



OUR IMPACT

2020 - 2021

Resilient Georgia is a statewide coalition of public-private partners building a more resilient, trauma-informed Georgia.

- Preventing ACEs
- Overcoming Adversity
- Promoting Resilience



TWO YEARS OF IMPACT

Dear Resilient Georgia Partners and Stakeholders,

We are pleased to share our 2021 impact report demonstrating our work to build resiliency and work towards the unified vision of a truly integrated behavioral healthcare system for Georgia. Over the last year we have continued to build and strengthen innovative private/public partnerships thereby improving behavioral health in Georgia and making Georgia a trauma-informed state for the sake of our children and families.

Over the last year, Resilient Georgia has worked with organizations, providers and stakeholders to open lines of communication, create alignment, and bolster mental and behavioral health support and resources for Georgia's families. We are focused on decreasing childhood adversity, building resilience and breaking down behavioral health access barriers. We do this through our statewide regional coalitions, convening diverse stakeholders regularly, and working to continually share innovation and celebrate the work that subject matter experts across the state are doing every day.

Together, with over 700 stakeholders, we are creating stronger, more resilient Georgia by preventing childhood trauma and supporting children and families who have experienced adversity. Resilience is the ability to overcome adversity. We accomplish this through awareness building, education, promotion of best practices, workforce development and advocacy.

COVID-19 has created a magnifying glass on our state. Long-standing health inequities have put many communities at increased risk of getting sick in multiple ways. Access to behavioral health and prevention resources for many of these communities is more needed and more difficult than ever. Our efforts have intensified to address statewide needs in mental health, wellness, and resilience during the COVID-19 crisis and the country's racial reckoning. Resilient Georgia has been hard at work responding to these distressing events and now provides ACEs prevention education in 12 regions of Georgia (spanning 97 counties) and ensures urban and rural communities statewide have more access than ever before to trauma-informed resources.

None of this would be possible without the generous support of our funders and the collaboration of our partners and stakeholders. Together, we will continue to strive for a future where every child in Georgia grows up to become a resilient adult thanks to a culture of prevention and widespread knowledge of trauma-informed care. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Emily Anne Vall
Executive Director



Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald
Executive Board Chair

Emily Anne Vall
Executive Director

Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald
Executive Board Chair

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**Building a
Collaborative Georgia.**

**Building a
Trauma-Informed Georgia.**

**Building a
Resilient Georgia.**

**Aligning efforts and resources across
Georgia that promote resiliency and
healing.**

OVERVIEW

In Georgia, 2018 data shows 60 percent of adults have at least one Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and 18 percent have experienced four or more. Women have slightly higher rates than men. Today, many of these adults with traumatic childhoods are caregivers themselves and risk perpetuating a toxic family environment. Resilient Georgia is here to help.

Resilient Georgia is a statewide coalition of stakeholders and organizations building a more resilient, trauma-informed Georgia. With over 700 engaged stakeholders, we are committed to building a stronger, more resilient Georgia. Through a network of public and private partners, we are creating a pipeline of trauma informed behavioral health resources that support children and families who have experienced adversity. This integrated system includes prevention, early intervention, research, advocacy and policy, and care implementation and coordination.

In April 2019 we hosted our first Resilient Georgia two-day Strategic Planning Meeting, and with the help of stakeholders and partners like you, we developed a Strategic Map for our first three years (2019 to 2022). As you read through this report, you will see we checked off quite a few more boxes since our last update. This valuable tool has continued to allow us to frame, align, plan and implement our work and acts as our guiding north star.

Over the last year we have uncovered three themes we now consider the pillars of our work: **To Convene and Connect; To Celebrate and Share Innovation; and To Remove Barriers.** These pillars have been integral to our success and will continue to drive our goal of aligning public and private efforts and resources across the state to support resilience for all people between the ages of 0 and 26, and their families.

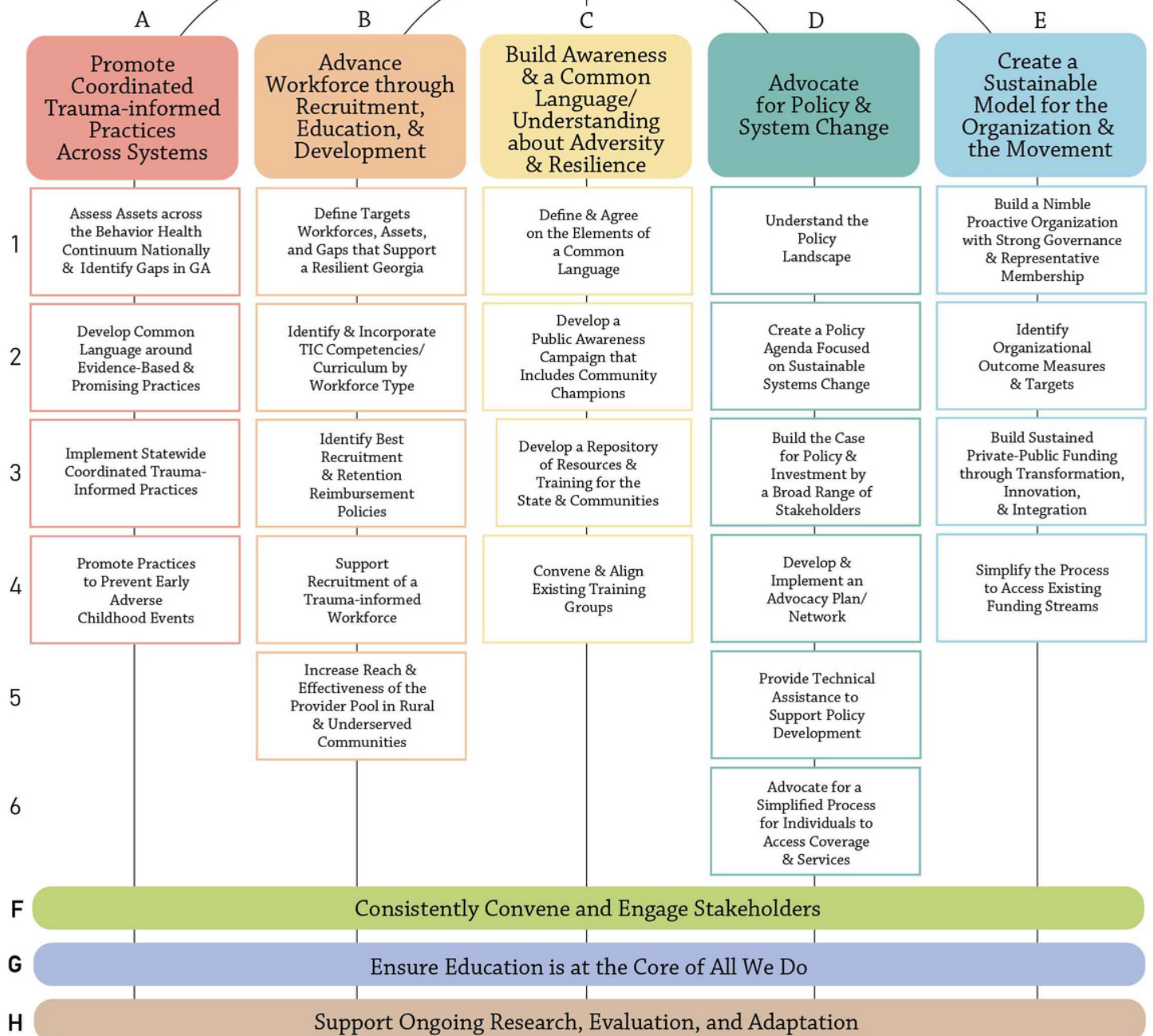


STRATEGIC ROADMAP

Resilient Georgia, Inc. Strategic Map: 2019-2022

*Align Public and Private Efforts & Resources
across the State that Support Resiliency for All
Persons Aged 0 - 26 and their Families*

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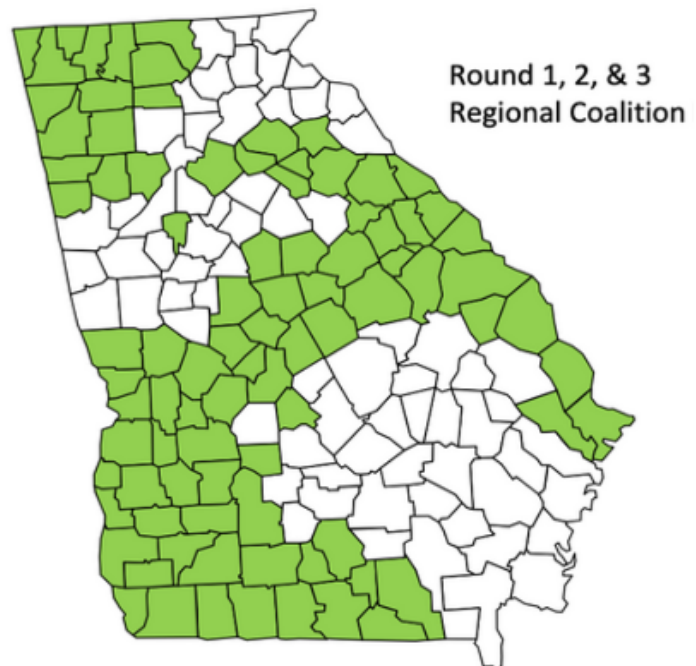
CONVENE AND CONNECT

REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM

Over the last two years, Resilient Georgia has been working with 12 regions, covering 97 counties, across Georgia to provide an emphasis on trauma informed awareness and care, ACEs and child sexual abuse prevention training as a basis to transform systems and procedures crossing both public and private sectors.

Resilient Georgia serves as a supportive and guiding resource during each region's planning and implementation process. These regional action plans each address the behavioral health needs of individuals birth through 26 years old and families in the community and surrounding counties using the Collective Impact framework, a diverse, robust and well planned public-private partnership.

Trauma informed care, ACEs and child sexual abuse prevention can be the basis for systemic changes in a community. Each region has identified how one or more of these content areas are delivered to diverse community members through formal training, education, marketing and communications. Round 1 grants were awarded in November 2019 to regional coalitions based out of Athens, Augusta, Macon, Savannah and surrounding areas. Round 2 grants were awarded in July 2020 to regional coalitions based out of Albany, Columbus, Rome, Thomasville and surrounding areas. Round 3 grants were awarded in March 2021 to regional coalitions based out of Clayton, Cobb, Gwinnett, Valdosta and surrounding areas.



REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 1

Savannah

Handle with Care

In April 2021, our Coastal Georgia regional coalition launched 'Handle with Care' with the Savannah Police Department and the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System (Savannah Morning News, April 2021). Handle with Care is a trauma-informed collaboration model between local law enforcement and schools. The program aims to provide a safe and supportive environment at school for children who have witnessed a traumatic experience, such as observing violence in the home, the arrest of a household member or execution of a search warrant in the home, being forcibly displaced from a home by a fire or eviction, or having a family member overdose. The police officer at the scene communicates with the child's school principal, with the help of an app, letting them know that the child has experienced a traumatic event. In the days and weeks that follow, trauma-informed, trained school staff respond to the traumatized student's needs within the classroom and throughout campus in a supportive and restorative manner. Handle with Care is being expanded to all eight Chatham County commission districts and is being implemented by our Augusta and Resilient Middle Georgia regional coalitions as well, with many more of our coalitions planning to follow suit.

Teenish Podcast

Gateway Behavioral Health Community Services Board, one of Resilient Georgia's 'Coastal Georgia' regional grantee coalition lead partners, launched "TEENISH" – a mental health and wellness podcast in 2020. The podcast, developed by and for youth in Savannah and neighboring communities, sheds light on systematic and personal issues around mental health for underserved youth in Chatham county. (Savannah Morning News, June 2021). Gateway's Teenish Podcast utilizes their community ties with the City, County, Juvenile Justice System, and School System to strengthen policies as they relate to including and enhancing youth voice in policies and procedures. Teenish empowered teens to dream bigger than they had previously allowed themselves to. One Teenish leader has accepted a full scholarship to Howard University, which includes her undergrad, Masters, and Ph.D. The Teenish youth leads are currently looking to expand the podcast to youth populations who are often overlooked or underrepresented, including those involved with Special Education, Court Involved Youth, and youth who have witnessed or been victims of violent crimes. Learn more at their Instagram (@Teenish192) or YouTube channel.



REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 1

Savannah

Mindfulness Zones

Loop It Up Savannah, one of Resilient Georgia's 'Coastal Georgia' regional grantee coalition lead partners, launched their Mindfulness Zone program in Fall 2019. The Mindfulness Zone is a program that works to give children agency in addressing emotionally challenging circumstances that arise in school among peers, at home with family members, and among community members. The program presents strategies for problem solving using mindfulness practice, yoga, and expressive arts, and works with children to develop their personal problem-solving toolkits, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making skills. This program was developed in close conjunction with educators and school staff and is being offered to over 1500 first- to fifth grade elementary school students in the Chatham County School district and also shared with 200 [Georgia Apex Program](#) participants. Additionally, 200 Mindfulness Zone kits and video access were sent to students in Newnan, Georgia following the tornado disaster. In addition to Resilient Georgia funds, this program has also received funding from the City of Savannah, along with very positive feedback from the Mayor, a number of City Council members, and the city staff. The Mindfulness Zone project is currently expanding to include programming targeting 0-to-5-year olds in daycare and preschool settings across the state with Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning funds awarded to Resilient Georgia.

Augusta

Resilient Teens

When the pandemic hit, medical students in the Augusta region were suddenly unable to get their rotation and mentorship hours. Teens in the area were under huge amounts of stress and parents and caretakers were at a loss. The local teen suicide rate and emergency room visits due to teen suicide attempts at the Augusta University Medical Center had already spiked over the last three years. Resilient Georgia's Augusta coalition worked quickly and used 72 medical students to work with teens and discuss and teach about teen mental health. This solution provided learning opportunities for the medical students and mentors for teens. The program (Resilient Teens) is now embarking on their fifth cohort.

Resilient Teens offers an interactive, after-school virtual learning experience for teens, ages 13-19, in the 14-county area of the Central Savannah River Area of Georgia. Teens are placed into small groups that are facilitated by Augusta University medical students. The med school mentors lead fun activities to help the teens learn about mental health and develop skills to cope during stressful events, bounce back and move forward.

REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 1

Macon

Adversity and Resilience Symposium

Resilient Middle Georgia's 2021 Adversity and Resilience Symposium had over 350 attendees from communities across Georgia. Their coalition building efforts and partnership with Atrium Navicent Health allowed them to host presenters from a wide variety of fields and disciplines. Ten presentations and panel discussions hosted throughout the day provided attendees with insights on how to implement a trauma-informed approach into various areas of their communities, including mental and physical health, law enforcement, education and local government.

Resilience Bags

To stave off isolation and loneliness exacerbated by the pandemic, Resilient Middle Georgia launched a new effort in July 2020 to increase community engagement through the use of [Neighborhood Check-in Notes and Resilience Bags](#). To date, the coalition has distributed over 20,000 Neighborhood Check-in Notes and 8,000 Resilience Bags to community members through local food drives, Family Connections Collaboratives, Back to School Events and more. Social distancing doesn't mean social disconnecting. Through Resilient Georgia's membership and active participation in the Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness, Facebook's new product experimentation team working on connecting families to their blocks and neighborhoods has recognized Resilient Middle Georgia's successful efforts to increase community engagement and is in discussion with them about best practices, intervention prototyping and feedback.

Resilient Middle Georgia Infographics

Resilient Middle Georgia understands that fostering community resilience begins with creating a shared understanding of trauma and adversity and arming the community with data and knowledge so they can in turn bring that deep awareness to all community conversations. Resilient Middle Georgia decided to collect in-depth, Pair of ACEs data for the 14 counties it serves and present it in a manner that was intuitive, informative and accessible. This work resulted in incredibly well-done, user-friendly web pages and infographics that the community and multiple partners use regularly.

- [Resilient Middle Georgia ACEs By County Infographics](#)
- [Resilient Middle Georgia Building Community Resilience Infographics By County](#)



REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 1

Athens

Community Behavioral Health Needs Assessment

A rigorous community behavioral health needs assessment to develop a trauma-informed behavioral health continuum of care is among the most urgent and important priorities for Athens-Clarke County and the Northeast Georgia region (Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, Madison, Oconee and Oglethorpe counties). They have leveraged their close connections with the University of Georgia and the strong research background of the Athens Wellbeing Project to evaluate behavioral health utilization, outcomes, and needs in the Northeast Georgia region, as well as the impact that COVID-19 has had upon the supply of behavioral health services. Pre- and post-survey data has also been collected from many of the Athens Coalition's ACEs and mental health training opportunities that were provided to various child-serving sector audiences and funded by the Resilient Georgia grant to better inform them of participant demographics, learning outcomes, what went well, and what did not. The Community Behavioral Health Needs Assessment will run until December 15, 2021. The coalition will begin analyzing results in January and hope to have a completed report on findings by February 2022.

We are sure you can see why we are so proud of the work our regional partners have done. It has been an amazing journey and the learning communities that have been formed through this program have been more informative that anyone could have imagined.

"Funding from Resilient Georgia has allowed us to connect with a broad range of our community, convene on substantial trainings, share innovative approaches, and remove barriers to understanding. For example, our multiple Youth Mental Health First Aid trainings reached a broad array of community leaders and professionally trained us to have the knowledge and power to support teens in crisis. With the support of Resilient Georgia, trauma informed care weaves a spider web of connectivity and understanding. We are connected and ready to cross county lines, meet new leaders, plan expanded programming, and prepare our communities for the response necessary to mitigate cause and effect."

- **Sarah H. McKinney, President and CEO, Athens Area Community Foundation**, which is part of the Athens Northeast Georgia coalition serving Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, Madison, Oconee, and Oglethorpe counties.

REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 2

Our regional partners from Round 2 hit the ground running and have been hosting a ton of ACEs prevention and awareness events!

Thomasville

Trauma Informed Training PSA

Southwest Georgia, like many other rural areas in the state, is often more greatly affected by health disparities. This region's population carries higher burdens and rates of poverty, children in poverty, individuals feeling mental distress and substantiated reports of child abuse and neglect, when compared to the rest of the state, with significantly fewer resources available to them. While across the state of Georgia, there are mental health provider shortages, these scarcities are more pronounced in rural areas such as Southwest Georgia. Another barrier to care in rural areas is deficiency of access due to a lack of transportation, especially public transportation. The need in Southwest Georgia is immense for a more educated, engaged and a more aware community on child's mental health, trauma informed care practices and resiliency initiatives for youth.

Resilient Southwest Georgia aims to utilize a tri-focus approach for their mission to address health disparities affecting rural regions to develop more resiliency, increase awareness and improve access to mental health. Their main areas of focus has been to connect the youth serving organizations across the seven counties that they serve (Colquitt, Decatur, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, and Thomas) with a strong collection of professional development and training opportunities focused on trauma informed care, youth mental health, child abuse and prevention and ACEs. Their target populations include foster parents and families, school systems, faith-based programs, and local non-profits. In Resilient SWGA's first year they surpassed their goal to train 1000 people and were able to train 1,082 people from 22 youth serving organizations covering 12 counties in Southwest Georgia. Please view their Professional Development Community Training Video PSA to learn more.



REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 2

Thomasville

Engaging Foster Parents

Resilient SWGA has formed a partnership with the Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia (AFPAG). They have trained more than 80 foster parents in the region on a multitude of relevant topics to help them become more trauma-informed. This equips them to better support and engage with children who may have experienced trauma, while also raising awareness around children's mental health and sharing local resources. [Hear one foster couple share how helpful these trainings have been in this video.](#) "We've trained lots of foster parents, and they've been incredibly thankful for the opportunity to be given extra tools in their toolbox, because any foster parent is working with children that have experienced trauma," Elijah Miranda, Executive Director of the Vashti Center, lead Resilient Southwest Georgia Coalition partner. "The fact that the child has been removed from their home is a traumatic experience, and so a foster parent is dealing with that and trying to help that child. So, if they're even more informed about how brain development works in a child who has experienced trauma, they're incredibly thankful and that's what we're able to offer through these trainings." (Source: [Grant helps Vashti Center spread mental health awareness](#), Thomasville Time Enterprise, Jun 2021)

To continue to strengthen their partnership with foster parents, Resilient SWGA has begun collecting data from the Foster Parent Associations in their 7-county region. They have conducted phone interviews and surveyed foster parent training recipients to gather information about their training experience, to better understand the challenges of being a foster parent, and to identify their future training and support needs.

Some preliminary findings include:

- 87% of foster parents reported an increased interest in Trauma-Informed Care post training
- 92% of foster parents reported implementation of Trauma-Informed Care practices in their work and personal lives post training
- 93% of foster parents reported obtaining new knowledge and skills in Trauma-Informed Care practices post training
- 96% of foster parents reported they would recommend these Trauma-Informed trainings to a friend or colleague

Rome Floyd

The Georgia Family Connection Region 1 represents the 15 counties in NW Georgia. They have a unique vantage point - 15 separate but united collaborative organizations who are focused on helping build resilience in their communities.

From July 2020 to July 2021, their Northwest Georgia coalition has hosted 52 advocacy events + 29 prevention education trainings + 15 Civic Dinners + 6 [Resilience: The Biology of Stress and Science of Hope](#) documentary screenings = 7300 participants engaged in ACEs-related trainings and community awareness building activities.

REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 2

Rome Floyd

Civic Dinners

Each of the 15 counties served by the Floyd- Northwest Georgia coalition hosted a Civic Dinner in 2020-21 using the Nurturing Communities (8 dinners) and Parenting in a Pandemic question formats (7 dinners). These dinners fed and engaged 351 community members, including school bus drivers, parents, grandparents and kinship caregivers, business owners, school counselors, direct service providers, and elected officials, providing much needed feedback to the region's Family Connection Collaboratives. Civic dinners are held with community members to explore the aspects of safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments essential to the healthy development of all children using Civic Dinner's Nurturing Communities and Parenting in a Pandemic question formats. By hosting these focused, informal conversations, the coalition was able to engage new sectors and get feedback on community challenges from partners that they otherwise would not have reached. The Floyd- Northwest Georgia coalition will continue to leverage feedback from these ongoing discussions to drive future decision-making and as jumping off points for long-term relationships and engagement in collaborative strategies.

Mini Grant Program

In alignment with the Strengthening Families 5 Protective Factors, Northwest Georgia's 15 Family Connection Collaboratives work with partners to ensure that children and families have access to concrete supports in times of need. Intervening in this way pulls families out of crisis, improves family stability, and puts the family and community back on the path to resilience. Their 'Building a Region of Resilience' initiative leveraged \$29,900 in funding from Resilient Georgia to invest in community partners providing programs and services directly aligned with our poverty/trauma-informed initiative and strategies to improve child and family health and wellbeing. Distributed via localized, competitive grant programs, 20 community partners received \$400 - \$2,500 in support of program/service implementation. These mini-grants provided children and families with trainings, back-to-school services and supplies, holiday toys and gifts, books, scholarships to after school/summer camps and monthly book clubs, and offered support to families in need for utilities, household items and meals.

Columbus

Cure Violence Prevention & Healing Work

The rates of homicides in Columbus, Georgia have increased at an alarming rate over the past 3 years. The city had 34 homicides in 2018, 41 homicides in 2019, and 46 homicides in 2020. By July of this year, Columbus was quickly approaching the homicide rate of the previous year, with a total of 41 homicides only 7 months in 2021. Of these homicides, 24 (59%) deaths were children ages 0 to 26 years old. Unaccounted for in these numbers are the troubling statistics surrounding the increasing non-fatal gun violence the community is experiencing. Over the course of this year, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley has become increasingly aware of these issues due to reading daily headlines, participating in diverse community conversations, and through Georgia Student Health Survey data collected from the local school district.

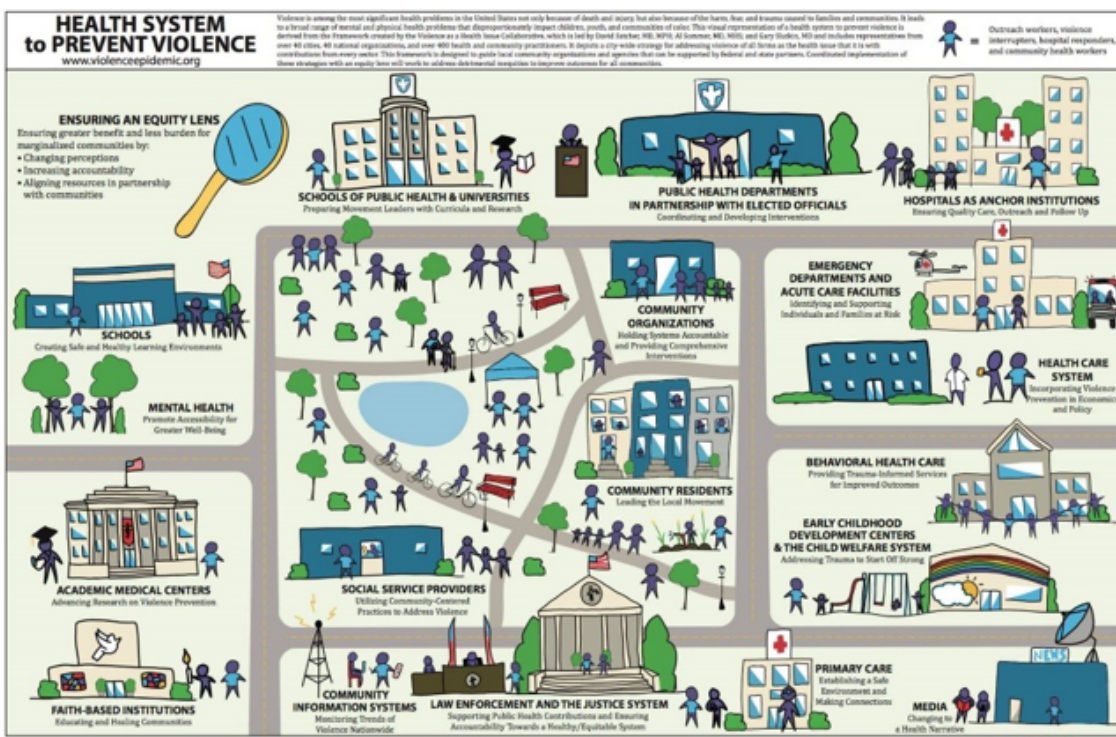
REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 2

Columbus

Cure Violence Prevention & Healing Work (continued)

Statistics show that the Muscogee County School District (MCSD) has experienced a 781% increase of homicidal ideation/threats and a 103% increase in suicidal ideation/threats over the past three years. Most recent 2020 MCSD student survey data reported 10,344 students during the last 12 months seriously considered harming themselves on purpose, 247 students brought weapons on campus, and that there were over 43 reported gang-related incidents on school grounds.

An intended result of Resilient Chattahoochee Valley's efforts to address this need are that students, families, and communities strengthen resiliency. With the prevalence of ACEs and daily exposure to crime, their child-equity based strategies aim to change the trajectory of students and stop the "cradle to prison pipeline" by integrating preventive practices and programs as soon as possible. Early intervention prevents the onset of adult criminal careers and reduces the likelihood of youth becoming serious and violent offenders. In effort to see positive progress, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley has fostered multiple partnerships with those in the community who have strong footholds in this pipeline. Cure Violence is a partner on this journey. They are a community-based, data-driven violence prevention program that addresses violence as a public health epidemic. Cure Violence believes that as with any infectious disease, violence clusters, spreads, and can be transmitted. The program Cure Violence demonstrates that violence can be reduced by detecting and interrupting conflict, identifying, and treating the highest risk individuals, and interrupting and changing social norms. This scientific approach provides evidence that adverse circumstances and exposure lead to higher risk for violent activity but can be mediated through effective and comprehensive prevention approaches.



REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 2

Columbus

On Demand ACEs Trainings

Resilient Chattahoochee Valley believes that knowledge is power. Through training their community on ACEs, trauma, and resiliency, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley is mitigating the effects of adversity locally and increasing the region's shared level of resiliency. This past year, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley conducted a total of 31 trainings to an estimated 1,111 trainees. At the outset of receiving grant funds, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley conducted a training landscape evaluation to assess the training assets and deficits of the community. The evaluation sought to explore what training opportunities currently exist, who provided those opportunities, what trainings were recently attended by members of our community, and which trainings their region would like to see offered. Resilient Chattahoochee Valley created a [training evaluation](#) tool to measure and collect data around online, on-demand training opportunities. From this work, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley has developed 12 online, on-demand ACEs trainings to be housed on the website, www.resilientcv.org. These [training opportunities](#), created in close collaboration with healthcare, early childhood, and education professionals, offers sector-specific educational paths that will highlight, engage, and resonate with all members of our community.

Albany

The Albany Collaborative recently partnered with Dr. Sarah Vinson to host a two-part training about trauma awareness. In addition, they partnered with Jack and Jill (Albany Chapter) and Aspire, United Way to host a virtual conference for parents. Pandemic Parenting 2.1 featured sessions that gave parents the tools needed to navigate through the effects of COVID-19 in 2021. The Albany region is working to implement Connections Matter across the region and look forward to spreading awareness.

Resilient Georgia is determined to convene and connect leaders to create peer learning communities within and across our grantee rounds, to scale what is working and learn from what is not at the community level. These communities of practice also ensure resources are rapidly being shared to remove barriers in addressing systemic change. By building bridges between organizations and providers, we are expanding access to needed mental and behavioral health in Georgia.

"Pickens County Family Connection is extremely proud to be a part of the work being done by Resilient Georgia. Building a Region of Resilience, with its emphasis on creating a trauma-informed and poverty-informed community, has allowed leaders and other professionals in the county to bring about needed change for our children and families. As Coordinator, I have received multiple trainings and additional resources to share with the community, which has given a new perspective to everyone, especially useful as we adjust to life after the pandemic."

- Jacque Elwarner, Executive Director, Pickens County Family Connection and Peer to Peer Networking Chair. Pickens County Family Connection is a part of our Floyd-Northwest Georgia coalition serving Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker and Whitfield counties.

REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 3

Our newest round of grantees started off sprinting and already have several wins under their belts after only a few months. Here are a few brief highlights.

Clayton County

Clayton County is unique in that the trauma informed conversation has taken place in various spaces for years. What has not occurred is community ownership of the trauma narrative and the development of a strategy for preventing ACES and creating a trauma-responsive ecosystem. The project team conducted a series of informal meetings with community members and leaders to begin unpacking what the message needed to be for the Clayton community. From this work a tag line for the ACSRI Project was birthed, “The Many Faces of Our Trauma.”

It was decided that the faith community would play a critical role in grass roots engagement efforts in Clayton. The coalition solicited the help of Pastor Emmett McCord, a leader and trusted messenger in the Clayton community to spearhead engagement of the Core Coalition members. Pastor McCord has been actively meeting with peers in the faith community to explain ACEs, trauma, and its effects, and to outline the vision for the coalition’s work in Clayton County.

Cobb County

Cobb Collaborative has built a robust digital marketing campaign supporting their goal to become a trauma-informed community. They currently have a page on their website dedicated to ACEs education, prevention, and resiliency, a strategic Social Media campaign supporting the Mind Your Mind initiative with a following of over 1,000 people, and a Mind Your Mind Monthly Newsletter that reaches an average of 402 people with an average of 900 opens each month.

Gwinnett County

Resilient Gwinnett is working to build resilient communities within Gwinnett by creating a shared understanding of adversity and resilience, promoting trauma-informed practices, and advocating for policy and systems change. The first phase of Resilient Gwinnett trainings target adults who are likely to be interacting with youth. Examples include sporting and athletic organizations, faith-based organizations, public schools and communities in schools.

REGIONAL GRANTEE PROGRAM: ROUND 3

Valdosta

Greater Valdosta United Way is in Valdosta, Georgia and covers seven counties with the Resilient Georgia funding consisting of Lowndes, Lanier, Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Clinch, and Echols in South Georgia. Lowndes county is the only county consisting of urban and suburban population, the other counties are all very rural areas with underserved populations. ACEs prevention and awareness events have already taken place in Lowndes, Clinch, and Lanier counties and the group has been working with providers in Cook, Berrien, Brooks, and Echols counties as well. Targeted outreach, [like this video posted on Valdosta CEO](#) discussing the coalition's efforts to promote mental health awareness, has been shared with over 1000 local businesses and has led to new, deeper, and more strategic collaborations with the private sector. Innovative events like a Mental Health Food Truck Crawl have been a huge hit!

We are very excited to announce that we will be expanding our grantee program to 16 regions, covering over 120 counties, by the end of 2022. We have identified strong partners in Waycross and the surrounding area, Brunswick and the surrounding area, Northeast Georgia, and Fulton/DeKalb Counties. We cannot wait to share more soon!

Resource Guides

Our Resilient Georgia regional grantees have been hard at work creating a community of resilience in their regions. We met with hundreds of local partners across the state and diligently worked to connect and convene them at the local level with our regional partners.

One resource each region identified as a very needed and missing piece was an easy-to-use mental and behavioral health resource guide that identifies local stakeholders and resources, and points practitioners and the public in the right direction to access care. We have been working to create these guides to help propel this work and get information to those who need it most. These guides include everything from local school board members and Community Service Boards (CSBs), to food pantries and housing assistance. This work will continue through 2022 and our hope to have complete guides that cover 75% of Georgia by years end. [Here is a preview of this work.](#)

RESILIENT GEORGIA CONVENINGS

RG General Meetings

Our Resilient Georgia General Meetings have grown in scope and participation in 2020-2021. Although we had to forego in-person meetings complete with coffee breaks, lunch and networking time, we made the best of it and got creative with Zoom. We welcomed the face of resilience and author of the book *Rabbit, Comedian Ms. Pat Williams* (Q3 2020) and then focused on sharing the great work our Resilient Georgia Grantee's have been doing (Q4 2020). To kick off 2021, we welcomed eight subject matter experts who discussed infant and early education mental health and shared some of their progressive work in Georgia (Q1 2021) and followed that meeting with 12 teen mental health experts (Q2 2021). Recently on October 28, 2021 we hosted an intimate chat with recent local Track and Field Olympian Kenny Selmon. Many professional athletes have been using their public platforms to build awareness and advocacy for mental and behavioral health. We were so grateful to sit down with a home grown Olympian and learn how he has continued to pass the torch and build upon this conversation.

RG Lunch and Learns

Earlier this year we hosted our first Lunch and Learn. We wanted to identify a way for our partners to share available resources to our regional grantees and designed these quick events as a way to do just that. We started off the year hearing from HealthMPowers and the Girls Empowering Movement (GEM), then NAMI Georgia, Sewn Arts, a Mindful Self Compassion for Leaders session hosted by our partners at the Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council, and most recently heard from Kate's Club. Our Lunch and Learns have received high marks from both our sharing partners and regional stakeholders.

The Student Taskforce on ACEs and Resilient Annual Conference

The Student Taskforce on ACEs and Resilience (STAR) is an interdisciplinary team of health students dedicated to equipping the next generation of health professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to improve the care of people impacted by ACEs. Resilient Georgia partnered with them again this year to support their annual Trauma Informed Training conference. The goal of their conference is to bring together students from different academic institutions and fields (e.g. medicine, nursing, public health, law and social work) to build practical skills they can apply in our interactions with people who may have suffered acute trauma and toxic stress. The theme of this year's conference was *Breaking Down Barriers: Caring for Diverse Communities*. Sessions addressed ACEs and trauma-related issues for a number of communities, including Black, Indigenous, AAPI, Latinx, LGBTQ2IA+, incarcerated, and disabled communities. This event was held virtually via Zoom and over 220 students and professionals attended.

RESILIENT GEORGIA COMMITTEES

Education & Training

The Resilient Georgia Education and Training Committee has been hard at work this year. One large project they attacked was to revamp the [RG Training Road Map](#). This interactive map allows users to see what trauma-informed training opportunities are available to them and the sector they work in. Although this tool has been around for a while, it was not as user-friendly as we wanted it to be - but it is now! We hope you will visit soon and share with your friends. As part of that project, we worked with Georgia State University to survey subject matter experts and identify what new trainings we were missing. We have analyzed that data and are excited to add several new trainings in 2022. The group has also been busy creating Concept Learning Cards. We are finalizing those and will be sharing them with partners statewide in 2022.

Telehealth & Technology

Telehealth has been a huge topic of conversation, as you can imagine, since the pandemic hit. Many state and local agencies were becoming frustrated when they procured a platform and/or service that did not perform to the standards that they expected. A leader at the Georgia Department of Education shared his concerns, and Resilient Georgia quickly worked with a skilled consultant to draft a Request for Proposal that the Georgia Department of Administrative Services could use as a starting point in creating a statewide contract for telehealth services. We are happy to announce that as of early November, several providers have been named and state agencies can now procure telehealth services without fear.

Many members of the Telehealth and Technology Committee have been working with [project ECHO](#) to create the Georgia ECHO Consortium (website coming soon). Project ECHO was created to eliminate health and social disparities. Using the ECHO model, people in communities around the world can access critical and life-saving knowledge while receiving mentorship and ongoing support to make a difference in their community. Currently there are several ECHO project sites in Georgia, but until this year, they did not speak or share resources. Georgia ECHO leaders saw the need to create a consortium to allow our state to strengthen existing ECHO's and create new ECHO's. To date, the group has met twice and they are actively building goals for 2022.

EXCITING PARTNERSHIPS

Georgia Center for Child Advocacy

Many of you likely know the great work that the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy does, and we are proud to report that our close relationship with them has blossomed even more over the last year. Currently, GACCA is working with eight of our 12 regional grantees to implement Connections Matter. Many of our regional partners have completed their “train the trainer” program and are working to educate thousands of community members. The Connections Matter Georgia Training of the Trainer offers professionals the foundational knowledge and tools they need to train others, including parents, educators, child-serving professionals, health care, human services providers, faith leaders, and community members. We are thrilled with their model, and we all love how sustainable it is.

Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice

We are so proud of the innovative work the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and Georgia State University have been doing to get trauma informed yoga to students. This year Resilient Georgia was able to both highlight their work in our Teen Mental Health General Meeting, and also support it by supporting technology to make yoga classes available virtually. We were also able to partner and enable DJJ to train their staff with the Community Resiliency model. Lastly, Dr. Doug Jackson joined Resilient Georgia to present to the Prosecuting Attorneys Council of Georgia where we shared information about ACEs and how to prevent them, what trauma does to a child’s brain, and resiliency.

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

This past summer, we were ecstatic to be approached by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning’s leadership to discuss our regional grantee work. The culmination of that first conversation resulted in a partnership that has allowed us to host and facilitate nine Mindful Self Compassion and seven Community Resiliency Model training opportunities for early care educators and stakeholders in November and December. The pandemic has created additional stressors that have never been seen before, creating a fast track to burnout. While we cannot eliminate the stressors, we can help get resources to those that need them and show these professionals how much we value their work. In addition, we joined the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Task Force in February 2021. The Task Force was created to carry out recommendations from the Georgia Legislative House Study Committee on Infant and Toddler Social Emotional Health. The group serves as a cross-agency collaborative focused on early child mental health policy, finance, workforce development and promotion/prevention efforts to support infant and early childhood mental health in Georgia.

EXCITING PARTNERSHIPS

Georgia's Essentials for Childhood

When Resilient Georgia came to fruition in 2019, one of the first coalitions we joined was Georgia's Essentials for Childhood. Since then, we have continued to share work and bolster our relationship. We are currently working closely to spread awareness and promote the book, "What Happened to You?" by Oprah Winfrey and Dr. Bruce Perry. As part of the Essentials team, we are thrilled to announce that Dr. Perry himself will join Georgian's from all walks of life to discuss his book on January 10th. In addition, the coalition has also been working closely with Inclusive to design and host a series of conversations on preventing child abuse and neglect, including how to build resiliency. Anyone interested is encouraged to become a conversation participant or host by viewing the [easy to follow guide here](#).





CELEBRATE GEORGIA'S WORK

CREATE A COMMON LANGUAGE

Resilient Georgia Website

To mark our two-year anniversary we splurged and got a facelift! We hope you will visit our updated, user-friendly [website](https://ResilientGA.org) (ResilientGA.org). With the help of our talented partners, we updated our content and technology, and it has made such a difference. This year, in addition to many Georgia partners, several states contacted us after visiting our website to learn more about our work. We also built a [page for all of our blogs](#), many of which have been shared nationally.

Social Media

Our social media presence on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#) has also grown this year. We hope you drop in when you have time and review some of our new content. Hopefully you have been receiving our monthly [newsletters](#), but if not please be sure to sign up on our website!



CREATE A COMMON LANGUAGE

Standout Events

We have also been very busy promoting our work through several standout events over the past year.

- November 2021 – Resilient Georgia joined the Giving Back to Gwinnett podcast. Guests had a robust discussion about what children and young adults are experiencing and how Resilient Georgia and Resilient Gwinnett are working to build resilient communities.
- November 2021 – Prevent Child Abuse Georgia hosted an open discussion on the book “What Happened to You?” by Dr. Bruce Perry and Oprah.
- October 2021 – The Foundation for Social Connection - F4SC 2021 Action Forum welcomed Resilient Georgia to share our work and discuss emerging state and regional coalitions.
- September 2021 – Self-Discovery. A Daily Journey with Venessa Anderson-Abram Radio Show welcomed Resilient Georgia’s Executive Director to discuss trauma and resiliency.
- August 2021 – Dr. Doug Jackson, Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice Clinical Program Manager, was a guest speaker at the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia (PAC) 2021 Juvenile Conference alongside Dr. Emily Anne Vall, Executive Director of Resilient Georgia.
- July 2021 – HomeTown Health welcomed Resilient Georgia and the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy to share information about Connections Matter and our Regional Grantee program with rural hospital leaders from across Georgia.
- July 2021 – Athens and Northeast Georgia Regional Coalition created this public service announcement about trauma and resiliency. This PSA represents the collaboration of the grant partners and key members of the community to create a tool for discussing trauma in the community.
- February 2021 – The Medical College of Georgia welcomed Resilient Georgia and partners from each of our (then) eight regions to discuss the work being done in communities across the state. With 190 budding physicians eager to work, learn and serve, the Healthcare Matters module provided an ideal opportunity for our students to dive into critical conversations outside of the clinics and hospitals.
- January 2021 – Resilient Georgia Executive Director Dr. Emily Anne Vall and Cobb Collaborative Executive Director Irene Barton discussed resilience and how to work collectively to improve communities in this conversation.



BREAK DOWN BARRIERS

LEADING THE CONVERSATION

Although 2020-2021 brought more challenges than any of us could have imagined, it also brought opportunity. The pandemic created the ideal opportunity to strengthen and encourage the much-needed conversation about mental and behavioral health; and we took full advantage.

The Governor's Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission

In late 2019, our Executive Board Chairperson, Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, was tapped by the Lieutenant Governor to serve on the Governor's Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission (BHRIC). Dr. Fitzgerald immediately went to work and built a strong sub-committee that was, and is, determined to improve mental and behavioral health access in Georgia. Resilient Georgia quickly stepped in to support her in this important mission and helped gather subject matter experts to testify, identify and document barriers currently in place, and research and learn what innovative solutions can be implemented in our state. In late 2020, the first annual BHRIC report was delivered to the Governor. In late 2021, after many hours of hard work and hundreds of discussions, meetings and testimony, an "omnibus" bill was drafted and is set to be introduced during the 2022 legislative session. This bill focuses on mental and behavioral health (MBH) parity and aims to equalize mental health and addiction coverage with physical care. We are so grateful for Dr. Fitzgerald's leadership and determination.

As a part of this work, Resilient Georgia has partnered with health economist Dr. Janani Thapa and the University of Georgia to begin to identify how much these barriers to care are costing the state. The findings from this cost assessment project will inform state policymakers of the cost-saving potential of investments in MBH reform and innovation. The first portion of this project will be completed in December of 2021.



RESOURCES THAT STRENGTHEN

National ACEs Data Report

As you may remember, when we first began our top priority was to look nationally and identify if there were organizations that had figured out how to create a statewide presence that pushed our trauma informed care and ACEs prevention efforts at the population level. We completed the [Resilient Georgia National Landscape Scan](#), and this year we added to that work by analyzing the various data sets that are available to us currently. As we continue to identify how to evaluate and assess our progress long term, this was a much-needed next step. Our very talented intern and partner Kiran Thapa [posted this blog](#) that outlines the work. The full excel report can be [found here](#). We have made this useful report available to all our partners including state agencies, as well as our regional grantees in hopes that it makes evaluation one step easier for everyone and ultimately helps us all show progress in a meaningful way.

The Case for ACEs Prevention

We want to prevent ACEs from happening in the first place and arm communities with the tools necessary to work upstream. We found this can be a tough mindset switch, so we created this brief titled [The Case for ACEs Prevention](#). We took the time to dive into the literature and put a price on ACEs and found that the estimated lifetime costs associated with new child maltreatment cases in 2020 was \$147 billion. These shocking numbers quickly get readers attention and have helped us get our point across. We have translated this document into Spanish and Portuguese and have co-branded it with multiple partners.

X2 Mental Health Chatbox

One of the first projects we embarked on was to implement a mental health chatbox called Tess from the company [X2](#). Primary data was collected from a sample of students from participating universities: University of Georgia and Albany State University, to assess depression and anxiety. The participants were invited to participate in a randomized control trial to evaluate the impact of the chatbot-based intervention on mental health in partnership with X2. The intervention is going strong and will be completed December 2021. We are pleased to report that we have also secured support for focus groups, so students can tell us more about their mental health needs, wants and how effective this resource was for them. We look forward to sharing our final results in 2022.

Georgia Foster Parent Qualitative Report

One of our talented interns, Gracie Kleinbardt, helped us learn more about Georgia's foster parents. Gracie worked with our regional partners in Thomasville to interview local foster parents and identify what training opportunities they felt were helpful and what additional resources could be helpful to them in the future. Gracie's report was incredibly helpful in showcasing how difficult it was for foster parents to access resources and where to go to find services. This report helped fuel the access conversation, and we are eager to continue to build upon it.



SUSTAINABILITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING

LEADERSHIP

We have been hard at work building diverse funding streams over the last year and a half and are excited to continue to build capacity. We have recently strengthened our relationships with The Jesse Parker Williams Foundation, The Healthcare Georgia Foundation, and The Wilbur and Hilda Glenn Family Foundation. We have also built new relationships with the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, The Kaiser Permanente Foundation, The James M. Cox Foundation, The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, and the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. In addition, we worked with a very talented intern to research the Fortune 1000 companies located here in Georgia. We have researched each company's giving and identified those that our work aligns with. We are looking forward to continuing to build new partnerships in 2022 and are grateful for each and every relationship we have made to date.

New RG Executive Board Members

This year we also welcomed two new Resilient Georgia Executive Board members, Ms. Fabricia Prado and Mr. Michael O'Neal. They have jumped right in and after only two meetings have added so much to the conversation.

Fabricia Prado is a trilingual licensed clinical social worker with seasoned experience and strong commitment to serving the needs of diverse populations. She is owner of Prado Counseling and Consulting in Marietta, Ga. She is a Certified Child and Adolescent Trauma Professional (CATP) and a master trainer and speaker on ACEs. She has served in leadership roles at CEPTA, Inc. in their telecounseling program and works with the National Latino Behavioral Health Association (NLBHA) under their cultural and linguistic approach to expand training resources and webinars to include Brazilian Portuguese and Spanish. Fabricia earned her Master of Social Work from Kennesaw State University and Master of Psychology and bachelor's in psychology from Pontifical University Catholic of Goiás, Brazil.



Michael O'Neal is a leader in creating nurturing, community-empowering and capacity-building spaces. A founder of Parent University, he serves as the Executive Director of Community United Services Inc., the entity that manages the Parent University program. Currently, he is facilitating Parent University and its component pieces in several other cities throughout the U.S. He also hosts the TV show "Parent University TV". He previously managed a pilot project called the Strong Families Program to give parental training to the parents of youth considered at risk by the schools or courts. He has co-facilitated Parental Engagement seminars at locations in Georgia and South Carolina in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Education, which was featured on Georgia Public Broadcasting. He serves on the Advisory Board of the Savannah Early Childhood Foundation and has served on many Boards or councils in the Savannah area, including the Healthy Savannah Board of Directors. O'Neal has been the recipient of numerous awards over his storied career, most recently receiving the Georgia Senate Resolution 639 commendation for 20 plus years of achievement with Parent University.



RESILIENT GEORGIA LEADERS & STAFF

Resilient Georgia Staff

As you can see over the last year we have grown by leaps and bounds and much of our growth is because we have a wonderful addition to our small team. We are thrilled to introduce you to our Director of Strategy and Operations, [Neha Mehta Khanna](#). Neha is passionate about advancing public health innovation in children's healthcare within local and global communities. As Director of Strategy and Operations for Resilient Georgia, she advances our organization's mission to lead a state-wide coalition to develop a closely aligned and trauma-informed public and private network working toward a united vision to create a birth through 26-year-old integrated behavioral health system. She leads special projects in support of organizational goals, directs system planning and guides operational functions for the nonprofit. Khanna's expertise builds on over a decade of management consulting experience across corporate and social sectors in the U.S. and abroad. She began her consulting career with Deloitte Consulting, where she worked to improve patient outcomes across diverse healthcare delivery organizations, and later as an internal consultant for Deloitte's corporate strategy team. Prior to joining Resilient Georgia, she worked as project director for the CEO at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.



Resilient Georgia Learning Experiences

Education is at the heart of all we do. That said, we have really embraced our interns over the last year. We have learned so much from each of them and are incredibly grateful to have their bright minds join the Resilient Georgia family.

Our 2021 interns included:

- Stephanie Michelle Basey, Resilient Georgia 2021 PhD Intern, Mercer University School of Medicine
- Cameron Bates, Resilient Georgia 2021 Undergraduate Communications Intern, University of Texas- Austin
- Ezri Bidinger, Resilient Georgia Undergraduate Communications and Special Projects Intern, University of Central Florida
- Gbemi Famisole, Resilient Georgia 2020-2021 MPH Intern, Emory University
- Ari Fodeman, Resilient Georgia 2020-2021 PhD Intern, Georgia State University
- Gracie Kleinbardt, Resilient Georgia 2021 Undergraduate Communications Intern, Bucknell University
- Arnelle Kondo, Resilient Georgia 2021 MPH Intern, Emory University
- Jessica Koreis, Resilient Georgia 2021 MPH Intern, Georgia State University
- Chidinma Ohanele, Resilient Georgia 2020-2021 MPH Intern, Emory University
- Donna Talavari, Resilient Georgia 2020-2021 Undergraduate Communications and Special Projects Intern, University of Texas- Austin

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

Resilient Georgia Learning Experiences

In addition to our internships, this year we worked with Dr. Cecile Janssens from Emory University. Dr. Janssens teaches at the Rollins School of Public Health and her courses include Critical Thinking, Grant Writing, and Scientific Writing, and she moderates the capstone projects and the journal club for their PhD students. This year we have the luxury of partnering with her and her Epidemiology students and their Capstone projects. They worked hard to analyze available ACEs related state data sets for us (Kids Count and the Georgia Student Health Survey). Each group was provided a content area to focus on, and they created reports and infographics for each of our (then) eight regional grantees. This was a huge win for Resilient Georgia and our regional partners, and the students were able to learn about ACEs and our state landscape.

As you can see, we have been very busy over the last year! Thank you for joining us on our journey and being a core partner in this work. Please contact us at any time to learn more about our work or to identify how we can bolster our partnership.

Thank you for your support and partnership, and we look forward to continuing our collective work and partnership next year!



Thank You To Our Supporters

Dr. Lucky Jain and Family

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation

The Healthcare Georgia Foundation

The James M. Cox Foundation

The Jesse Parker Williams Foundation

The Kaiser Foundation Health Plan

The Pittulloch Foundation

The Richard and Karen Parker Family Charitable Fund

The Wilbur and Hilda Glenn Family Foundation

Questions or feedback?

Contact info@resilientga.org.



For more information, visit resilientga.org.