



YEAR 4 Annual Report



RESILIENT
CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY



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About the 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.

Coalition Mission

Resilient Chattahoochee Valley is a regional initiative that seeks to improve outcomes for children and families in the Chattahoochee Valley through the implementation of 3 equity-based strategies: Resilient Chattahoochee Valley Coalition, The Basics Chattahoochee Valley, and Community Schools United. Collectively, these strategies aim to foster a resilient community where children enter school ready to learn, are supported academically, emotionally and socially, and graduate high school on time ready for college or career. Visit our website to learn more at www.resilientcv.org.

Summary

To achieve our mission, we combine United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley's child equity strategies together with a cross-sector of key stakeholders and partners to overcome barriers



that prevent children and families from thriving in our community. Efforts within the realms of Prevention and Intervention Strategies, Education and Training Opportunities, Research, and Influence on Policy, System, and Environmental Changes allow for Resilient Chattahoochee Valley to create sustainable changes across our region, positively impacting our shared level of resiliency.

United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley's foundational child-equity strategies that guide this work are outlined below:

The Basics Chattahoochee Valley is a community-wide initiative that strives to give every child a great start in life through focusing on the earliest years, enhancing children's social, emotional, and cognitive development through the five Basics Principles. The Basics are: Maximize Love, Manage Stress; Talk, Sing, and Point; Count, Group, and Compare; Explore through Movement and Play; and Read and Discuss Stories.

Community Schools United coordinates transformative services into the fabric of schools to support the whole child by following the national strategy's four evidence-based pillars: Collaborative Leadership and Practice, Family and Community Engagement, Expanded Learning Time, and Integrated Student Supports. Community Schools United eliminates barriers to success so that every child has the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Resilient Chattahoochee Valley Coalition increases knowledge and awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma, and resiliency by creating a common language and understanding around adversity, offering trainings and community engagement opportunities that encourage local trauma-informed practices and ACEs prevention, reduction, and intervention techniques, and convening regional partners to serve on a coalition tasked with creating policy, systemic, and environmental changes across the Chattahoochee Valley.



Snapshot of Key Impacts from Years 1 to 4

Resilient Chattahoochee Valley **SNAPSHOT** Years 1 -4



Resilient Chattahoochee Valley is a regional initiative that seeks to improve outcomes for children and families by aiming to foster a resilient community where children and families thrive.

Through the shared efforts of 3 child-equity strategies, support of strong community partnerships, and leadership from Resilient Georgia, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley has successfully completed 4 years of strategy implementation with the following highlights to share!

Conducted 158 Trainings to 3,231 Participants

Distributed 26,805 Books to build At Home Libraries

Led 57 Parent Workshops to 2,001 Parents

Convened a Coalition of over 70 Regional Partners

Partnered for 112 Outreach events reaching 8,763 Community Members

Expanded into 3 Community Schools in GA

Provided 229 Social Emotional Learning Interventions





Leadership Team and Contributors

Ben Moser: President and CEO, United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley bmoser@unitedcv.org

Betsy Covington: President and CEO, Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley, Inc. bcovington@cfcv.com

Jennifer St John: Senior Vice President, Impact jstjohn@unitedcv.org

Rachel Chambless: Director of Engagement rchambless@unitedcv.org

Sidney Houck: Director, Community Schools United shouck@unitedcv.org

Imani Jones: Manager, The Basics and Resilient Chattahoochee Valley ijones@unitedcv.org

Coalition Partners

Organization Name	Engaged Partner	Contact Information
Non-Profit		
2-1-1 United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley	Melinda Klamer	
Boys and Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley	Rodney Close Tavari Turner	
Business Inc.	Sherricka Day	
Chattahoochee Council, Boy Scouts of America	Tonya Dobbins	
Chattahoochee Valley Episcopal Ministry	Malinda Shamburger	
Columbus Alliance for Battered Women dba Hope Harbour	Lindsey Reis	
Columbus Wellness Center	Luella Rhodes	
Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley	Betsy Covington	
Easterseals West Georgia	Lakisha Taylor	
Empowered Youth of Columbus	Samantha Miller-Gurski	



Enrichment Services Program, Inc./Head Start, Early Head Start	Belva Dorsey, Kelvin Thomas, Mary Jean Miller, Toccarra Deberry, Sabrena Stephens	
Feeding the Valley Food Bank	Frank Sheppard	
Chattahoochee Valley Imagination Libraries (CVIL)	Warren Steele	
Georgia Center for Adolescent Power and Potential	Angel Young	
Georgia Center for Child Advocacy	Krista Gonce	
Gigi's Pearls	Shameika Averett	
Girls Scouts of Historic Georgia, Inc.	Rick Lemyre	
Goodwill Industries of the Southern Rivers	Tricia Llewellyn Kona n	
Greater Columbus GA Chamber of Commerce/Columbus 2025	Tabetha Getz	
Home for Good: A program of United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley	Pat Frey	
Love Like Lexi Project	Andrea Mills	
MercyMed of Columbus	Billy Holbrook	
Men Act This Way	Keith Mitchell	
Micah's Promise	Bobbi Starr	
Open Door Community	Kim Jenkins,	



House, Inc	Barbara Moushon	
Overflo Outreach	Catosha Riley	
Georgia Cooperative Extension - Parents as Teachers	Tammy Keith	
Pastoral Institute	Mary Johnson Laura Cardin	
Prevent Child Abuse Georgia	Sarah Ren Mich	
Resilient Georgia	Emily Anne Nikki Warner Audrey Idaikkadar	
St. Anne Community Outreach	Kelly Tolman	
The Salvation Army	Andre Pereira	
Teen Advisors	Tabata Boyd	
Twin Cedars Youth and Family Services, Inc.	Rosalind Alston	
United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley	Ben Moser Sidney Houck Jennifer Bickerstaff Rachel Chambless Jennifer St John	
Valley Healthcare System	Dr. Asante Hiltz	
YMCA of Metropolitan Columbus, GA	Chris Bryant	
Youth In Action Family and Children's Services	Tae Smith	
<u>Private</u>		
Art of Yoga	Chris Wilkes	
Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club of Columbus, GA	Greg West	



Columbus Pediatric Associates	Dr. Donna Yeiser, Kamie Theobald	
Columbus Pediatrics GA	Dr. Devica Alappan, Amy Higgins	
Columbus York-Rite Men of Distinction	Nathanial Cox	
DBI Broadcasting	Geniece Granville	
First Baptist Church-Columbus, GA	Howie Hooper	
Food Mill	Olivia Amos	
Dr. Jaketra Bryant INC	Jaketra Bryant	
New Horizons Behavioral Health	Armanda Spears	
Piedmont Columbus	Cary Burcham, Dr. Rebecca Reamy,	
	Lea Werner, Resa Lord, Miranda Julian,	
	Chamaine Bjornson, Melonese Close	
Piedmont Physicians Pediatrics	Dawn Harbin Brown, NP (interim)	
Rivertown Pediatrics	Dr. Susan McWhirter	
St. Francis-Emory Healthcare	Pamela Steele	



St. Mary's Road United Methodist Church	Lawrence Gibbs	
The Brain Center	Dr. Franciska Kocsner	
Public		
Chattahoochee County Family Connection	Christina Young	
Chattahoochee Valley Library	Alan Harkness, Greta Browder, Christie Rudd	
Clay County Family Connection	Eddie Watson	
Columbus Housing Authority	Jonathan Evans, Carla Godwin	
Communities In Schools	Raven Hart	
Cure Violence - Columbus	Dr. Asante' Hiltz, Reggie Lewis, Cedric Hill	
Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice	Hermanda DeMines	
Georgia Department of Public Health - West Central Health District	Kiara Loud, Dorcas Woody	
Georgia Family Connection – Region 8	Michael Johnson	
Harris County Family Connection	Terry Edwards	
Marion County Family Connection	Chevina Phillips	
Marion County School District	Cassandra Porter	
Muscogee County Family Connection	Zoe' Hightower	

	<p>Dr. David Lewis, Keith Seifert (retired)</p> <p>Dr. Kenya Gilmore, Courtney Lamar, Matt Bell, Meredith Adams, Kimberly Thomas, Ron Wiggins, Patricia Woodall, Kaprice Bentley Brown, Felicia Thompson</p>	
Muscogee County School District	Sara Lee Crumbs	
Quitman County Family Connection		



Stewart County Family Connection	Edwina Turner	
Stewart County School District	Dr. Michael Robinson	
Talbot County Family Connection	Dot Bass	
Taylor County Family Connection	Lula Neal	
Taylor County School	Kim Yvek	

Message from the Principal Investigator(s), and/or Coalition Leaders/Members *(optional)*

“United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley is deeply committed to the ongoing work of building a more resilient community. The critical support provided by Resilient Georgia continues to guide the integration and implementation of this effort. Since the formation of Resilient Chattahoochee Valley in the summer of 2020, our community and our organization have seen incredible growth and change. The focus on creating a trauma-informed and integrated behavioral health system for children and young adults has been nothing short of inspiring. By fostering a supportive network and working collaboratively with strategies like Community Schools United and The Basics Chattahoochee Valley and partnering with many local and regional cross-sector organizations, we’re creating a stronger foundation for every child to thrive.

As we look ahead to what is next for our community, there are exciting developments on the horizon. As an organization, United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley is focused on reducing poverty and building a more prosperous community. In 2022, after a review of effective poverty reduction efforts and analysis of our local labor market, we knew that job creation was essential, and we convened a group of stakeholders to tackle this pressing issue. This led to the development of The Chattahoochee Hub for Innovation and Production of Semiconductors (CHIPS4CHIPS) focused on job creation and supporting the growth of the domestic semiconductor industry. This includes more than 25 top-tier research universities, regional universities, historically Black colleges and universities, community colleges, and technical colleges to fill the workforce pipeline needed to support chip fabrication and advanced packaging, among other aspects of the semiconductor value chain. Over the past year, we continued to expand this work and added a targeted focus of addressing the Prime Age Employment Gap by creating additional pathways to employment, targeting our highest need



communities to address barriers to employment. These combined efforts will support the creation of more well-paying, high-quality jobs for community members, and offer multiple pathways for job attainment, and are an example of the innovative ways that we are leading and collaborating to build a thriving community. The opportunity for trauma-informed workplaces and a pathway for students from high school and college to the workforce strengthens the entire community, paving the way for a more hopeful and resilient future.

We know the work is not complete and there are opportunities for further integration of Resilient Chattahoochee Valley among current and prospective coalition members to include the continued expansion of trauma informed awareness into rural communities as well as deeper integration into our local healthcare system to address ACE's experienced by youth and young adults in our region.

United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley is grateful for the relentless dedication and community provided by Resilient Georgia for leading with such compassion and vision. Your efforts are making a profound difference, and we stand firmly behind your mission. Together, we can continue to make strides toward a healthier, more supportive environment for all our young people."

CEO of United Way of The Chattahoochee Valley

Ben Moser

Key Impacts/Accomplishments

Resilient Chattahoochee Valley
Key Impact
year four

Led 41 workshops to an estimated 1,777 parents



Distributed 5,697 Books to build At Home Libraries



Conducted 16 trainings to an estimated 642 participants

Partnered for 26 outreach events reaching over 921 community members.



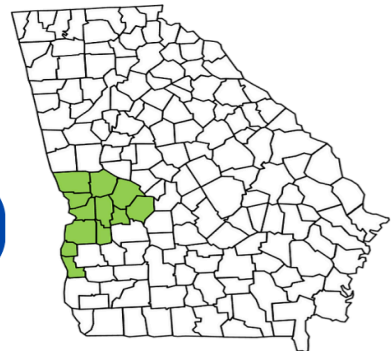
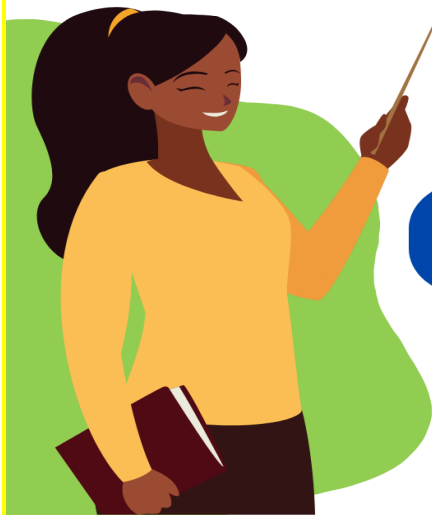
Hosted 40 enrichment sessions accounting for 2,065 student impressions

Convened a Coalition of over 70 Regional Partners

Provided 229 Social Emotional Learning Interventions



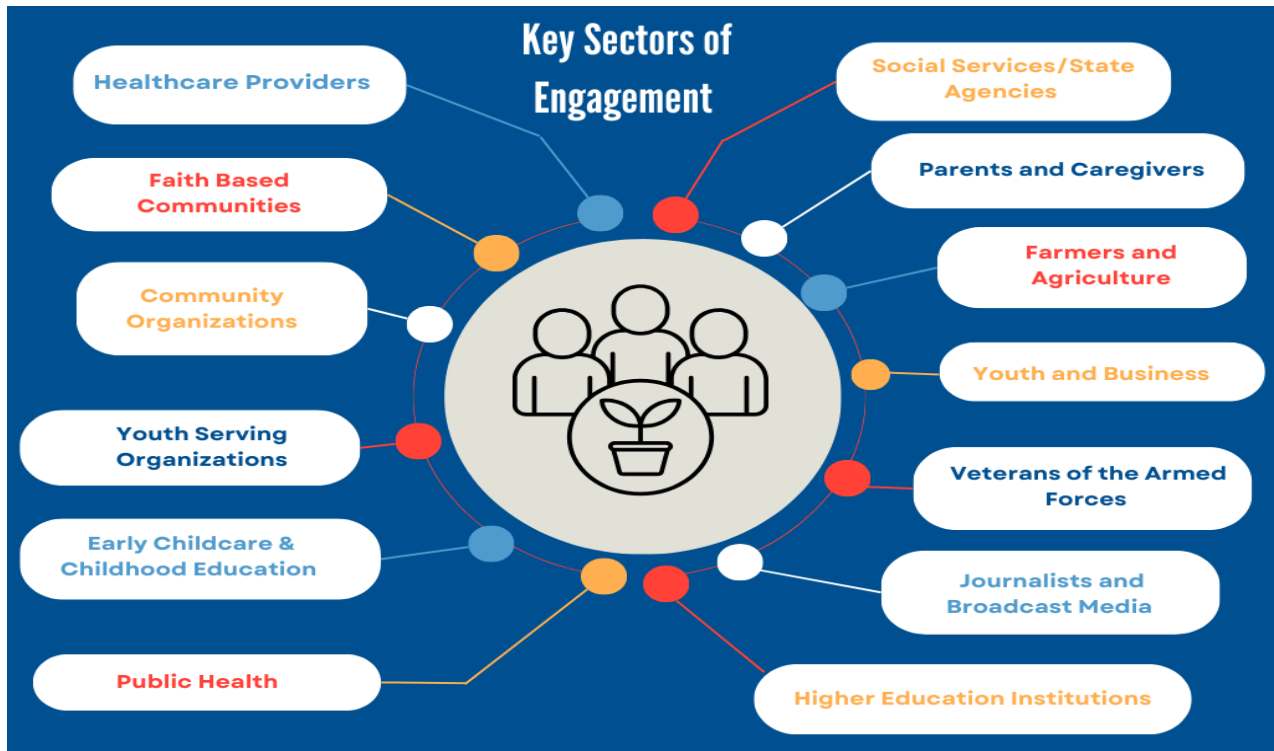
Recorded 10 youth led podcast episodes



12 County Service Region



Key Sectors



Description of Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)- Related Efforts

Prevention/Intervention

Resilient Chattahoochee Valley (RCV) holds the belief that prevention and intervention efforts are crucial in relation to trauma-informed care and ACEs. Therefore, the shared efforts of the collaborative have extensive prevention and intervention components. Below are our coalition’s most impactful prevention and intervention achievements.

The shared efforts of Resilient Chattahoochee Valley had a strong presence at **26 unique community outreach and presentation events** reaching an estimated **921 service providers and community members**. Several of these events are highlighted below:

- **The Basics Community Baby Shower** – United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley recently hosted a heartwarming Community Baby Shower, bringing together **77 families**, engaging expectant



mothers, new parents, and family members from across our region. This event was part of our ongoing commitment to support the health and well-being of our community's youngest members and their families. The Community Baby Shower provided a welcoming space where participants could access essential community resources, educational materials, and much-needed supplies. Attendees received baby essentials such as diapers, feeding supplies, baby care products, and Basics Supply Kits. A key feature of the event was the incorporation of The Basics, an early childhood initiative that promotes five evidence-based parenting and caregiving principles essential for childhood development. These principles are: **Maximize Love, Manage Stress, Talk, Sing, and Point, Count, Group, and Compare, Explore Through Movement and Play, Read and Discuss Stories**. One of the event's highlights was the chance for families to connect with local service providers and organizations dedicated to family support. This created a valuable network of resources for parents, ensuring they have access to the help they need as they navigate the challenges of parenthood. That support included resources and information from Safe Kids, The Department of Health, The Chattahoochee Valley Libraries (Imagination Library), and Valley Healthcare, a regional federally qualified health center. Through the collective efforts of volunteers, donors, and staff, United Way of Chattahoochee Valley successfully created an atmosphere of support and encouragement for all who attended.

- **The Columbus Book Festival** - On May 11th, 2024, the Columbus Children's Book Festival welcomed over **2,000 visitors** to its annual event, celebrating the joy of reading and the importance of early childhood literacy. The festival featured a vibrant array of activities and attractions, making it a memorable day for families and children of all ages. One of the highlights of the festival was the opportunity for attendees to meet and interact with renowned authors and illustrators including Vashti Robinson, Matt De La Pena, Alyssa Satin Capucilli, and Gregory Christie. In addition to these literary attractions, the festival showcased a diverse representation of youth-serving community organizations. These groups provided valuable resources and information to support the educational and developmental needs of children in the Chattahoochee Valley. The Basics Chattahoochee Valley and 211 provided essential information about The Basics and community resources to **300 families**.
- **Teen Summit with Boys and Girls Club Chattahoochee Valley** - The 3rd Annual Teen Summit, a pivotal event aimed at empowering and inspiring young minds, marked a significant collaboration between RCV and the Boys and Girls Club of the Chattahoochee Valley. This year's summit was particularly special due to the concerted efforts and seamless partnership among RCV, the Boys and Girls Club staff, and the Key Club—a dedicated committee of students. Their input was invaluable in shaping the event's agenda and ensuring that the summit addressed the needs and aspirations of their peers. The Key Club's active participation highlighted the importance of youth involvement in creating events that resonate with them. Students kicked off the 3rd Annual Teen Summit with a robust two-day program designed to educate and inspire.

Day 1: Empowering Through Education and Engagement

The first day featured a general session with a panel discussion moderated by RCV Manager Imani Jones, with a group of panelists who all work in education. This was followed by a series of



breakout sessions focused on community education resources and super sessions dedicated to community efforts to combat crime. Additionally, there were learning sessions aimed at career launching, providing students with valuable insights and tools for their future. Following the breakout sessions, students participated in a college and career fair. The latter half of the day offered a variety of breakout sessions, developed and selected by the Key Club, to infuse fun and creativity into the summit. These sessions were designed to engage students in enjoyable and interactive activities, ensuring a well-rounded and enriching experience.

- Young Moguls 101: Teen Business Essentials
- Teen Tech Guardians: Cybersecurity Basics
- Vibe Tribe: Teen Wellness Workshop
- Safety First, Second, and Always: Tackling Gun Violence with a Twist
- Coin Crew: Teen Financial Literacy Lab
- College and Career Fair
- Lyric Lounge: Rap Cypher
- Creature Quest: Unleashing Your Inner Animal Enthusiast
- Treat Yo' Self: Treat-Making Edition
- Picture Perfect: Teen Photo Masterclass
- Athlete Ambitions: Balancing Sports and Studies

Day 2: Community Engagement and Giving Back

The second day of the summit was packed with diverse and engaging activities, starting with travel to various institutions for tours and overviews to gain insights into these establishments in the areas of college and career. After the tours, students were invited to participate in outdoor activities. The afternoon included a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, a 3-point shootout, and board games for 140 teens. Meanwhile, 60 teens engaged in service projects like mural painting and community clean-up. Transportation then brought everyone back for a United Way and RCV-sponsored block party filled with various activities to foster community spirit and enjoyment.

Sessions and Focus Areas

- Tours / Overview of Institutions
 - Columbus State University
 - Valley Healthcare
 - Georgia Military College
 - Southern Union
- Interactive Activity that Pairs with Institutional Tour
- 3-on-3 Tournaments / 3-Point Shootout / Board Games (140 Teens)
- Community Service
 - Mural Painting at North
 - Community Clean-Up (60 Teens)
- Block Party and Activities
 - Club BGGCV
 - Hype Zone



- Chill Zone
- Courtyard

Community Schools United Strategy

- **Resource Rooms:** This year, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley strengthened **4 resource rooms** housed within select elementary schools. These resource rooms, led by community school coordinators, are inviting spaces for students, parents, educators, and community members stocked with basic needs supplies, social-emotional learning libraries, resource racks, calm corners, electronic stations, and academic support materials to meet the needs of the whole child, their families, the school itself, and the surrounding community.
- Prevention and intervention efforts within these resource rooms over the past year include:
 - **205 referrals** given to community school coordinators from school leadership to further build relationships with school families, identify root cause of the identified need, and increase access/connection to community resources to meet those needs.
 - **131 behavioral interventions** conducted by community school coordinators in accordance with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) tier two and three interventions, actively utilizing resources within the social emotional learning libraries built on site.
 - **43 home visits** initiated due to concerns related to attendance and affidavit of residency.
 - **8,750 Buddy Packs** distributed in collaboration with Feeding the Valley Food Bank and local churches. Buddy Packs, a program of Feeding the Valley Food Bank, bridges the gap between the school week and the weekend, serving children who live in food insecure homes and are likely to experience hunger when free breakfasts and lunches are unavailable.
 - **862 uniform separates are distributed** to families identified based on need. Access to school uniforms removes a barrier for attendance.
- **I-SPY Jars** – One new resource added into the Social Emotional Learning Libraries, and beyond, includes the creation of I-SPY Jars with Community volunteers. I-SPY Jars are bottles filled with mini-objects and a filler that can be leveraged for self-regulation and a range of speech and language goals. This year, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley engaged **over 25 volunteers** in creating **41 I-SPY Jars**. Engaging volunteers allowed Resilient Chattahoochee Valley to educate the community on the coalition’s shared efforts, and create a sufficient number of jars for distribution by schools and organizations across the region. To see and learn more about our I-SPY Jars, [watch the following video!](#)
- **At Home Libraries** - Resilient Chattahoochee Valley continued its partnership with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, previously Ferst Readers, whose mission is to strengthen communities by providing free quality books and literacy resources for children and their families. Because the primary target group is highly mobile, the coalition innovated this partnership by altering the delivery method, utilizing schools as the distribution mode instead of the mail. This year, **5,697 books** went into the homes of our students to build at home libraries. With the books, are



newsletters and engagement tips for families to heighten the reading experience and encourage the implementation of positive parenting principles post distribution.

- **Summer Learning Experience** - For the third summer, the coalition played an integral role in Muscogee County School District’s Summer Learning Experience. With this experience, leaders emphasized summer learning activities that are engaging, data driven, and reflective of stakeholder input. As a valued stakeholder for the school district, the coalition was recruited to lead enrichment activities, increasing exposure to engaging experiences for students and allowing community partners nontraditional access to our students. The coalition hosted **40 enrichment sessions which accounted for 2,065 student impressions**. After surveying students and discovering less than *10% of students had vacationed or stayed in a hotel room*, a unique session was developed in partnership with Candlewood Suites. RCV partnered to bring the hotel experience to them! **78 students** were able to design a hotel room, participate in mock check ins, and learn how to make a bed through a competitive game where sheets and pillows were thrown about. The coalition always aims to include youth voices wherever possible; we know that leveraging their feedback to create a unique experience has made a powerful impact.
- **Views and Visions Podcast**: The Views and Visions Podcast recorded **10 episodes** and developed a curriculum created with teacher Ms. Farrell, instructor for the Gifted Resource course at Shaw High School. Students were actively involved in recording and editing the episodes, and a separate group of students also recorded a vodcast. The podcast aimed to create a platform centered around conflict resolution and emphasized the voices of youth. Students were responsible for researching topics and ensuring coherent and consistent conversations, which helped them develop skills in dynamic dialogue, de-escalation, and emotional regulation. At the project's end, **15 student participants** gathered to share insights and discuss their learning experiences, comparing their individual journeys and reflecting on their growth. By fostering complex conversations in a collaborative format, the project imparted valuable lessons on effective communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration to students and parents.
- **The Food Mill**: The collaborative’s partnership with The Food Mill, their mobile market, and leadership over Farm to School Programming continues to be innovative and impactful. Currently operating in three Community Schools, as well as 3 additional schools throughout Muscogee County, this program includes building raised beds inside the school grounds, weekly lessons with students, as well as garden maintenance by a trained FoodCorps Service Member. Below is 2023 – 2024 school year operations data for this program.

Total Students Taught:	1,745
Total # of Lessons Taught:	805
Total Teaching Hours:	693.9
Total Hours in the Garden:	379.8
Total Hours in the Cafeteria:	195.3
Total Taste Tests:	16
Total Volunteer Hours:	60.3
Total Volunteers:	19



In addition to the expansion of the Farm to School program, the collaborative continues to host monthly stops of the Food Mill's Mobile Market at all Community Schools, as well as several housing developments in surrounding neighborhoods. Additionally, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley supported the expansion of the Mobile Market into a more rural region of our community, Talbotton. Customers of the Mobile Market are able to purchase fresh produce with cash, card or EBT points. If customers use their EBT points, they receive an additional 50% discount. The Food Mill shares that efforts in Talbotton are unique because distribution of produce is primarily free due to the level of need in the community. Talbotton is also experiencing issues with SNAP enrollment, and the collaborative is using this partnership to address barriers to enrollment that are occurring in our region and across the state. The Food Mill visits Talbotton twice a month and primarily distributes produce from Feeding the Valley. An average of 3-4 pallets of fruits and vegetables are distributed at each visit. It is also worth noting below that out of all **22 stops** of the mobile market detailed below, the most successful stop is at one of the Community Schools, Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary!

Overall Programming	\$	Community Schools	Items Sold	Gross Revenue	Discounts Given
Gross Program Revenue (22 stops)	\$ 26,548.5	Brewer Elem	396	\$ 1,338.62	\$ 377.42
Total of Georgia Fresh For Less SNAP discounts given (50% discount)	\$ 6,969.04	Dorothy Height Elem	228	\$ 1,034.92	\$ 356.58
Total SNAP dollars used to purchase fresh produce, Supporting local farms	\$ 12,080.95	MLK Elem	1684	\$ 6,117.09	\$ 1,596.25
Cliff Effect Food Mill Discount (25%)	\$ 6,482.27				

Advocacy and Policy, Systems and Environmental (PSE) Changes

Resilient Chattahoochee Valley's advocacy and policy efforts are embedded in increasing regional knowledge and awareness about adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma and resiliency. Resilient Chattahoochee Valley, and its shared child equity strategies' engagement with the following groups, reflects our efforts in this space:



- **ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed** represents the growing number of working families who struggle to afford the basics of housing, childcare, food, transportation, healthcare, and technology. Many states are utilizing ALICE to inform research, data, policy, and systems change. Last year, United Ways of Georgia joined the ALICE network and collectively launched ALICE in Georgia: A study of financial hardship. With this tool, communities across Georgia have access to a comprehensive research and framework that provides United Ways, nonprofit partners, and community leaders with tools and resources to understand the complexities of ALICE households and develop solutions to help ALICE households move toward economic stability. In the first six months of being part of the ALICE network, we sought to increase our knowledge and incorporate ALICE across our partnerships and learning communities.

An early change in organizational policy directly impacts mental health access in our community. *The Pastoral Institute, a leading local private mental health provider updated their eligibility criteria to reflect ALICE households, expanding affordability and access.* Pastoral Institute H.O.P.E. (Helping Other People Endure) Fund eligibility now extends to 300% FPG, with special consideration for additional circumstances affecting members of ALICE in our community. UWCV Community Investment grant funding also made it possible for the Pastoral Institute to lower all copay levels and expand the number of counseling sessions for H.O.P.E. recipients, ensuring that those with the greatest financial limitations receive mental health care at no cost to them. This change was a direct result of the compelling data and information provided by UWCV during the Community Partners grant training in January 2024. Pastoral Institute Director of Advancement Mary Johnson credits the UWCV Community Partners grant training as follows:

“Until we attended United Way’s grant training, we were completely unfamiliar with ALICE and had no idea that our current criteria for financial assistance excluded such a large portion of our working community. We immediately began educating our staff and board members about this disparity in access to mental health services. It has reframed our entire H.O.P.E. program and empowered our team to integrate ALICE into our strategic discussions and decisions. I now discuss ALICE in almost every community presentation I make – learning about it was a huge gamechanger for me, and I am personally and professionally committed to continuing to increase awareness around this issue for our region and state.”

Please find more information unitedforalice.org.

- **Prosper Chattahoochee Valley:** Because of the Prime Age Employment Gap (PAEG), our region met the eligibility criteria to apply for the U.S. Economic Development Administration Recompete Program, a program for distressed communities. Last summer, UWCV formed a working group of education, nonprofit, and workforce partners to support plan development and implementation. In December of 2023, the Chattahoochee Valley was selected as one of 22 finalists out of 565 applicants nationwide competing for federal grants ranging from \$20 million to \$50 million and ultimately awarded a \$500,000 Strategy Development Grant. In 2024, our



regional planning efforts accelerated, and partnerships grew as we aligned around key workforce development strategies to grow participation in the workforce. UWCV led the application that included a bi-state, cross-sector coalition, 53 letters of commitment, and more than \$33M in commitments/in-kind services. In late April we submitted our revised regional plan “Prosper Chattahoochee Valley – Expanding Pathways, Empowering Futures.” These efforts, combined with existing initiatives, will grow talent, advance equitable opportunities, and ensure that all people in our region have an opportunity to thrive.

- **Chattahoochee Hub for Innovation and Production of Semiconductors (CHIPS4CHIPS)** is a cross-sector and bi-state coalition of individuals and organizations in the Columbus, Georgia region. CHIPS4CHIPS has mobilized public and private leaders in Georgia and Alabama to support the growth of the domestic semiconductor industry. This includes efforts by the majority of regional and all local top-tier research universities, regional universities, historically Black colleges and universities, community colleges, and technical colleges to fill the workforce pipeline needed to support chip fabrication and advanced packaging, among other aspects of the semiconductor value chain. This initiative represents unparalleled partnerships and aligns efforts to develop talent and attract the semiconductor industry to the Chattahoochee Valley. A recent highlight of this initiative includes:
 - CHIPS Camp: Building on the successful first camp in the summer of 2023, the 2024 camp increased its reach and impact. Earlier this summer, **120 students** from Muscogee County, Russell County, Harris County, and Phenix City Schools attended a semiconductor manufacturing and packaging camp to spark interest for future careers in advanced manufacturing and other STEM-related careers. Exposing students to the endless opportunities in semiconductor manufacturing creates a talent pipeline for local students who are prepared to build the future. This incredible opportunity was made possible through the collaboration of Columbus State University, Columbus Technical College, Georgia Tech, Troy University, and Tuskegee University.
- **Handle With Care:** Resilient Chattahoochee Valley continues to recognize that as instances of violence and exposure to trauma continue to climb in our communities, it is important to play a lead role in exploring and implementing solutions to alleviate the negative impact on our youth. Handle with Care quickly rose to the top of our list of solutions and has been an on-going effort of the collaborative. This evidence-based program is a collaborative partnership between law enforcement and schools. When a law enforcement officer encounters a child during a call, that child’s name and the words “Handle with Care” are sent to the school before the next school day. The school and affiliates are then informed and can offer individual, class, and whole-school trauma-sensitive curricula so that traumatized children are “handled with care.” If the child needs more intervention, on-site trauma-focused mental healthcare is available at the school.

Significant strides were made this year, overcoming barriers expressed by the coalition previously, such as department turnover, addressing stakeholder questions, establishing an implementation committee, and more! Resilient Chattahoochee Valley is thrilled to participate in the Handle with Care Taskforce operating across the state, and grateful for Resilient Georgia’s leadership in partnering with the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy in offering this group. Through utilizing resources gained from this taskforce, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley created a



committee of community members to launch implementation in Muscogee county. This committee, called Columbus Changemakers, has met 3 times and is made up of educators, law enforcement, social workers, mental health professionals, school board members, and elected officials. The next step is hosting a virtual panel of communities who have been implementing Handle With Care, to answer the questions committee members have and address any hesitations on the way to implementation.

- **National Strategy Influence:** The collaborative continues to work deeply with both The Coalition of Community Schools and The Institute for Educational Leadership, supporting their goal of the establishment of 25,000 Community Schools nationwide by 2025. Through this support, the collaborative plays a lead role in growing statewide expansion, and holds network positions for national institute groups including, United Way’s implementing Community Schools and Community School Coordinator Calls.

In June of 2023, it was announced that the state of Georgia would be hosting the Community Schools and Family Engagement Conference for 2024. This conference was the largest yet, with over 5,000 people in attendance from all 50 states and several countries – excitingly it was also the first time this conference was held in the South. As a part of launching the conference website and official announcement in the state, the Institute for Educational Leadership and Coalition for Community Schools leadership paid a visit to the Chattahoochee Valley to meet with local stakeholders and lead a community conversation about Community Schools. The leadership team was also able to visit a few schools' sites and meet with some strong partners. The team was very engaged and impressed and invited us to host site visits for the conference. Not only has our community been engaged in the planning of this conference, we were spotlighted for two site visits, and led the Georgia state breakout. The two site visits included highlighting our partnership and efforts with The Food Mill: including the mobile market, farm to school programming, and Cooking Matters Classes; and with Greenpower: an innovative STEM initiative for students. In addition, our team sat on the Georgia Plenary and hosted The Brain Architecture Game as a breakout session.

- **RCV No Small Matter Screening/Volunteer Event** - In celebration of the “Week of the Young Child,” we hosted a film screening at the Chattahoochee Valley Public Library that underscored the significance of early childhood development with a special focus on literacy. The event aimed to raise awareness about the crucial role that early educational experiences play in a child’s growth and future success. The film showcased innovative approaches to early learning and highlighted the benefits of nurturing literacy from a young age and the importance of economic equity for educators. Following the screening, United Way volunteers, along with dedicated community members, engaged in a hands-on volunteer project. Together, they assembled The Basics Kits, which included interactive and educational materials designed to support parents and caregivers in applying the five core principles of The Basics. The event educated attendees about the importance of early literacy and facilitated community involvement in promoting effective parenting practices.
- **Coalition Communications** - We have newly launched monthly coalition communications, which are sent to over **70 coalition partners**. These communications are designed to engage



community members, provide updates on upcoming events and training, and foster a collaborative network among our partners. Each month, we share a calendar of events and a list of training sessions to keep partners informed about new opportunities for participation and growth. Additionally, we include key resources and updates from Resilient Georgia's Monday Memo, offering valuable insights and tools from state-level initiatives to support our local efforts. We have been working closely with our internal strategy 'Home for Good' to include training opportunities, resources and information in their collaborative communications to reach a broader audience outside of our immediate coalition partners. A significant goal of these communications is to strengthen community collaboration by highlighting success stories, showcasing partner initiatives, and offering opportunities for members to connect and collaborate on projects. Through these monthly updates, we aim to keep our partners informed, enhance collaboration, and support our shared mission of community resilience and early childhood development.

- **Strategic Partnerships** - In addition to the efforts outlined above, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley continues to hold dynamic connections to the following groups that reflect additional advocacy and policy efforts:
 - Basics Learning Network (BLN): a global network of communities who have adopted The Basics. The BLN meets monthly to learn new strategies to effectively share positive childhood experiences.
 - Campaign for Grade Level Reading/Get Georgia Reading: Get Georgia Reading is the state's official Campaign for Grade Level Reading program. The Campaign is a collaborative effort that seeks to increase the number of children in low-income families that succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career, and active citizenship.
 - Columbus 2025: is our community's collaborative strategic plan to create a more competitive, prosperous region.
 - Community Action Network (CAN): CAN is a collaborative led by the West Central Health District that seeks to bring together agencies in our region to collaborate on work related to public health.
 - Home for Good (HFG): HFG is our community's plan to end homelessness. In collaboration with HFG, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley aims to ensure that the needs of our transient and homeless youth are met. Additionally, HFGs provides leadership to the Continuum of Care, which convenes a broad, cross-sector coalition semi-annually.
- **United Way Affinity Groups**- United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley has two donor affinity groups, Women United and Emerging Leaders United. These affinity groups engage segmented populations of donors to deepen the understanding of the community work, resources, strategies, and goals of United Way. Women United focuses on efforts to support women and girls in the Chattahoochee Valley. Emerging Leaders United is a group of young donors under the age of 40. This year, Women United's volunteer leadership has engaged with RCV by planning, scheduling, and promoting opportunities in their networks and workplaces to facilitate The Brain Architecture Game. This includes two of The Brain Architecture Game sessions this year, one at corporate partner Synovus and one with Columbus State University Servant Leadership Program.



Women United and Emerging Leaders United will join together to host a Lunch & Learn in September open to members of both affinity groups, where they will learn ways to engage with Resilient Chattahoochee Valley and participate in The Brain Architecture Game.

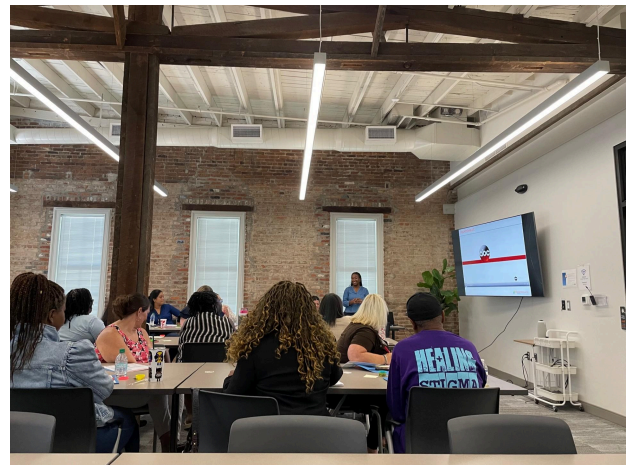
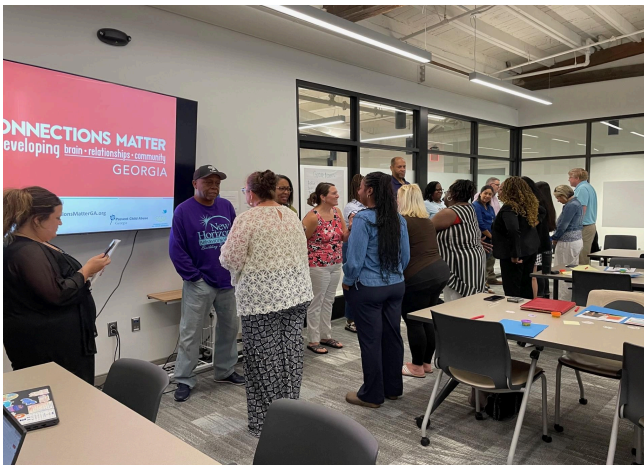
Research

The Resilient Chattahoochee Valley coalition continues to participate in extensive research activities to inform strategy implementation. Research collected in the past year to inform our efforts include:

- **Parent, Student, and Community Voice:** Parent, student, and community voice is essential to the success of the Resilient Chattahoochee Valley. To ensure voices are being heard and lifted into practice, each Community School was assigned an electronic tool to conduct surveys on a consistent and continual basis. Below are several survey results that are utilized to influence the offering of services within the framework of Resilient Chattahoochee Valley.
 - Attendance: To uncover and address root causes of tardiness and absenteeism, families are surveyed when arriving late to school to evaluate the reason behind their tardiness. The results found that:
 - **57%** said they were tardy because of **lack of transportation**.
 - About **10%** indicated that they were tardy because they **slept in**.
 - About **10%** indicated that they were tardy because of their work **schedule**, with the remaining number of respondents indicating **others**.
 - Parental Engagement: To improve family engagement, the collaborative surveyed families to gauge ways in which our families would like to be more integrated within their child's school. The results found that:
 - **50%** of parents ranked **Parent-Teacher-Organization (PTO) as their first choice** for a way to incorporate parent voice at their school.
 - **21%** of parents ranked a **School based leadership team** as their first choice.
 - **21%** of parents ranked **Workshop and student event participation** as their first preference of engagement.
 - Needs Assessment: The collaborative conducted a survey to assess families' impressions of the needs of their household and their community. From this survey, we found that:
 - **78%** of the community indicated that they needed better **access to higher paying jobs**.
 - **86%** indicated that the community needed **better access to affordable housing**.
 - **86%** indicated that the community needed **better access to affordable healthy food**.
 - **86%** indicated that the community needed **better access to healthcare options**.
 - **98%** indicated that the community needed **better access to reliable transportation**, both personal and public.



- **Expand access to childcare:** Childcare is a universally recognized employment barrier and critical contributing factor to the Prime Age Employment Gap (PAEG). With approximately 8,000 manufacturing jobs in our region and 49% of children living in single parent households, childcare acutely impacts our labor market, especially for non-traditional hours. Current data reveals an untenable situation forcing low-income families to choose between spending up to 40% of their income on childcare, entrusting their children to unlicensed providers or having one prime age member not work. As part of the Recompete Strategy Development Grant, we are analyzing solutions and incentives to address this crisis, including exploring expansion of grass-roots programs that currently provide childcare; employer incentives meeting the needs of their target workforce; and government policy changes and initiatives. It's notable that this focus on childcare grew out of research with local coalition partners where they indicated that transportation and childcare were among the biggest barriers to workforce participation. As a result, the strategy includes innovative solutions to both issues.
- **Connections Matter:** Resilient Chattahoochee Valley requested a sampling of post Connections Matter training surveys collected by Georgia Center for Child Advocacy. These samplings inform the coalition on a variety of factors that help shape future training opportunities. The sampling can be found [here](#).



- **Teddy Bear Clinic:** This year, the coalition hosted Mercer School of Medicine for **5 Teddy Bear Clinics**. The goal of the Teddy Bear Clinic is to reduce the level of fear and anxiety children experience when they go to the doctor. The Mercer medical students use teddy bears and toy medical instruments to educate students on the purpose of each tool. Traditionally, the Teddy Bear Clinic is a one-time event, but to deepen the impact and measure the effectiveness of this interaction, the collaborative will work with the Mercer Medical students throughout the first semester of the 2024-2025 school year to see the same **30 students for 6 different lessons**. The students will be surveyed on the first day, and then will retake the same survey at the end of the semester to measure their levels of fear or anxiety of the doctor as well as their understanding of basic medical terms and procedures they would most likely encounter during a visit to their pediatrician.



Training

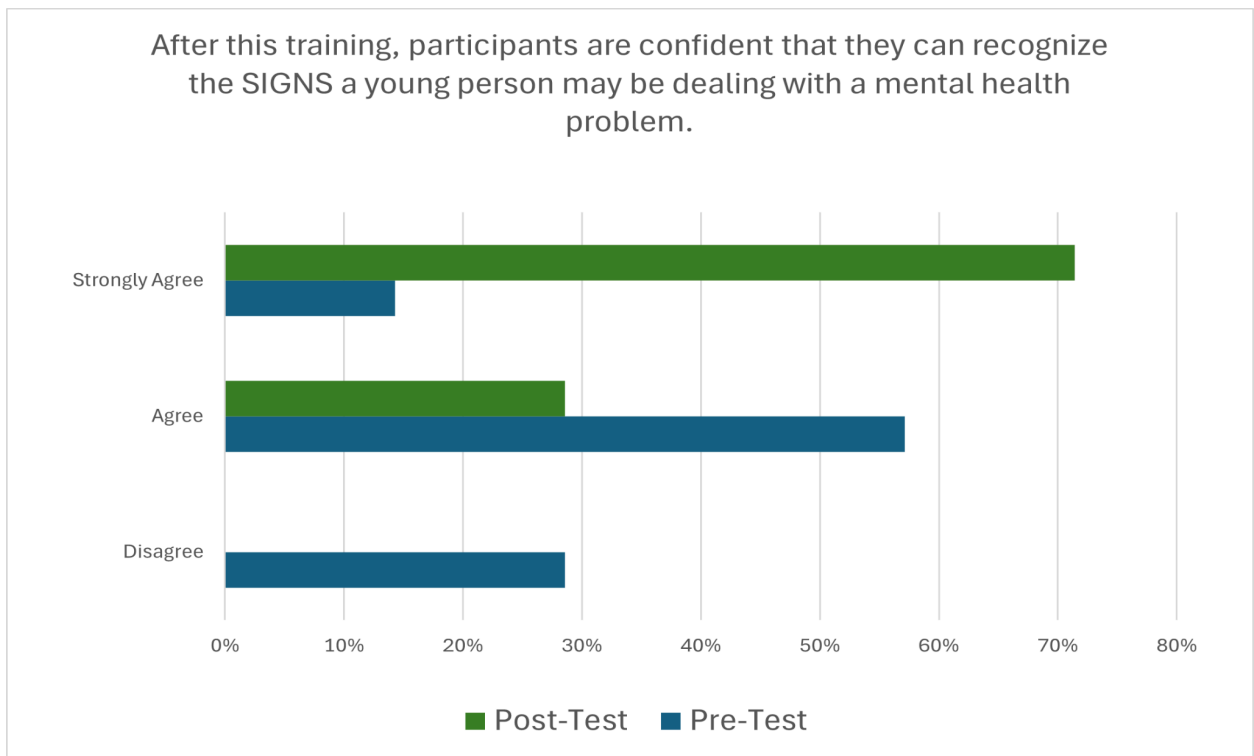
Through training our community on PACEs, ACEs, trauma, and resiliency, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley is mitigating the effects of adversity locally and increasing our region's shared level of resiliency. This year, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley conducted a total of **16 training sessions** to an estimated **642 participants**, as well as **41 workshops** to an estimated **1,777 parents**. Highlights from implementation include the following:

- **Connections Matter Training:** Resilient Chattahoochee Valley continues to implement and expand the Connections Matter training opportunity in our region. 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. The Connections Matter Georgia initiative is a collaboration between the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy and Prevent Child Abuse Georgia. The training curriculum is an evidence informed curriculum, developed using a robust body of literature by Dr. Linda Chamberlain and adapted for Georgia-specific audiences. Over the past year, two additional trainers were onboarded to the training team, totaling 4 trainers for Resilient Chattahoochee Valley. Collectively, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley has conducted **7 Connections Matter trainings, with 277 trainees**. Remarkable training achievements include the participation of all of Stewart County School District and select school wide training in the Muscogee County School District.
- **Brain Architecture Game:** Resilient Chattahoochee Valley strengthened its offering of guided sessions of the Brain Architecture Game. The Brain Architecture Game is a tabletop game experience that builds understanding of the powerful role of experiences on early brain development – what promotes it, what derails it, and consequences for society. Participants' goal in the game is to build a brain that is as tall as possible - representing functionality, and as sturdy as possible - representing the ability to withstand stresses. Participant groups then work together, drawing Life Experience cards to gain materials for brain building. In the game, positive experiences earn a pipe cleaner and a straw for support. However, negative experiences only receive a pipe cleaner, but no straw. After the initial period of early childhood brain development in the game, weights must be hung from the structure of the brain – representing life stressors. Afterward, groups use the notes in their Life Journals to discuss the experiences that strengthened, or weakened, the architecture of their developing brains. Resilient Chattahoochee Valley leverages connections to collaborative efforts throughout the game and provides action steps to participants to remain involved after the game ends. Since February, the collaborative has hosted **9 games, to a total of 369 participants**.
- **Teen Mental Health First Aid:** Resilient Chattahoochee Valley collaborated with the Pastoral Institute to offer a comprehensive community-wide youth mental health aid training program for professionals who work closely with youth, such as educators, counselors, social workers, and healthcare providers. The initiative aimed to equip these professionals with the necessary skills and knowledge to support young individuals facing various challenges. The training covered topics such as recognizing signs of mental health issues, effective communication strategies, and providing immediate support to youth in crisis. Non-crisis practical skills training allowed participants to



practice interventions and support techniques in simulated scenarios, helping them gain confidence and proficiency. Additionally, participants received access to a wealth of resources, including toolkits, guides, and contact information for local mental health services, ensuring they could provide ongoing support to youth in need. Resilient Chattahoochee Valley and the Pastoral Institute aimed to create a network of well-equipped professionals capable of supporting the mental health and well-being of young people in the community. Below are survey results from participants of the training in partnership with the Pastoral Institute, provided on behalf of Georgia State University.

Training Feedback



Overall, the responses are very positive across all four questions, indicating that participants found the training informative, useful, and worth recommending.

- **CSU Workshops Parent Workshops:** The collaborative continues to work deeply with parents inside school buildings. Over the past year, the coalition conducted the below workshops and accrued the following attendance at the events. Workshop topics included How to Tie a Tie, Financial Literacy, Parent Child Love Languages, Parent Cafes, Cooking Matters Classes, Navigating the Education System, and many more.



Workshops	#	Attendance
DHES	12	115
MLK	12	1,090
Brewer	10	198
PCES	7	374
Total	41	1,777

- Teen Advisors:** In August 2023, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley (RCV) issued a mini-grant to Teen Advisors, a local organization dedicated to empowering youth through various programs and training. This grant aimed to train Teen Advisors' staff and participating teens in Teen Mental Health First Aid, enabling them to serve as mediators and liaisons at their schools. This initiative is part of RCV's ongoing commitment to supporting youth mental health and fostering a supportive school environment. Through this partnership, two staff members of Teen Advisors have been trained in Teen Mental Health First Aid (TMHFA). They are now working to incorporate the TMHFA curriculum into their own instructional programs. Additionally, they are collaborating with the Muscogee County School District (MCSD) to integrate this crucial mental health curriculum into the broader educational framework. This effort aims to ensure that more students benefit from the tools and knowledge provided by TMHFA, promoting a healthier and more supportive school environment. By embedding TMHFA into both Teen Advisors' programs and MCSD's curriculum, the partnership is making significant strides toward improving mental health awareness and support for students across the community. [Teen Mental Health First Aid - Teen Advisors](#)
- RCV Book Club** - Building on the success of previous book clubs, we recently introduced a new iteration that aimed to bridge the rich history of the Chattahoochee Valley with the ongoing need to acknowledge and address persistent community challenges. Participants were invited to read “The Heart is a Lonely Hunter” by Carson McCullers, a novel that directly references our area and highlights various societal issues of the 1930s. Through this book club, we encouraged participants to use a sociological lens to examine the Chattahoochee Valley, focusing on the various Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) depicted in the novel. This approach facilitated a deeper understanding of the historical and contemporary challenges faced by our community. In addition to group discussions, we provided survey data to offer a comprehensive view of current issues and community needs. This data helped participants understand the context and impact of ACEs in our region. We explored opportunities for community members to actively support efforts to reduce adverse childhood experiences and to become more trauma-aware and responsive. By engaging in this book club, participants not only enriched their understanding of the region’s history and its ongoing challenges but also became empowered to contribute to meaningful change in our community.



VIEWS AND VISION PODCAST
GROUP 1



RCV BOOK CLUB MEETING AND DISCUSSION



BRAIN ARCHITECTURE
PRESENTATION

OUR IMPACT
CAPTURED ON CAMERA



BRAIN ARCHITECTURE
PARTICIPANTS



BASICS COMMUNITY BABY
SHOWER



MOBILE MARKET CSXFE24



WALKING SCHOOL BUS



VIEWS AND VISION PODCAST
GROUP 2



As we wrap up FY24 and are thrilled with all of the programmatic, educational and engaging training, workshops and community engagement points we have been able to offer the Chattahoochee Valley, our team is energized and inspired to explore innovative methods of engagement. We are committed to leveraging our experiences and lessons learned to implement fresh, dynamic approaches that will enhance our impact and reach.

Planning for Future Trainings

- **Kitchen Sink Activity:** United Way Director of Engagement and members of the Community Schools United team have worked to develop an updated engagement activity to highlight the support Community Schools United and other United Way strategies provide to parents and caregivers of young children. The activity highlights the mental load of single parents living below the ALICE threshold and unable to meet monthly needs. The activity shares the many challenges parents juggle and how it oftentimes can feel like “juggling everything, but the Kitchen Sink.” The activity shares ways Community Schools can help with some of those challenges including food insecurity, after school care, school clothing needs, onsite health clinic access, and a need for parents and children to have time to engage in fun ways for their mental and emotional health. The activity also highlights The Basics parent and caregiver texts available to share ideas on how to incorporate The Basics principles into family time. This activity will be featured in upcoming volunteer training, including United Way Campaign Ambassadors as well as Corporate Partner activities in the Chattahoochee Valley over the next year.
- **Campaign for Grade Level Reading Webinar (CGLR):** CGLR is a valuable national resource in advancing early literacy. United Way Worldwide and Ascend at the Aspen Institute have long partnered with each other and with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading to disrupt the cycle of poverty and create more hopeful futures for children with a focus on improving early learning. Two-generation (2Gen) approaches — which support children as well as their parents and caregivers — help whole families build the necessary foundations for success in kindergarten and beyond. This is especially important with research findings documenting that the entire third-grade reading gap is evident by the end of kindergarten, and we know that double-digit gaps in reading proficiency unfortunately still persist. Jennifer St John and Pam Romero participated in the first of the conversations for GLR Week July 22nd through July 26th, joining other panel members in sharing information about what’s working to engage parents as their child’s first and most important teacher. Specifically, Jennifer and Pam highlighted how The Basics, Community Schools United, and other collaborative efforts are helping to ensure young children are ready for kindergarten while also increasing intergenerational prosperity and fostering well-being among parents and their children.

Innovative Partnerships

In the spring, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley began a partnership with Shaw High School, to develop a student-led podcast. This initiative focused on youth advocacy, conflict resolution, turning passions into profit, relationship building and management, and overall self-guidance. The project aimed to provide



students with a platform to voice their opinions, share their experiences, and discuss issues relevant to their lives and communities.

Summary

Students took on various roles in the podcast production, from researching and scripting episodes to recording and editing. They collaborated closely with teachers and one another to develop a guiding curriculum with outlines, talking points, and post reflections. The podcast also provided a unique opportunity for students to learn valuable life skills, such as effective communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.

Students worked collaboratively in groups to develop their podcast ideas and engage in meaningful discussions about their chosen topics. They conducted thorough research to ensure they had accurate and comprehensive information, finalized their research, and created engaging titles for their podcasts. To facilitate informed and structured conversations, they developed detailed guiding scripts. This process not only enhanced their understanding of the subject matter but also equipped them with essential skills in teamwork, research, and effective communication. Check out their self-developed curriculum, [Podcast Conversations \(1\).pptx](#).

By the end of the project, students produced a series of insightful and engaging podcast episodes and developed a deeper understanding of the power of their voices and the impact they can have on their community. The partnership with Resilient Chattahoochee Valley highlighted the importance of youth involvement in community initiatives and demonstrated the potential of student-led projects to drive positive change.



Impact Statement from Ms. Farrell

- *“This year, we had the incredible opportunity to work with United Way and Imani Jones on a Podcast Project. We offered this project to two groups of students and received almost 100% participation. The students, a wonderfully diverse group, were interested in creating podcasts but had no idea how to start. Initially, they thought they could just record on their Chromebooks and improvise. Ms. Jones visited several times to help them understand the process, practice, and record. The students drafted scripts, conducted research, and recorded based on ideas they generated in the first meeting. The students gained more than just podcasting skills. They had to*



work in groups to research, create scripts, record, and edit. We discovered that several students were interested in sound design, and others in marketing. Some students chose to create Vodcasts, allowing us to develop those skills as well. Perhaps even better is that several students want to continue their podcasts into next year, and one of the podcasts has sparked a dialogue with the administration about student representation in decision-making. It has been a wonderful experience that has given the students skills that can help them access more opportunities in the future.” – Ms. Jennifer Farrell

Soundbite - [Final Recording - School Environment](#)

Spotlight

Community Schools United, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley, and The Basics Chattahoochee Valley have played a lead community partner role in Muscogee County School District’s systemic change of bringing the first K-2 Academy to the state of Georgia. One of our community schools, Brewer Elementary, is the site being repurposed for this innovation. However, all of our community schools are being impacted by this system change, as they lie in the highest need area of the county and currently account for the lowest performing schools. Davis, Dorothy Height, Brewer, and Martin Luther King Jr Elementary School students were all targeted and tested for entry into the academy. Entry is being granted based on test scores. All Kindergarten, First, and Second grade students who tested a certain percentage below grade level will be required to attend Brewer Elementary, now called T.H. Brewer Early Innovation Academy in the 2024 – 2025 school year. The creation of this new school required rezoning, a significant challenge for our collaborative and the school district to tackle together. We anticipate that rezoning these schools will lead to an increase in tardies and absences, siblings attending different schools, and other barriers to learning. The collaborative will play a significant role in addressing these out of school barriers, leveraging the Community Schools United Strategy and resource rooms.

The success of the K-2 initiative will involve parents, Muscogee County School District, the Rollins Center for Language and Literacy, the Georgia Department of Education and other community partners working together. Benefits of this partnership include a 14 to 1 class ratio, significant school support such as two school counselors, and a dedicated school social worker, along with a fully certified staff, additional reading coaches, and academic deans.

Additional insight into this innovative system change can be found in the following links

- [Muscogee County School District gives update on K-2 initiative](#)
- [Muscogee County School District set to implement new k-2 initiative for the upcoming school year](#)
- [‘Bold action.’ A Columbus school will be converted into a center for struggling students](#)

Inspired Action

Resilient Chattahoochee Valley: Resilient Chattahoochee Valley invites all members of the community to join our road to resilience. Through sector specific training, partner engagement, and strategy implementation, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley believes that everyone has a critical role in our



community’s fight against ACEs. To Learn more about how you can be a champion for resilience, visit Resilient Chattahoochee Valley’s website.

Community Schools United: The National Coalition for Community Schools Steering Committee has set an ambitious goal of 25,000 Community Schools by 2025 that will reach over 10,000,000 children and youth. Resilient Chattahoochee Valley is eager to add to this number by expanding into 2 more schools in Columbus, Georgia this coming school year, for a total of 3 Community Schools. We invite all parties interested in learning more about our efforts with our schools to read about this strategic commitment and visit our website.

The Basics Chattahoochee Valley: The Basics are an important cross-sector community tool that can empower parents, caregivers, and community organizations to give every child a great start in life. The Basics Chattahoochee Valley continues to lead local and statewide efforts in early childhood development and envisions a future where all children enter kindergarten happy, healthy, and ready to learn. Help support our work by visiting our website, sharing our content on Facebook and Instagram, and encouraging caregivers to sign up for Basics Insights Text Messages.

Income and Expenses/Financials

Budget Line Item	Project Budget	Resilient Ga Funding	Matching Amount	Matching Grants/Sources of Income
Personnel Costs	\$117,205.00	\$111,963.58	\$100,000.00	The Basics Grant (Community Foundation), The Deal Center, CSU Strategy
Education and Training	\$24,550.00	\$11,773.87	\$10,000.00	The Basics Grant (Community Foundation), The Deal Center, CSU Strategy
Policy and Systems Changes	\$24,375.00	\$23,629.06	\$20,000.00	CSU Strategy
Prevention and Intervention Svcs	\$20,225.00	\$10,501.57	\$30,000.00	Stuff the Bus, CSU Strategy
Outreach and Engagement	\$26,075.00	\$26,142.89	\$31,000.00	The Basics Grant (Community Foundation), The Deal Center, CSU Strategy



Research, Data Collection, Evaluation Technology	\$5,275.00	\$5,312.56	\$6,000.00	The Basics Grant (Community Foundation), CSU Strategy
Administrative Fee	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00		
Other Programmatic Expenses	\$1,500.00	\$1,650.95	\$3,000.00	Deal Center, CSU Strategy
Roll Over FY23				
Totals	\$229,205.00	\$200,974.48	\$200,000.00	

The financials above reflect the proposed budget and actual budget for year 4 of Resilient Chattahoochee Valley.

We are very thankful for the generous partners that provide matching funds, in-kind services, and additional support via volunteer engagement with our strategies. Year 4 alternate and additional funding sources, grants and contributions have been secured to support this work. The source and total contribution amount is detailed below.

- Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley - \$89,520.50
- The Georgia Deal Center - \$24,000.00
- Muscogee County School District Cares Fund - \$63,000.00
- CSU Strategy - \$300,000.00
- Stuff The Bus (School Supply/Resource Campaign) \$15,000.00

Additionally, Resilient Chattahoochee Valley estimates the following in-kind contributions that further enhanced the regional efforts for year 4.

List of In-Kind Supports:

- Actual In-Kind Donations from Year 4- Referenced in the Year 4 Report
- Community Schools Volunteer Hours: 456.50 Hours totaling \$14,457.04
- RCV: 196.50 Hours= \$6,248.70
- The Basics: 25 Hours = \$2,385.00
- Buddy Packs \$3.50 x 8,750 = \$30,625
- Books \$2.83 x 3,899 = \$11,232



- Resource Room Space \$10,335 x 3 = \$31,005
- MCSD equipment 700 x 3 = \$2,100

Looking Forward

As we continue our efforts towards becoming a more trauma-informed and aware region, we recognize that it is imperative that we engage all sectors of our community in this journey. This includes collaborating with schools, healthcare providers, social service agencies, and local businesses to ensure that trauma-informed practices are integrated across all areas of service and support. By fostering widespread awareness and understanding of trauma's impact, we aim to create a more resilient community where individuals and families can heal, thrive, and contribute to the well-being of our region. Below is a look into some of our efforts moving forward.

Piedmont Partnership: We are excited to look forward to our continued partnership with Piedmont and the upcoming opening of their new children's hospital in September. Understanding the critical importance of engaging with the health sector, we have had the pleasure of collaborating with Piedmont and their dedicated Child Life Specialist to offer a mini-grant. This mini-grant will be used to procure essential items that enhance the recovery process for pain management in children, provide valuable information and interactive resources to siblings with a new family member in the NICU, and supply travel bags for parents whose children require assessment at larger-scale hospitals. This initiative reflects our commitment to supporting comprehensive family care and ensuring a holistic approach to health and well-being for the communities we serve.

Strengthening partnership with ESP: We are proud of our ongoing partnership with the Enrichment Services Program (ESP) and continue to engage with this closely aligned organization in new and meaningful ways. By donating a portion of the remaining items from our Basics Community Baby Shower, we were able to support the immediate needs of ESP's clients, not only within Muscogee County but also in the more outlying communities of the Chattahoochee Valley. These donations included essential items that directly benefit families, such as baby care products, educational materials, and other necessities that can make a significant difference in their daily lives. This collaboration not only reinforces our shared mission of empowering families and strengthening communities but also ensures that vital resources continue to reach those who need them most across our entire service area.

Mini Grants to Family Connections: In an effort to more meaningfully engage with our rural communities and deepen our relationship with Georgia Family Connection, we have initiated a process of offering mini-grants aimed at capacity building and expanding our reach in trauma-informed care. As part of this initiative, we have outlined an agreement where Georgia Family Connection collaboratives will first conduct a community-wide Connections Matter Training. Following the training, grantees are required to complete an after-action plan, selecting from a menu of impactful activities. These options include building an SEL library, creating Volunteer Kits (Basics Supply Kits), hosting film screenings and community discussions, and developing I-Spy Jars and Calm Corners. Through these efforts, we aim to



empower our rural communities with the tools and resources they need to foster resilience and support the well-being of all members.

Mercer University: To develop a deeper relationship with our local healthcare and higher education institutions, we have begun to develop a slate of engagement with Mercer University. This collaboration includes exploring joint initiatives that connect academic expertise with community needs, providing opportunities for students to participate in meaningful projects, and offering workshops and seminars that address important health and social issues. By working together, we aim to foster a stronger connection between the university and the community, enhancing both educational experiences and the overall well-being of the region.