsh residents (18+ years; N=2,285). <sup>c</sup>Unadjusted sample proportions. <sup>d</sup>Level of trust in NHS COVID-19 information rated <6 (0=not at all, 10=completely). <sup>e</sup>Felt they had been unfairly controlled 'a lot' by the national restrictions imposed by the government. <sup>f</sup>Two metre social distancing should be removed. <sup>g</sup>Face coverings in shops should no longer be a legal requirement. <sup>h</sup>During national restrictions reported they had 'bent or broken the rules occasionally', or 'largely ignored the rules'. <sup>i</sup>Responded 'no' or 'unsure' to wanting a COVID-19 vaccination. <sup>j</sup>Analysis controlled for socio-demographics, COVID-19 infection and having a chronic disease.

We are grateful to everyone who voluntarily gave their time to participate. For full findings please see: [Bellis MA, Hughes K, Ford K et al. Associations between adverse childhood experiences, attitudes towards COVID-19 restrictions and vaccine hesitancy: a cross-sectional study. BMJ Open, 2021.](#)