



RESILIENT
COMMUNITIES
OF EAST GEORGIA

20
24

RCEGA ANNUAL REPORT

[RESILIENTCOMMUNITIESGA.ORG](https://resilientcommunitiesga.org)

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About Resilient Georgia Regional Coalitions

Resilient Georgia has been working with 16 regions across Georgia to provide an emphasis on trauma-informed awareness and care, Adverse Childhood Experiences (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.
- In November of 2019, Resilient Georgia began partnering with Round 1 regional coalitions based out of Athens, Augusta, Macon, Savannah and surrounding areas. Round 2 partnerships began in July 2020 with regional coalitions based out of Albany, Columbus, Rome, Thomasville and surrounding areas. Round 3 partnerships began in March 2021 with regional coalitions based out of Clayton, Cobb, Gwinnett, Valdosta and surrounding areas. Round 4 partnerships began in December 2021 with regional coalitions based out of Atlanta, Brunswick, Gainesville, and Waycross and the surrounding areas.
- In their third and fourth years of partnership with Resilient Georgia, coalitions have bolstered their work to create bold, systemic, sustainable change in consistent ways across statewide issues, to affect policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change and incorporated a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) lens in their action plans.
- In their fifth and sixth years of partnership, coalitions were to deepen their efforts to effectively engage partners across all regional counties, ensuring comprehensive representation and participation, particularly in under-resourced and historically underserved areas.

Coalition priorities for Year 5 and 6 to align with Resilient Georgia's 2023-2025 strategic map:

- Develop and Implement Coordinated Trauma-Informed Practices across Systems (A)
 - Implement Trauma-Informed Practices (A3)
 - Promote the Adoption of Evidence Based Practices to Prevent ACEs and Foster PCEs (A4)
- Build Awareness and a Common Language/Understanding about Adversity and Resilience (C)
 - Communicate, Promote, and Implement the Elements of a Common Language (C1)
 - Convene, Align, and Expand Existing Training Groups (C4)
- Advocate and Partner to Drive Policy and Systems Change (D)
 - Partner with Diverse Stakeholders to Drive a Policy Agenda Informed by the Community and Focused on Sustainable Systems Change (D2)
- Build Equitable Access to Early Prevention and Treatment (E)
 - Promote and Expand Equitable Access in Rural and Under Resourced Areas and Ensure Successful Participation and Intentional Engagement with Every County in the Region (E1)

Coalition Mission

We are committed to creating lasting change through a holistic, multi-faceted approach that addresses the root causes and long-term solutions to adverse childhood experiences, trauma-informed care and healing centered engagement.

Our Mission

Resilient Communities of East Georgia is to create a network of leaders trained on building resiliency in their regions to improve mental health and ACES awareness and resources. This network will empower people to improve the health and well-being across both public and private sectors and transform the East Central region of Georgia.

Our Vision

The vision of Resilient Communities of East Georgia is to give all people a voice in creating a resilient community across East Georgia so that every individual has the support and services they need to thrive and be successful.

Our Values

Compassion: We will show care and concern for each person's challenges and help to alleviate those burdens.

Integrity: We will be honest and hold steadfast in morals striving to do the right thing in a reliable way.

Diversity: We will represent and respect everyone's uniqueness varying from racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds and various lifestyles, experience, and interests.

Empathy: We will be aware of the feelings and emotions of all people showing kindness and a sincere interest in others.

Support: We will provide comfort and support through resources, prevention, and advocacy to all people.

Respect: We will listen and appreciate differences and admire each person's abilities, qualities, or achievements.



SUMMARY

We are committed to creating lasting change through a holistic, multi-faceted approach that addresses the root causes and long-term solutions to adverse childhood experiences, trauma-informed care and healing centered engagement.

The Resilient Communities of East Georgia coalition aims to:

- a. Improve the mental health and wellbeing of teens by offering opportunities to build their coping skills and enhance their understanding of their emotions and feelings through their participation in Resilient Teens.
- b. Advance the health-care workforce by exposing teens to young people in medical school and developing more trauma-informed physicians through their participation in Resilient Teens.
- c. Promote coordinated cross-sector trauma-informed initiatives across systems by educating community coalition members on Adverse Childhood Experiences and the power of Positive Childhood Experiences in mitigating the effects of ACEs.
- d. Build a common language around trauma, resilience and equity through trainings and community presentations.
- e. Advocate for change using a JEDI lens by ensuring diverse voices are included in decision-making.
- f. Create a sustainable model for regional collaboration and action by partnering with organizations with similar goals and values to work toward a common outcome.

Population of Focus:

To drive effective and sustainable change for the birth-to-26 population, Resilient Communities of East Georgia works with 14 Family Connection Collaboratives, local and regional providers, organizations, and individuals across all sectors of the community with a specific focus on teens and young adults.

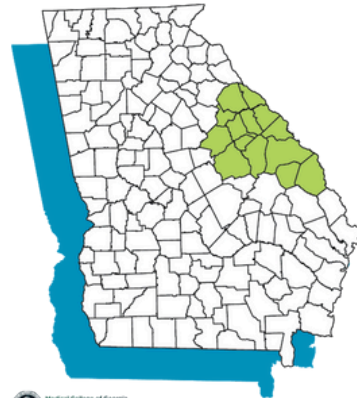


A REGIONAL RESOURCE FOR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Sign up to be a part of the Resilient Communities of East Georgia regional coalition and learn about resources and training opportunities.



SCAN HERE TO GET IN TOUCH



RCEGA LEADERSHIP

Dr. April Hartman, MD, FAAP

Dorothy A. Hahn, MD Endowed Chair in Pediatrics Associate Professor and Vice Chair of Diversity; Division Chief, General Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine Department of Pediatrics, Medical College of Georgia, Wellstar MCG Health

Julie Miller, MPA

Regional Manager, Georgia Family Connection Partnership

Dr. Melissa Bemiller, PhD

Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Sociology -
Department of Social Sciences Augusta University

Rebecca Best, MBA

Executive Director - RCEGA

Kari Viola-Brooke, LPC, CPCS

Executive Director - Child Enrichment

Caitlyn Brantley, LCSW

Prevention Services Director - Child Enrichment

Teresa Carter, M.ED., MNLM

Executive Director - CIS of Burke County-Family Connection, Inc.

Daravious Cullars

Executive Director - Lincoln County Community Partnership

M2 Medical Student Coordinators for Resilient Teens

Maya Stephens - Christy Daniel - Carrington Moore -
Hermela Beyene - Ishani Desai - Mary Elridge



Members of our leadership team at our First Annual Resilient Teens Summit.

Pictured L to R: Rebecca Best, Melissa Bemiller, Teresa Carter, Caitlyn Brantley, April Hartman and Julie Miller

COALITION PARTNERS

REGION 7 GEORGIA FAMILY CONNECTION

Teresa Carter, Communities in Schools of Burke County – Family Connection
Teka Jenkins, Columbia County Community Connections
Jennifer Kelley, Glascock – Communities in Schools and Family Connection
Regina Butts – Hancock County Communities in Schools and Family Connection
Chester Johnson, Ships for Youth, Jefferson County FC
Elaine Williams, Jenkins County Enrichment Center
Daravious Cullars, Lincoln County Community Partnership
Gail Taylor, McDuffie County Partners for Success
Candice Hillman, Augusta Partnership for Children, Richmond County FC
Cathy Kight, Screven County Community Collaborative
Mary Eubanks, Taliaferro County Family Connection
Allison McAfee, Washington County Family Connection
Emma Sinkfield, Warren County Family Connection
LaShaunder Elam- Lee, Wilkes County Community Partnership

ACADEMIC

Medical College of Georgia, Augusta University
Department of Social Sciences, Pamplin College of Arts, Augusta University

BUSINESS

M3 Agency
Elevate Business Solutions
Enoch Tarver Law Firm

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Wellstar MCG Health

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
Toombs Judicial Circuit (Glascock, Lincoln, McDuffie, Taliaferro, Warren, Wilkes)
Columbia County Juvenile Court
Richmond-Burke Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)

NON-PROFITS

Resourced Augusta – Angela Bakos
Child Enrichment, Inc.
HUB for Community Innovation

PRIVATE

The Community Foundation of CSRA
Medical College of Georgia Foundation
The Pittulloch Foundation
The Jesse Parker Williams Foundation

Message from our leaders

We are committed to creating lasting change through a holistic, multi-faceted approach that addresses the root causes and long-term solutions to adverse childhood experiences, trauma-informed care and healing centered engagement.

Our coalition continues to grow and evolve, and we welcome these pivotal changes that will positively impact the community we serve. Our leadership team benefitted from adding Dr. April Hartman as our new Principal Investigator. Dr. Hartman is dedicated to expanding the Resilient Teens program, bringing exciting new ideas to elevate its profile at Wellstar MCG Health, and increasing our collaborative partnerships.

With the addition of a collaborative partnership with Child Enrichment, we have expanded the Resilient Teen program to include therapists. Each Resilient Teens session now benefits from the presence of a CE therapist, ensuring that vital support is provided to teens as needed. CE Prevention Director Caitlyn Brantley is responsible for trauma-informed training, coalition convening, and ensuring our work aligns with the statewide Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan. Caitlyn plays a crucial role in planning our joint annual Trauma-Informed Summit.

At the end of year five, we committed to growing our capacity by hiring a full-time Executive Director for our coalition. Rebecca Best's expertise spans strategic planning, program development, fundraising, community outreach, and advisory support - critical services designed to propel organizations forward. Her extensive sales, marketing, and leadership background allows her to craft powerful strategies and foster connections that amplify organizational goals and social impact.

In addition, we acknowledge the upcoming annual transition among the Medical College of Georgia Coordinators. This group of remarkable Medical Student Coordinators has displayed creativity, hard work, and an eagerness to contribute, which have significantly advanced the goals of our grant. We sincerely appreciate their contributions and are proud of all they have achieved. While we will certainly miss these students, we are excited for their new endeavors.

As we navigate these transitions, we want to extend our profound appreciation to the Resilient Georgia staff and leadership for their invaluable support. Your dedication is essential as we embark on this new and exciting development phase.

Our unwavering commitment is to create lasting change through a holistic, multi-faceted approach that addresses root causes and long-term solutions to our challenges.

Key Impacts

The Resilient Communities of East Georgia (RCEGA) coalition focuses its efforts on educating the community on the impacts of trauma and strengthening support for programs and services serving teens in the east central region of Georgia, which includes rural, urban, and suburban areas of the 14-county catchment area. The coalition includes 14 Family Connection County collaboratives, Wellstar MCG Health, Augusta University, Child Enrichment and the Prevent Child Abuse Council of Greater Augusta. The East Georgia coalition created and successfully implemented a Resilient Teen program to address ACEs during the pandemic. Since then two virtual cohorts are taught annually, bringing our total served to 507 teens. This program also engaged 201 medical students to deliver the curriculum and guide the teens in the program, impacting the way future physicians will treat their patients. Each of these future doctors will bring a trauma-informed lens to the estimated 10,000 patients they will serve over their career.

New for 2024, we implemented a Resilient Teen summer program in partnership with Judge Jaye Jones and the Toombs Judicial Circuit and a grant from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and hosted our first annual Resilient Teens Summit.

Our coalition continues to build strong partnerships throughout the region, collect data for future endeavors, and embolden our online presence with our website and social media channels. New for 2024, we added monthly blog resources to both our Resilient Communities of East Georgia and Resilient Teens website as well as a merchandise store for program participants, collaborative partners, and the community at large to support RCEGA.



PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

- 10 cohorts of our 8-week program that 507 teens from 14 counties and 201 medical students have participated since inception



ADVOCACY AND PSE CHANGES

- Guest interview on WRDW The Morning Mix news program highlighting the RT Program and Summit
- New marketing push with Hope Givers Live programs scheduled for January 2025



TRAINING

- 420+ community members, collaborative partners, educators, medical students and other professionals have received Mandated Reporter, Darkness to Light, Safe Sanctuaries and/or Connections Matter training



RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

- 72% of teens now talk to a trusted adult when feeling anxious or upset. This is a 33% increase from pre-program survey

Accomplishments: Year 5

Prevention / Intervention
Resilient Teens (RT) Program
9 cohorts of our 8-week program that 507 teens from 14 counties and 201 medical students have participated since inception
Established RT Summit where over 80 teens and parents came together for a day of learning and activities
RT Ambassadors pinned at RT Summit, highlighting their commitment to serve
Partnered with a Juvenile Court Judge and DJJ to bring Resilient Teens to court involved youth
Established Teen Advisory Council to engage teens and give them for of a voice in Resilient Teens
Expanding programmatic development to cover all childhood and adolescent age groups (0-26yrs) and better align with RG age group
Partnering with AU Occupational Therapists to support the CLIMBE program – sensory integration classroom, K-3 rd grade
Expanding RT program to middle school students through Hope Givers
Hope Givers LIVE scheduled in two middle schools –Richmond County and Burke County, both underserved & under resourced
Working to establish Resilient Teens Clubs within the schools we serve. Partnering with Free Your Feels thematic toolkits for monthly club discussions. Hornsby Middle School in Richmond County to pilot
Exploring connections with athletic trainers (sports medicine program) to serve as sponsors/adult allies of Resilient Teens Clubs in schools
Advocacy
Public Awareness Campaigns
Raised profile through expansion of communication efforts through printed collateral, social media, website, and community presentations
Guest interview on WRDW The Morning Mix news program highlighting the RT Program and Summit
New marketing push with Hope Givers Live programs scheduled for January 2025
HUB for Community Innovation
Participated in Books for Shay Community Literacy Fair in March
Participated in the Back to School event in July. Interacted with over 1500 attendees promoting the Resilient Teens program.
Augusta Partnership for Children
Participated in the Childrens Week Carnical in September. Promoted Resilient Teens program.
Children's Hospital of Georgia
Participated in first annual Advocacy for Children Day in April
Trainings
Annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference in Augusta
Led by Child Enrichment in April, Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness month
120 attendees
Training Collaboration with Child Enrichment
420+ community members, collaborative partners, educators, medical students and other professionals have received Mandated Reporter, Darkness to Light, Safe Sanctuaries and/or Connections Matter training
Research/Evaluation/Other Efforts
Resilient Teens Surveys
The coalition collects pre- and post-program surveys from teens and facilitators to assess the effectiveness of the program.
92% of teen participants agreed that they feel better prepared to manage issues after participating in the program.
91% of teens report a better understanding of mental health care.
72% of teens now talk to a trusted adult when feeling anxious or upset. This is a 33% increase from pre-program survey
Resilient Teens Curriculum
Established partnership with Hope Givers to roll out HG curriculum
Standardize Coordinator and Facilitator Training
Harrisburg Family Medicine and Child Enrichment, Inc.
Dr. April Hartman serves on the Board of Directors for both organizations
Policy, Systems, Environmental (PSE) Change
Diversity RT Coordinators and Facilitators
Expanding process to incorporate college students from varied disciplines as facilitators as number of teens increases
JEDI Integration
Incorporated JEDI principles into all coalition building activities, decision-making processes, partnerships, and service delivery
Resilient Teens Long-Term Impact on Healthcare
Since the inception of this program, the coalition has aimed to influence the future of medical students incorporating trauma-informed care into their practices
HUB for Community Innovation
Working with HUB leadership for inclusion as one of the non-profits housed within their center as part of an expansion that is planned

Accomplishments: Year 5



Julie Miller, Regional Manager, Georgia Family Connection Partnership, at the Augusta Partnership for Children event, Children's Week Carnical



Rebecca Best, Executive Director, RCEGA at the HUB for Community Innovation Back to School event in July

TIC + ACES Related Efforts

Prevention/Intervention
Advocacy and PSE Change
Training
Research and Evaluation

To ensure that all 14 counties are implementing a trauma-informed approach in delivering programs and services in their communities, each county includes trauma-informed training as part of their collaborative development process in their annual strategic plan. This increases the knowledge of trauma-informed practices with community partners and embeds it into the daily work of the Collaborative and promotes sustainability.

The Resilient Teens program is included in the annual plan for all 14 counties and sets recruitment goals for each county. The statement explains what the program is and its goals: Virtual 90-minute skill-building and mentoring sessions conducted once a week for eight weeks that teach resiliency and encourage youth to make positive life choices that affect their mental and emotional health. Held twice per year.

Each county is also required to use an equity lens when preparing its plan:

- assume all populations have inherent value and assets,
- consider the impact of decision-making on historically underserved populations, which are groups that have been excluded or received very limited benefits from programs and services,
- disaggregate data and differentiate strategies to focus and meet the needs of each sector of the population served,
- consider population needs in the distribution of resources (financial and otherwise), and/or
- consider and actively work to change the systems, practices, and policy decisions that may disadvantage a population.

Each county received six hours of systems change training in 2024 to help coordinators and partners understand the elements necessary to make lasting changes to systems to promote equity and healing-centered practices.

TIC + ACES Related Efforts

Prevention/Intervention
Advocacy and PSE Change
Training
Research and Evaluation

In an effort to meet the JPI requirements, we are expanding our reach. We will continue to recruit teens for our virtual sessions however, we wish to also host in-person sessions during the school day in counties where there are JPI teens. This expansion is based on feedback we have received from teens and facilitators.

We started Resilient Teens when Covid hit, and teens were desperate to connect with their peers. We filled that gap with virtual programming. Now that teens have more opportunities to be with their peers, we see that they are choosing in-person activities. In response to that, we are creating an in-school option that school administrators seem to welcome to address disciplinary issues. We plan to continue to hold true to the near-peer model by having near-peers, who are from diverse college student populations, as a major part of facilitation and interaction with the teens.

We seek to provide Resilient Teens to teens who are referred through DJJ, alternative school settings, in-school suspension students, as well as teens who are referred due to bullying, fighting and other negative behaviors. Our goal is to make a positive impact on these teens and the community as a whole. We wish to utilize this grant to help those teens who have already been referred to DJJ but, also deter those teens who are headed down the wrong path. We want to truly work the grant's title "Juvenile Prevention and Intervention.

Last year, 40 of our targeted JPI teens registered for the program.

Unfortunately, only 18 successfully completed. When discussing the JPI teens with other Family Connection Coordinators, school personnel, parents and community members, the majority of individuals believe that we would be more successful if the sessions for JPI teens, those who are not ordered by a judge to participate, are in-person. In-person sessions will give us readily assembled groups assigned by the school.

Being able to offer an in-person group within the school hours and a virtual out-of-school hours experience will allow us to reach more teens that meet the JPI definition of the population we need to focus on. We will work with DJJ, Juvenile Court and the schools to determine which option would work best for the students they serve.

Resilient Teens Program

Teaching Resilience

5 PILLARS OF RESILIENCE

Resilience is made up of five pillars. By strengthening these pillars, we in turn, become more resilient.

- Self-Awareness
- Mindfulness
- Self-Care
- Positive Relationships
- Purpose



Want to know how to...
BOUNCE BACK & MOVE FORWARD?

If you are a teen, sign up for

THE ROAD TO RESILIENCE

it's **FUN**
it's **INTERACTIVE**
it's **VIRTUAL**

NO COST TO ATTEND

If you attend all sessions, you get **\$100**
(ages 13-19)

REGISTER ONLINE:

www.resilientteens.org



What's needed:

90
minutes
a week

8
weeks



"It allows me to understand others and their way of seeing things. It also allows me to connect with people based off of what we have in common."

"The resilient sessions taught me how to better care for myself in times of hardships and learn how to bounce back as good as new."

"I loved all of the conversations - they made me think and feel new and different things. Feeling connected with my small group, it's a safe space for me."

"I loved all of the conversations - they made me think and feel new and different things. Feeling connected with my small group, it's a safe space for me."

507
TEENS

14
COUNTIES

201
MEDICAL STUDENTS

Training

CONNECTIONS MATTER



- (4 HOURS)
 - Connections Matter is an in-person and virtual training designed to engage community members in building caring connections to: improve resiliency, prevent childhood trauma, and understand how our interactions with others can support those who have experienced trauma.
 - <https://cmgeorgia.org/>
 - 64 people trained in 2024
-

MANDATED REPORTER



- (90 MINUTES)
 - This training is in-person or virtual. It is designed to help child serving professionals and volunteers who suspect child abuse respond legally and morally. This meets the yearly training requirement for schools and youth serving organizations.
 - <https://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/training/>
 - 490 people trained in 2024
-

DARKNESS TO LIGHT STEWARDS OF CHILDREN



- (2.5 HOURS)
 - This training is in-person or virtual. Prevention training featuring real people and real stories about protecting children from sexual abuse. Participants learn how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.
 - <https://www.d2l.org/education/stewards-of-children/>
 - 66 people trained In 2024
-

SAFE SANCTUARIES



- (2 HOURS)
- This training is for local churches working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. It covers the basics of Safe Sanctuaries and why it's important for your local church to implement it. In your local setting, you will find it is easier to follow directives and put boundaries in place if you understand why it is necessary.
- <https://www.sgaumc.org/safesanctuaries>
- 66 people trained in 2024

Research and Evaluation

RESILIENT TEENS PROGRAM SUMMARY

Since the beginning of the Resilient Teens Program, not including the current cohort that is in process, we have completed eight cohorts and 2 pilot groups—one in 2020 and one in 2024 (where we ran an in-person program). Total, we have had 507 teens representing all 14 counties successfully complete the Resilient Teens Program. We have also had over 200 medical school students serve as facilitators in our program and 17 coordinators. In cohort 9, which will be concluding this fall, we have 25 teens participating virtually and 9 teens participating in person. We also have 21 facilitators participating virtually and 1 in-person facilitator.

The Resilient Teens Program Part One consists of eight lessons:

- 1) Introduction/ACES
- 2) Coping with Stress
- 3) Self-Awareness & Mindfulness
- 4) Body Image
- 5) Suicide Training
- 6) Self-Care
- 7) Purpose & Goal-Setting
- 8) Finale

The Resilient Teens Program Part Two consists of eight lessons:

- 1) Introductions and ACEs
- 2) Under (Peer) Pressure
- 3) Finances
- 4) Mental Health
- 5) I Love Myself and Food
- 6) Career Exploration
- 7) Conflict Resolution
- 8) Finale

For our evaluation purposes, we give a pre-program survey and a post-program survey. The pre-program survey is given to both the teens and facilitators during the first session of the program. These serve as a baseline to understand the current level of knowledge and perceptions that the teens and facilitators have and allow us to ask about the training for the facilitators. The post-program survey is given to both the teens and facilitators at the end of the last session. This is given to assess if there is a change in attitude or perception. Our post-program survey completion rates are 78% from teens and 98% from facilitators. We have had a total of 396 teens and 202 facilitators complete the post-program surveys.

	Teens (N=396)	Facilitators (N=202)
Age		
Mean	15.13	24
Median	15	23
Range	12 - 19	21 - 32

Research and Evaluation

	n	Percent	n	Percent
Gender				
Female	257	65%	135	67%
Male	133	34%	65	32%
Non-conforming	7	2%	2	1%
Ethnicity				
Black	275	69%	43	21%
White	90	23%	73	36%
Asian	8	2%	70	35%
Other	24	6%	16	9%

We have had 507 teens successfully complete the program and 397 completed the post-program survey. The teens were between 12 and 19 with the average age being 15 years old. Sixty-five percent (257) of the teens identified as female, 34% (133) identified as male, and ~2% (7) identified as gender nonconforming. The teens were also asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity; 69% (275) identified as Black or African American, 23% (90) identified as White or Caucasian, 2% (8) identified as Asian, and 6% (24) identified as Other.

We have had over 200 medical students serve as facilitators and 202 completed the post-program survey. The facilitators were between 21 and 32 with the average age being 24 years old. Sixty-seven percent (135) of the facilitators identified as female and 32% (65) identified as male. The facilitators were also asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity; 21% (43) identified as Black or African American, 36% (73) identified as White or Caucasian, 35% (70) identified as Asian, and 9% (16) identified as Other.

Almost all the teens (95%) mentioned that the small group portion of the sessions were their favorite part of the program. Other favorite parts included the activities, feeling heard and safe, being able to talk with others, and learning about their own self-worth. Notably, during the pre-test survey, over seventy percent of the teens indicated that they did not know how to properly express their feelings. After completing the program, nearly all the teens mentioned that they feel the program helped them to better understand (82%) and express (77%) their feelings. Additionally, 72% of the teens (an increase of about 33%) said that they now “talk to somebody” when they are feeling upset, anxious, or sad after completing the program.

Ninety-one percent of teens indicated that after completing the Resilient Teens Program, they have a better understanding of mental health care with 86% indicating a better understanding of ways to care for their own mental Health. Additionally, teens mentioned that they feel more comfortable discussing depression (88%), anxiety (88%), and suicide (84%) after completing Resilient Teens Program. Finally, 89% of teens said they would recommend this program to other teens.

POST-PROGRAM SURVEY RESULTS FOR 2024

In 2024, we have had one cohort complete the Resilient Teens Program and we completed a successful in-person pilot cohort. We are nearly finished with another virtual and in-person cohort. We had planned to hold our last session this week, but we were unfortunately hit hard by Hurricane Helene causing widespread damage to our area. Over a month later, several are still without internet. This has delayed the completion of our fall cohorts. We just completed session five on 11/4/2024, but and

Research and Evaluation

therefore, the data analysis will not include the fall cohorts. In our current cohort, we have 25 teens participating virtually and 9 participating in person. We also have 21 facilitators for our virtual cohort and 1 facilitator for our in-person cohort. Combining these cohorts from 2024, we had 95 teens, and 26 facilitators complete the pre-program survey. We collected a total of 57 post-test surveys from Cohort eight in Spring 2024 and the pilot in the summer of 2024. Overall, we received results from 43 teens and 14 facilitators.

For cohort eight, we had Resilient Teens Part One and Resilient Teens Part Two. Combining both parts, our eighth cohort contained 41 teens who successfully completed the program. The teens were led by 14 facilitators and 6 coordinators, all of which are medical school students. Concerning the teens, we collected a total of 40 post-program surveys: 22 from Part One and 18 from Part Two. Concerning the facilitators, we collected a total of 14 post-program surveys: 10 from Part One and 4 from Part Two. Below are some highlights from the cohort.

Demographics of both the facilitators and teens can be seen in Table 2 for parts one and two. We had 14 facilitators for spring and summer 2024 and 14 completed the post-program survey. All of our facilitators were between the ages of 21 to 27 with the average age being 24 years old. Ninety-three percent (13) identified as female while 7% (1) identified as male. The facilitators were also asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity; 43% (6) identified as Black or African American, 14% (2) identified as White or Caucasian, 36% (5) identified as Asian, and 14% (2) identified as being two or more races.

We had 41 teens successfully complete the program and 40 complete the post-program survey. Additionally, we held an in-person pilot program where we had four teens successfully complete the program, but only three completed the post program survey. Unfortunately, a lot of questions were left blank. We include the pilot teens in the demographic section, but not in the rest as there is too much missing data.

The teens were between 13 and 19 with the average age being 15 years old. Seventy-two percent (31) of the teens identified as female and 28% (12) identified as male. The teens were also asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity; 56% (24) identified as Black or African American, 33% (14) identified as White or Caucasian, and 12% (5) answered that they were two or more race/ethnicities.

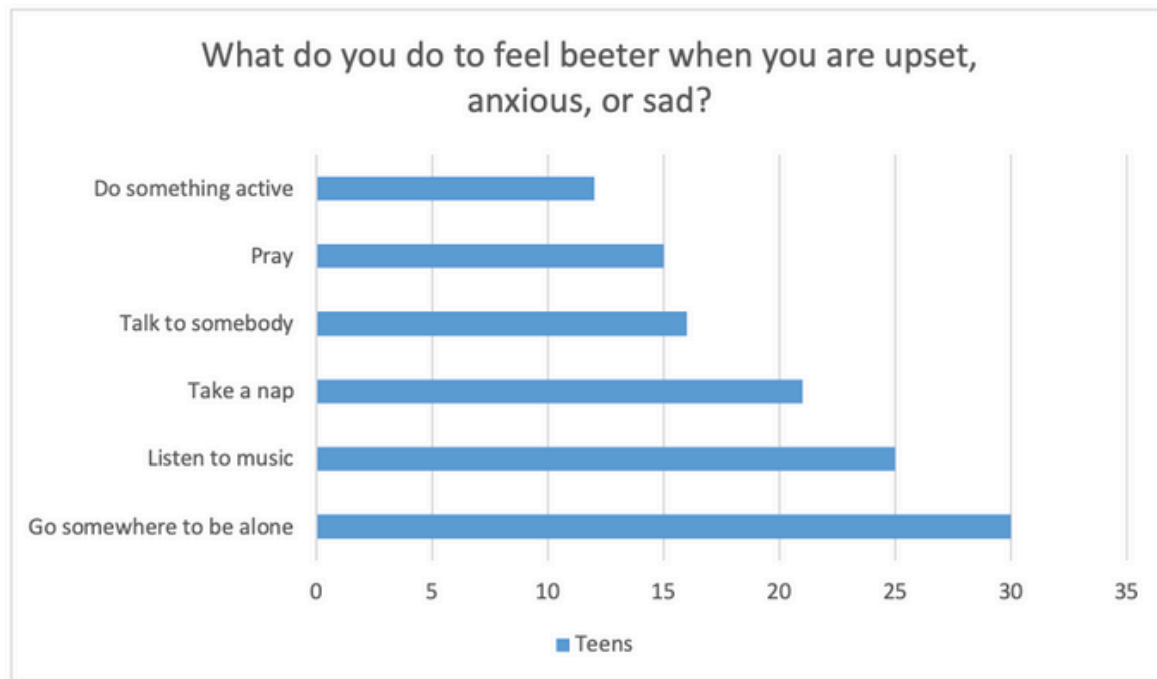
	Teens (N=43)		Facilitators (N=14)	
Age				
Mean	15.05		23.8	
Median	15		24	
Range	13 - 19		21 - 27	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
Gender				
Female	31	72%	13	93%
Male	12	28%	1	7%
Non-conforming	-	-	-	-
Ethnicity				
Black	24	56%	6	43%
White	14	33%	2	14%

Research and Evaluation

Asian	-	-	5	36%
Hispanic	-	-	-	-
Two or More	5	12%	2	14%

In addition to demographics, we asked the participants a few other socio-demographic type questions. Eighty-six percent (12) of facilitators said they were religious or spiritual. Ninety percent (36) of the teens said they were religious or spiritual. Concerning living conditions, 75% (30) teens indicated that their mother and 45% (18) teens indicated that their father lived with them. Ninety-five percent (38) of the teens had siblings. While 55% (22) teens mentioned that they received free or reduced lunches, only 10% (4) mentioned that their family received SNAP benefits.

Most teens indicated that completing the Resilient Teens Program helped them to better understand, (98%, 39) and express (80%, 32) their feelings. Forty percent (16) of teens indicated that they talk to somebody when they are feeling upset, anxious, or sad. The top six responses for what they do when they feel upset, anxious, or sad were that they: go somewhere to be alone (75%, 30), listen to music (63%, 25), take a nap (53%, 21), talk to somebody (50%, 11), pray (40%, 16), or do something active (30%, 12).



We asked the teens to elaborate on how the program helped them to better understand and/or express their feelings. Some of the responses included:

- Teaching me how to walk away from situations and to learn how to speak up when going thru something
- I help me to realize what I was feeling, what made me feel that way and talk about it
- They helped me understand that many other people have the same problems as me

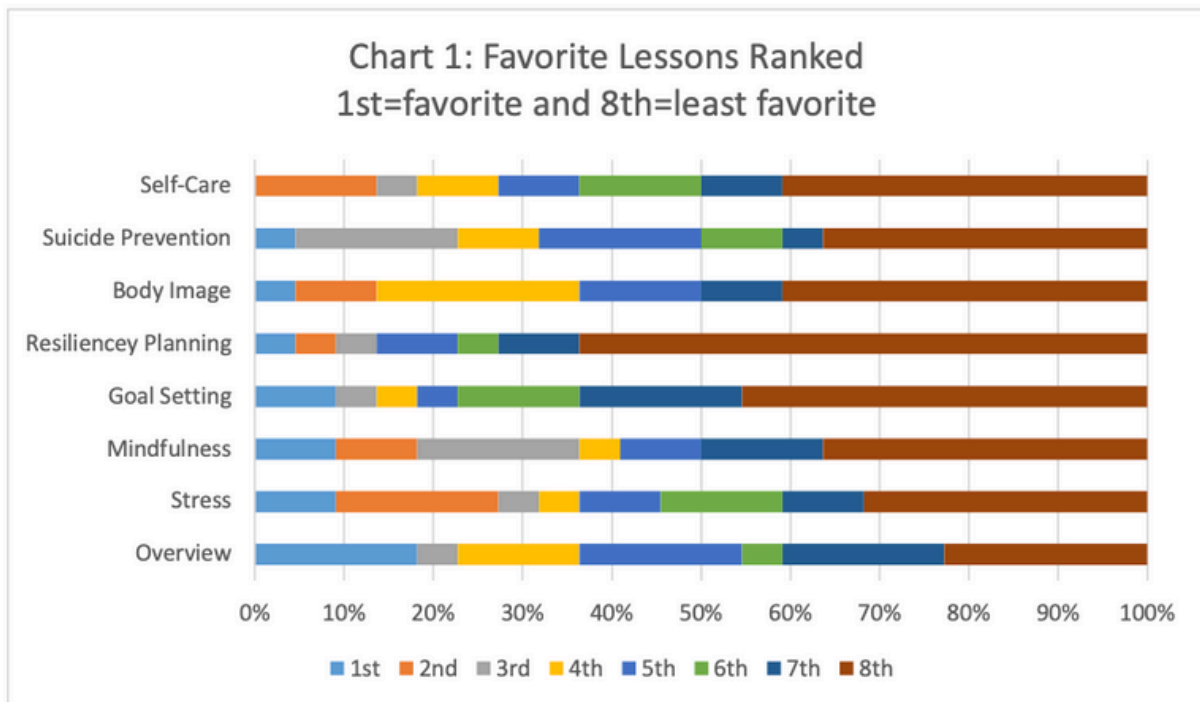
Research and Evaluation

- It helped me realize that other people are going through the same things as me, so I can better communicate with them since I know I won't be judged.
- It helped me open up a lot more and realize I don't have to keep it all to myself
- It helped me by telling me to talk to somebody about how i feel.
- I realize ways to help me better these feelings and I had to find and acknowledge them first.
- it taught me different ways to express myself
- It helped me communicate better with my different relationships

PART ONE OUTCOMES

While we had 26 teens complete a post-training survey, only 22 completed all of the questions so some of the following results are based on 22 teens instead of 26.

Favorite Lessons ranked, as seen in Chart 1, shows that the initial session, which was an overview of the program, was ranked as the favorite lesson by 18% (4) of the teens. Sixty-three percent (14) of the teens ranked Resiliency Planning, which is the last session, as their least favorite lesson.



All (100%, 22) of the teens indicated that this program helped them to become more aware of community issues and their impact. The teens indicated that completing the program helped them to understand and feel more comfortable talking about depression (19, 86%), anxiety (20, 91%), and suicide (18, 82%). They also all indicated that they are now more aware of the availability of community resources (20, 91%) and where to find them (91%, 20). Ninety-one percent (20) of the teens said they now understand better ways to care for their mental health.

Research and Evaluation

We asked the teens what they remembered learning about resiliency, adverse childhood experiences, positive childhood experiences, and trauma-informed care. The teens were varied in their responses. Concerning resiliency, they appeared to have a basic understanding of the topics and building blocks. They seemed to understand positive childhood experiences (PCEs) better than adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). They also showed a basic understanding of trauma-informed care (TIC). After analyzing the comments for all four (resiliency, ACEs, PCEs, and TIC) it appears that while there was a noticeable struggle discussing the individual meanings, the overall takeaways we intended were still present. Some comments include:

- I learned that to be resilient, you have to acknowledge yourself. By that I mean acknowledging your self-care!
- To love yourself because no one will love you like you. To control your stress and anxiety.
- I learned that there are other people going through the same thing I have went through and it showed me how I can have a positive way around things.
- I learned that many people go through many things in life, especially during their childhood. And they often don't know how to handle certain things, but this program has taught me that no matter what it is you can get through anything.
- I learned that this is a very sensitive topic and there are many different coping skills that are given to help cope with trauma.
- That a lot of people deal with trauma, and it can be different for everyone. Not everyone struggles with the same trauma, and it can affect people in different ways.
- I learned that there are people who care and want to help no matter what it is that you've been through.

At the end of the program, 91% (20) of the teens agreed that the topics were useful. Ninety-one percent (20) of the teens agreed that they understood the material, that they learned new things, and that they feel better prepared to manage issues after participating in the program. Ninety-five percent (21) agreed that the sessions were interesting, 86% (19) agreed that the sessions kept their attention, and 91% (20) agreed that the topics made them think about things that they have not thought about before.

Concerning challenges, they faced when attending the sessions, most (54%, 12) claimed that they did not experience any challenges. Those who did experience challenges to attend the sessions, 32% (7) discussed that there was weak internet or poor cell reception/data in their area, and 14% (3) indicated that their house was noisy and busy which made hearing and concentrating hard.

Most of the teens (86%, 19), said that they enjoyed the Resilient Teens Program as a whole and that they would recommend (95%, 21) it to other teens. We asked the teens to tell us in one or two sentences what their big take-a-ways from the program were and why they would recommend it.

Responses included:

- The biggest thing I've gained is gaining useful knowledge not only for me but also for others.
- How to handle stress and love myself
- That I am not alone in this world
- How to look at situations differently in a positive way.
- Mental health is a big part of your everyday life.

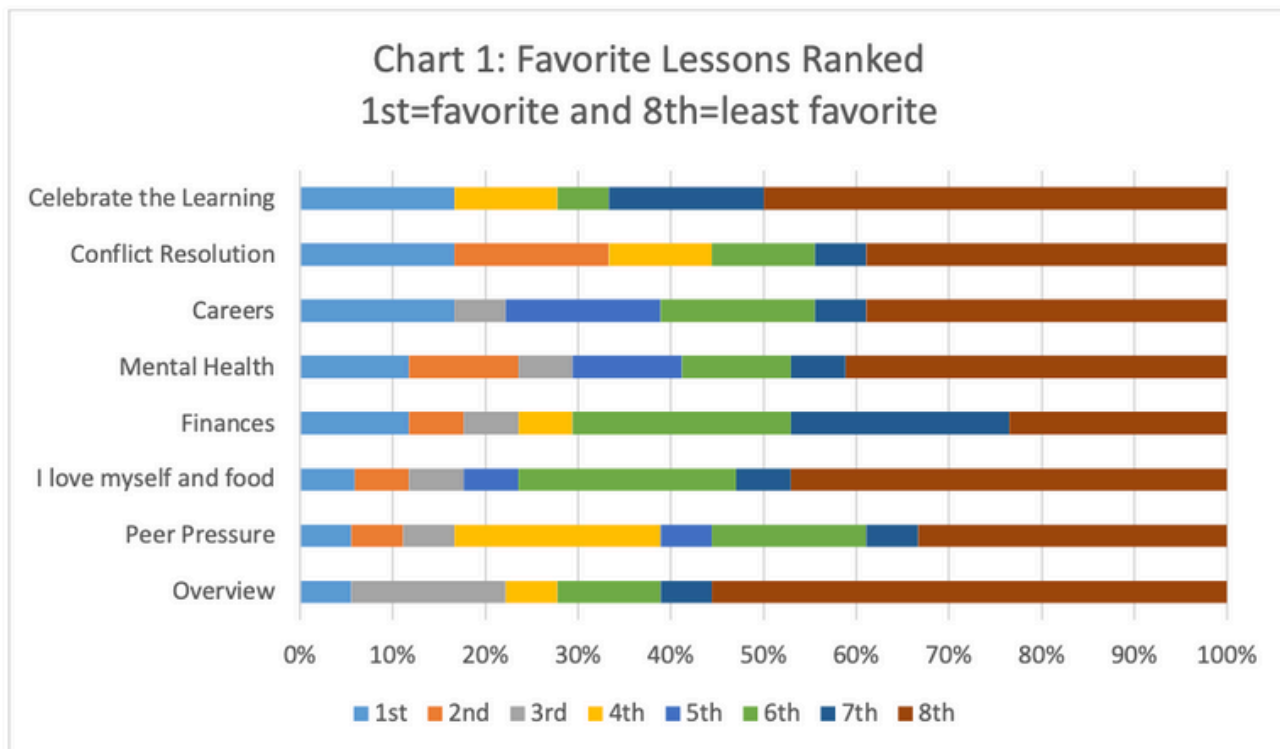
Research and Evaluation

Ten facilitators took the post-program survey. When we asked the facilitators about challenges they faced when facilitating the sessions, 60% (6) claimed that they did not experience any challenges. Those who did experience challenges mentioned a lack of teen participation (5, 19%), technology issues (10%, 1.) At the end of the program, 90% (9) facilitators felt that the teens had a good understanding of resiliency, 100% (10) felt that the teens had a good understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences and Positive Childhood Experiences, and 80% (8) felt the teens understood Trauma-Informed Care. All 100% (10) of the facilitators said that they enjoyed the Resilient Teens Program as a whole and that they would recommend it to other facilitators. Some of their comments regarding their experience include:

- I do really think it can help teens grow in the right situation, I think it's a great source of hours and mentorship for other med students too.
- It is a good program that is not too time consuming, and the children appeared to have enjoyed it
- It is good to expose them to complex and important topics

PART TWO OUTCOMES

We had 18 teens complete the post-program survey. Favorite Lessons ranked, as seen in Chart 1, shows that the sessions on Celebrate the learning (last session of the program), conflict resolution, and careers, tied for being ranked as the favorite lesson by 17% (3) of the teens. Fifty-six percent (10) of the teens also ranked Celebrate the Learning as their least favorite session.



Research and Evaluation

At the end of the program, 89% (15) of the teens agreed that the topics were interesting, useful, and kept their attention; and that they learned something new from the program. Eighty-nine percent (16) of the teens agreed that they understood the material and indicated that they feel better prepared to manage issues after participating in the program. Seventy-two percent (13) mentioned that the topics made them think about things that they have not thought about before.

Concerning challenges, they faced when attending the sessions, most (50%, 9) claimed that they did not experience any challenges. Those who did experience challenges to attend the meeting, 39% (7) discussed that there was no internet, weak internet, or that cell data/service was bad in their area.

Nearly all, 89% (16), of the teens said that they enjoyed the Resilient Teens Program as a whole and that they would recommend it to other teens. We asked the teens to tell us in one or two sentences what their big take-a-ways from the program were and why they would recommend it. Responses included:

- Having self-control and dealing with different situations
- Self-Positivity
- It's okay to be different
- How to communicate better
- learning about things I probably wouldn't in school

Four post-program surveys were completed by the facilitators for part 2. When we asked the facilitators about challenges they faced when facilitating the sessions, 100% (4) claimed that they did not experience any challenges. At the end of the program, 100% (4) of the facilitators felt that the teens had a good understanding of resiliency and Adverse Childhood Experiences, and 75% (3) felt that the teens understood Trauma-Informed Care and Positive Childhood Experiences. All the facilitators (100%, 4) said that they enjoyed the Resilient Teens Program as a whole and that they would recommend it to other facilitators. Some of their comments regarding their experience include:

- great program to learn from and chance to work with teens
- I think this is a great space for teens and facilitators to learn. There is great conversation that can be valuable to all people
- I thought the sessions were very informative both for teens and for myself, and I'm optimistic that the teens can take nuggets to implement in their lives for the better.

We asked the teens if the program helped them to think about plans after high school, and 94% (17) agreed that it did. While most (56%, 10) indicated they are planning to go to college, other options mentioned included becoming an actress, becoming a hair stylist, and attending a tech/trade school. When asked how teens see themselves when they look in the mirror, their responses were mostly positive. Sixty-one percent (11) indicated that Resilient Teens helped them to see themselves more positively.

Research and Evaluation



Part two also discussed healthy habits. Most teens (83%, 15) indicated the program helped them about eating healthy foods, about the importance of being active, and to have a better understanding of finances. Ninety-four percent (17) indicated that Resilient Teens helped them to better understand what healthy relationships look like.

SUGGESTIONS

We also asked the facilitators if they had any suggestions for future cohorts. While nearly all indicated that they enjoyed the setup/training, weekly structure, and topics, there were a few suggestions. Their suggestions are as follows:

- A student suggested the inclusion on bullying as a topic, and that it could go with session 5.
- My group also responded well to games as a form as engagement so maybe that could be incorporated into the lessons somehow

The teens were also asked what they thought could make the program better. Half (50%,40) discussed that they wouldn't change anything about the program. Other suggestions included:

- Expand the topics
- More interactive activities
- Use more inclusive language, ex: parent vs caregivers

Further, we asked the teens which topics they would have liked to discuss. Some of the suggestions can be found in part two. Some suggestions included:

- Bullying
- Drugs

Finally, we asked the teens to tell us there biggest takeaway from the program. All of the comments were positive and most discussed positive thinking and emotional well-being. Below represents the most common words used.

Research and Evaluation



NEXT STEPS

- 1) External Evaluation
IRB has approved an external evaluation.
- 2) We will implement a 6-month follow-up survey to the teens who successfully completed the program
- 3) We will also discuss additional ways to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the Resilient Teens Program and of Resilient Community of East Georgia.

Innovative Partnerships



Since 2023, our partnership with Child Enrichment has enabled us to align our Child Abuse Prevention work with building a trauma-informed community. This partnership brings increased resources, expertise, and community engagement, which significantly enhances our efforts in preventing child abuse.

With our active participation, the Child Enrichment's Prevention Services Director engages the RCEGA Coalition meetings to include the Prevent Child Abuse Council members. This collective effort brings more participants to the table, ensuring a comprehensive approach to our work.

Partnering with Child Enrichment has created an opportunity to provide therapists during Resilient Teens sessions if a teen experiences a triggering or traumatic moment.

Additionally, the RCEGA Adult Summit merged with the Child Abuse Prevention Conference. This exposed more community partners to trauma-informed practices and allowed us to add a Teen Summit for our Resilient Teen program graduates. Our collaboration and involvement in this broader community engagement is a testament to the impact we can make together.



Conversations began this year with Hope Givers, an organization committed to resilience, advocacy, connectedness, goal setting, and mentoring. Developed by award-winning producers of videos/films, their sincere desire to help teens stems from personal experience, as the founder initiated the program after a dear friend from high school died by suicide.

The Hope Givers team, in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Education, has meticulously aligned the topics with health education standards and created activities to accompany the 15-minute videos, featuring young people (social media influencers) who resonate with teens.

We are working closely with Tamlin Hall, the creator, and his team to ensure the content is delivered within our near-peer model. In addition, his work is featured on Georgia Public Broadcasting. Locally, we are working with Adam Kowalczyk (Coach K) from Davidson Fine Arts High School in Richmond County. He assisted in the development of the curriculum and will be training our facilitators on the model.

Spotlight: Resilient Teens Summit



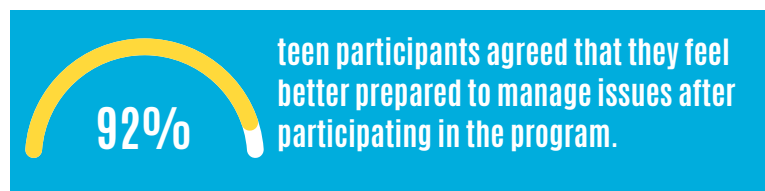
On Saturday, August 24, 2024, the Resilient Teens Summit took place, embracing the theme "Resiliency is Our Superpower." The event kicked off bright and early at 9:00 am with arrival and registration, where participants were greeted with a light breakfast snack. As the program began, attendees found themselves welcomed warmly, where they learned about the day's schedule and connected with peers who had previously completed the Resiliency Training (RT) program.

To break the ice, a fun Human Bingo activity started shortly after, encouraging everyone to find common characteristics among themselves for a chance to win prizes. Participants settled in for a calming Chair Yoga and Mindfulness exercise led by medical students from the Medical College of Georgia. This session was a perfect transition to the insightful talks that followed. The first speaker, Dan Rogers, Executive Director of Scouting America, shared his experiences on resiliency and coping with stress and gave lessons learned from his remarkable 13,000 miles of backpacking.

The next speaker, Juvenile Court Judge Jaye Jones, took the stage, focusing on the importance of purpose and goal setting. Midway through the morning, participants recognized the efforts of their peers with the presentation of the RT Ambassador pins, and the Resilience Award was presented to Juvenile Court Judge Jaye Jones for his work with youth.

Lunch provided a relaxing atmosphere for teens to unwind and socialize, encouraging connections and sharing experiences. Following lunch, Adam R. Kowalczyk, affectionately known as "Coach K," addressed the group on mental health, leading to a mixed group activity focused on peer pressure. Attendees next engaged in a meaningful table activity that encouraged reflection. Here, they were invited to rewrite their stories and think of new perspectives, jotting down their key takeaways from the day and writing letters to their future selves—a thoughtful gesture that the summit organizers promised to mail out a year later.

As the program wrapped up with closing remarks, the excitement for the Teen After Party grew. From 2:00 to 4:00 pm, attendees could let loose and enjoy the festivities with a DJ and games, celebrating their newfound connections and resilience.



Spotlight: Resilient Teens Summit



RESILIENT TEENS

9:00am Registration and Grab a breakfast snack!

9:20am Welcome + Why Are We Here

9:35am Human Bingo Icebreaker Activity

9:55am Mindfulness Exercise

10:10am Dan Rogers, Executive Director, Scouting America: Lessons Learned from 13,000 Miles of Backpacking

10:35am Bathroom break

10:45am Jaye Jones, Juvenile Court Judge: Purpose and Goal Setting

11:05am Resilience Award

11:15am Lunch break

12:00pm Adam R. Kowalczyk "Coach K", Davidson Fine Arts Magnet School: Hope. Resilience. Connectedness.

12:25pm Peer Pressure Group Activity

1:00pm Bathroom break

1:15pm Perspective Taking and Reflection

1:45pm Closing Remarks

2:00pm DJ Party + Games!

resilientteens.org

Spotlight: Resilient Teens Summit



Spotlight: Resilient Teens Summit



Spotlight: Resilience Award

THE RESILIENCE AWARD IS DESIGNED TO HONOR AND CELEBRATE INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, OR COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE DEMONSTRATED EXCEPTIONAL RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND TRANSFORM THEIR COMMUNITY INTO A PLACE WHERE ALL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THRIVE. THIS AWARD AIMS TO CONVEY THE IMPORTANCE OF RESILIENCE AND THE REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THOSE WHO EMBODY IT.

RECIPIENTS

2023 DR. KIMBERLY VESS, RCEGA FOUNDING MEMBER
2024 HONORABLE JAYE JONES, JUVENILE COURT JUDGE

MAY THIS AWARD SERVE AS A REMINDER OF THE STRENGTH THAT LIES WITHIN THE HUMAN SPIRIT.



Inspired Action

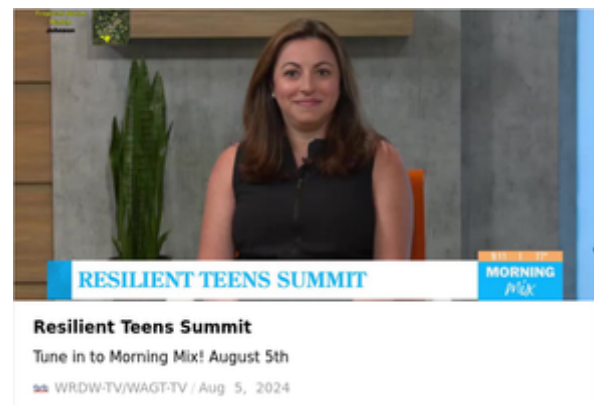


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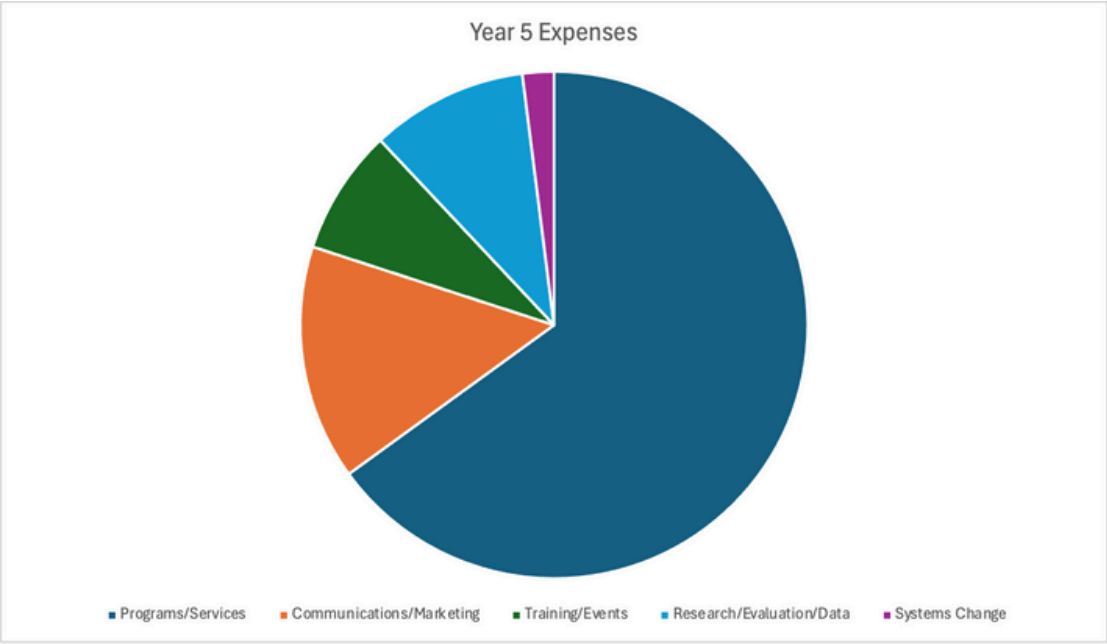
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In August, our now Executive Director, Rebecca Best, went on WRDW News 12 Morning Mix show to share details about the Resilient Teens Summit and the Resilient Teens program.



Income Statement

Revenue	
Resilient Georgia	\$ 250,000.00
Medical College of Georgia Foundation	\$ 50,000.00
Juvenile Prevention grant	\$ 100,000.00
Child Enrichment (in-kind)	\$ 50,000.00
Augusta University (in-kind)	\$ 25,000.00
Family Connection Region 7	\$ 25,000.00
	\$ 500,000.00
Expenses	
Programs/Services	\$ 325,000.00
Communications/Marketing	\$ 75,000.00
Training/Events	\$ 40,000.00
Research/Evaluation/Data	\$ 50,000.00
Systems Change	\$ 10,000.00
	\$ 500,000.00



Next Steps

Where do we go from here? Annual reports are great for looking back, but we also looking forward.

Resilient Communities of East Georgia continues to look for new ways to impact our region. This section outlines our strategy for continuing the good work done so far.

01

Prevention/Intervention + Research

We will work to expand the RT Program and look to adopt the CLIMBE* program into our coalition while maintaining evidence-based results.

*incorporates social emotional and sensory activities into OT and educational interventions to promote increased literacy outcomes in students

02

Advocacy and PSE

We will promote TIC + ACES awareness and collaborate with strong community partners to elevate the work of all.

03

Training

We will expand our training offerings across all 12 sectors of the Resilient Georgia map and across all 14 counties on our region.

Acknowledgements



THE PITTULLOCH FOUNDATION



Medical College of Georgia
FOUNDATION
AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY



Community
FOUNDATION

for the
Central Savannah
River Area



GEORGIA
family connection

**We thank you for your
continued support in
our efforts to contribute
to healing centered
engagement.**

Contact

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