

Complete Draft: Setting up for Success: Supporting Positive Parenting Interventions for
Caregivers Impacted by Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) in El Salvador

Meghan E. López, MSN, FNP-BC

Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

*“On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized
assistance on this paper” MEL 3/24/19*

Setting up for Success: Supporting Positive Parenting Interventions for Caregivers Impacted by
Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) in El Salvador

Abstract

In El Salvador there is a pervasive transgenerational experience of violence and instability with nearly every person having personal experience with one or multiple traumatic experiences during their lifetime. These experiences are particularly powerful in childhood, with Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) negatively impacting health, social-emotional wellbeing, and relationships throughout the life course. One of the standard approaches for intervention with children at risk for Adverse Childhood Events is through parenting education programs designed to enhance caregiver ability to care for and positively discipline their children. However, for parents that themselves have experiences high levels of ACEs, the barrier of learning how to manage stress and may be as important as learning new parenting skills. Parents (N=30) from four communities with high incidence of violence in El Salvador participated in three intervention days each consisting of three parts (early childhood education, parent wellbeing, and practice with simultaneous coaching) each concentrated around three core themes (communication, family identity, and positive discipline) with one theme developed on each of the three intervention days. Parents were assessed using the Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO) and the Parenting Stress Scale (PSS) to observe the ability of parents to implement positive parenting behaviors and as a self-report of parenting stress, respectively. Affect ($p=0.000$) and Responsiveness ($p= 0.034$) showed statistical significance from pre to post assessment. Parental Stress from pre to post intervention was also found to be statistically significant ($p=0.003$). There was no statistically significant difference in performance across the four communities nor across ACE risk scores. In considering the recommendations from the literature in the context of El Salvador given the enormity of the adverse childhood events suffered by the community, it is imperative that caregivers be cared for in order to support child development and break the transgenerational cycle of adverse childhood experiences.