



RESILIENT
COMMUNITIES
OF EAST GEORGIA

**Resilient Georgia Regional Grantee
Annual Report 2023**

BUILDING A TRAUMA-INFORMED RESILIENT COMMUNITY

www.resilientcommunitiesga.org



Table of Contents

<i>About the Resilient Georgia Regional Grants.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Coalition Mission.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Summary.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Leadership Team and Contributors.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Coalition Partners.....</i>	<i>6-8</i>
<i>Message from the RCEGA Leadership Team.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Key Impacts/Accomplishments.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Description of Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES).....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>TIC/ACES Services – General (optional).....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Prevention/Intervention.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Advocacy and Policy.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Research.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Training.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Innovative Partnerships.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Spotlight.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Inspired Action.....</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Income and Expenses/Financials.....</i>	<i>26</i>



About the Resilient Georgia Regional Grants

[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.
- Round 1 grants were awarded in Nov 2019 to regional coalitions based out of Athens, Augusta, Macon, Savannah and surrounding areas. Round 2 grants were awarded in July 2020 to regional coalitions based out of Albany, Columbus, Rome, Thomasville and surrounding areas. Round 3 grants were awarded in March 2021 to regional coalitions based out of Clayton, Cobb, Gwinnett, Valdosta and surrounding areas. Round 4 funding was awarded in December 2021 to 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

MISSION – The mission of 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.

VISION – 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.



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

The Resilient Communities of East Georgia coalition aims to:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Build a common language around trauma, resilience and equity through trainings and community presentations.
5. Advocate for change using a JEDI lens by ensuring diverse voices are included in decision-making.
6. 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.



Leadership Team and Contributors

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

Senior Media Strategist - M3 Agency

Kari Viola-Brooke

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

Dr. Taylor Tidwell, MD – Research Coordinator

M2 Medical Student Coordinators for Resilient Teens

Samantha Armas

Brandon Garten

Stephanie Hayes

Mitch Hanson

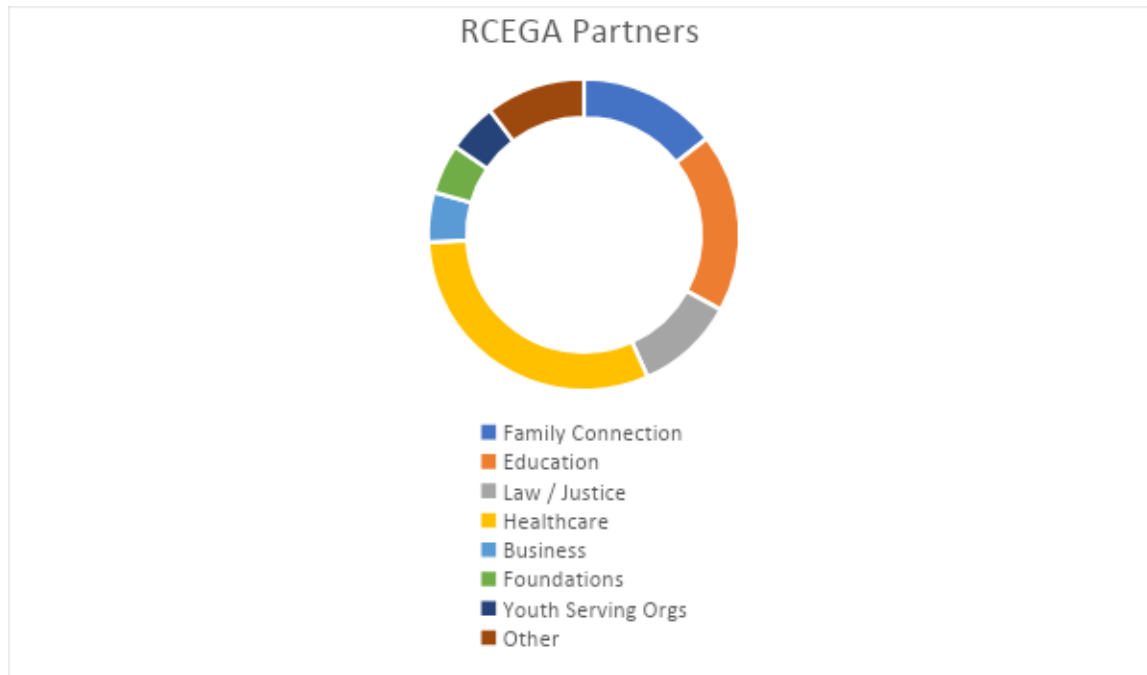
Jessica McElrath

Adam Zbib

Dr. Kimberly Vess served as Principal Investigator and has been a Key Leader since the beginning of this grant. She has moved to North Carolina to start a new medical school. Her leadership will be missed. Her last day was September 30, 2023.



Coalition Partners



REGION 7 FAMILY CONNECTION

- Teresa Carter, Communities in Schools of Burke County – Family Connection
- Teka Jenkins, Columbia County Community Connections
- Wanda Davis, 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
- Jackie Butts, Taliaferro County Family Connection
- Allison McAfee, Washington County Family Connection
- Emma Sinkfield, Warren County Family Connection
- LaShaunder Elam- Lee, Wilkes County Community Partnership

ACADEMIC:

- Julie Langham, Augusta Technical College, workforce director

BUSINESS:

- Heather Weaver, Queensborough National Bank VP
- Kevin Wade, Intellisystems



- Suzanne Sharkey, Burke County – Georgia Power
- Columbia County Chamber of Commerce
- Washington County Chamber of Commerce

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION and EDUCATION:

- Dr. Alicia Finnell, CTAE Director
- Akita Meriwether, School Nutritionist
- Hancock County Head Start
- Each of the 14 public school systems work with Family Connection Coordinators to refer teens to the Resilient Teens program.

FAITH-BASED:

- John Belangia, Lincoln County

FIRST RESPONDERS:

- Columbia County Fire and Rescue
- Glascock County Fire and Rescue
- Jefferson County Fire and Rescue

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS:

- Wellstar MCG Health
- Hancock County School-Based Health Clinic
- Medical Associates Plus – Burke County School-Based Health Clinic

HOUSING SHELTERS AND FOOD:

- Augusta Locally Grown

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)

LAW ENFORCEMENT:

- Washington County Sheriff's Office - Major Corey King
- Burke County Sheriff's Office – Antonio Young – Juvenile Compliance Officer

NON-PROFITS:



- Resourced Augusta – Angela Bakos

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS:

- Rutha Givens, Burke County
- Eva Smith, Burke County
- Chranda Baker, Warren County

PUBLIC:

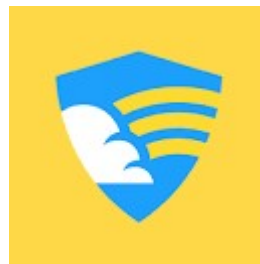
- Joanna Greenway, Department of Family and Children Services
- Vivian Stewart, Mayor of Crawfordville
- Kathy Chalker – retired DFCS Glascock,
- Raven Smith, Department of Public Health

PRIVATE:

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

YOUTH and YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

- Child Enrichment – Executive Director and Prevention Services Director
- Boys and Girls Club





Message from the Leadership Team of RCEGA

Our coalition is undergoing a change in leadership and we have added a key new partner in Child Enrichment. With Dr. Vess leaving, Dr. April Hartman is taking over as the Principal Investigator for this work. She is invested in seeing the Resilient Teens program expand and she has exciting new ideas to elevate the program's profile at Wellstar MCG Health.

In addition, it is time for our annual switchover in Medical College of Georgia Coordinators. They will recruit and train their replacements before they move on to their next med school adventure. This group of Med Student Coordinators have been amazing to work with. They are creative thinkers, hard-working and eager to contribute to the goals of this grant. We will miss these students and Dr. Vess but are excited for what they will do in their new roles.

With the addition of Child Enrichment as part of the leadership team, we have added therapists to the Resilient Teen program. A CE therapist attends each session of the Resilient Teens program and is there to provide support to teens if they need it. We are very excited to welcome CE Prevention Director Caitlyn Brantley on to the team as she will be responsible for trauma-informed training throughout the region, convening the regional coalition and aligning our work with the statewide Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan. She will also plan our annual Trauma-Informed Summit.

Dr. Taylor Tidwell has joined our team and is working on combining our data sets into one database and will be analyzing our Resilient Teen statistics for future publication. He is also reviewing and editing the Resilient Teen curriculum to get it ready for widespread dissemination.

While transitions can be difficult, we appreciate the support of the Resilient Georgia staff and leadership as we move to this new and exciting phase of our development.



Key Impacts/Accomplishments

Resilient Communities of East Georgia has:

- Conducted eight cohorts of Resilient Teens, serving more than 450 teens and 200 plus students from the Medical College of Georgia.
- Held the third annual Summit: Transforming our Community from Adversity to Resilience.
- Invited legislators to learn about our work at a luncheon. Keynote: Speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives Jon Burns.
- Engaged new key partner Child Enrichment, which will advance trauma-informed practices in law enforcement and the judicial arena.
- Awarded the first Resilience Award to Dr. Kimberly Vess, whose work was integral to RCEGA and Resilient Teens.
- Embedded trauma-informed work in 14 county collaborative plans to ensure sustainability.
- Applied for and received a \$100,000 grant from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to deliver Resilient Teens to court-involved youth.



Summit Trauma Exercise



Legislative Luncheon featuring House Speaker Jon Burns.



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

Prevention/Intervention

To address Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), resilience, and trauma-informed care in teens 13-19 in the 14-county area of the Central Savannah River Area of Georgia, RCEGA created a program to address teen mental health and wellbeing called Resilient Teens. Since 2020, we have completed seven cohorts of Resilient Teens and are nearing the end of our eighth cohort. Each cohort is eight weekly sessions of 90 minutes conducted virtually. Currently, 398 teens have completed the program and 79 are participating in the current cohort.

This program uses the five pillars of Resilience as its foundation which includes, self-awareness, mindfulness, self-care, positive relationships and purpose. There are also sessions on Suicide Prevention, body image and goal-setting. A large group lesson is delivered by a Medical College of Georgia student coordinator for the first half hour. Then teens are placed into small groups (6-8) which are facilitated by two medical students per small group. Since the inception, more than 200 medical students have participated as either facilitators or coordinators. It is estimated that each practicing physician will see 10,000 over their career. What an impact these future doctors will have on the people they serve.

- 92% of teens report the program helped them have a better understanding of ways to care for their mental health.
- 79% of teens say they now talk to a trusted adult when they are feeling anxious or upset.

Advocacy and Policy

Resilient Communities of East Georgia held a legislative luncheon and invited all legislators from the 14 counties in our region. Jon Burns, Speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives, gave the keynote address, which focused on issues such as healthcare, mental health, and the wellbeing of children and families. He encouraged everyone in attendance to get the cell phone number of their legislators and keep them informed on the issues and conditions facing each county. Our coalition will be sending legislators and other decision makers information in a newsletter that they can use to stay informed on our work with trauma and resilience.

Research

Since the beginning of the Resilient Teens Program, not including the current cohort that is in process, we have completed six cohorts and a pilot group. Total, we have had Since the beginning of the Resilient Teens Program, not including the current cohort that is in process, we have completed six cohorts and a pilot group. Total, we have had 398 teens representing all 14 counties successfully complete the Resilient Teens Program. We have also had over 177 medical school students serve as facilitators in our program and 17 coordinators. In cohort 7, which will be concluding this fall, we have 79 teens and 26 facilitators participating.



- 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) Review and Celebrate the Learning

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 77% from teens and 95% from facilitators. We have had a total of 306 teens and 162 facilitators complete the post-program surveys.

- We have had 398 teens successfully complete the program and 306 completed the post-program survey. The teens were between 12 and 19 with the average age being 15 years old. Sixty-five percent (198) of the teens identified as female, 33% (102) identified as male, and 5% (6) identified as gender nonconforming. The teens were also asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity; 73% (223) identified as Black or African American, 20% (60) identified as White or Caucasian, 3% (11) identified as Asian, and 5% (15) identified as Other.
- We have had over 170 medical students serve as facilitators and 162 completed the post-program survey. The facilitators were between 21 and 32 with the average age being 24 years old. Sixty-three percent (102) of the facilitators identified as female and 36% (58) identified as male. The facilitators were also asked to self-identify their



race/ethnicity; 15% (25) identified as Black or African American, 42% (69) identified as White or Caucasian, 35% (57) identified as Asian, and 7% (11) identified as Other.

- Almost all of 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-three 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 (79%) and express (75%) their feelings. Additionally, 79% of the teens (an increase of about 35%) said that they now “talk to somebody” when they are feeling upset, anxious, or sad after completing the program. Ninety-two percent of teens indicated that after completing the Resilient Teens Program, they have a better understanding of ways to care for their mental Health. Additionally, teens mentioned that they feel more comfortable discussing depression (94%), anxiety (94%), and suicide (90%) after completing Resilient Teens Program. Finally, 94% of teens said they would recommend this program to other teens.
- POST-PROGRAM SURVEY RESULTS FOR 2023
- In 2023, we have had one cohort complete the Resilient Teens Program and are nearly finished with another cohort. We just completed session eight on 11/6/2023, but the data analysis will not be complete until after this report is due. In our current cohort, we have 79 teens and 26 facilitators. Combining these two cohorts from 2023, we had 112 teens and 48 facilitators complete the pre-program survey. We collected a total of 112 post-test surveys from Cohort Six in Spring 2023. Overall, we received results from 81 teens and 31 facilitators.
- For cohort six, we had Resilient Teens Part One and Resilient Teens Part Two. Combining both parts, our sixth cohort contained 99 teens who successfully completed the program. The teens were led by 32 facilitators and 6 coordinators, all of which are medical school students. Concerning the teens, we collected a total of 81 post-program surveys; 27 from Part One and 54 from Part Two. Concerning the facilitators, we collected a total of 31 post-program surveys; 13 from Part One and 14 from Part Two.
- We had 32 facilitators for spring 2023 and 27 completed the post-program survey. We had 99 teens successfully complete the program and 81 completed the post-program survey. Below are some highlights from the cohort.
- All of our facilitators were between the ages of 21 to 27 with the average age being 24 years old. Fifty-eight percent (18) identified as female while 39% (12) identified as male. The facilitators were also asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity; 11% (3) identified as



Black or African American, 50% (14) identified as White or Caucasian, and 39% (11) identified as Asian.

- Additionally, we had 99 teens successfully complete the program and 81 completed the post-program survey. The teens were between 13 and 19 with the average age being 15 years old. Fifty-seven percent (46) of the teens identified as female and 43% (35) identified as male. The teens were also asked to self-identify their race/ethnicity; 74% (60) identified as Black or African American, 17% (14) identified as White or Caucasian, 4% (3) identified as Asian, and 5% (4) answered that they were two or more race/ethnicities.
- In addition to demographics, we asked the participants a few other socio-demographic type questions. Eighty-seven percent (27) of facilitators said they were religious or spiritual. Eighty-eight percent (71) of the teens said they were religious or spiritual. Concerning living conditions, 41% (33) teens indicated that they lived with both their mother and father and all 96% (78%) of the teens had siblings. While 62% (50) teens mentioned that they received free or reduced lunches, only 17% (14) mentioned that their family received SNAP benefits.
- Most teens indicated that completing the Resilient Teens Program helped them to better understand, 85% (69) and express (77%, 63) their feelings. In the pre-program survey, when asked how they express their feelings when they are upset, anxious, or sad, 29% (17) of teens said that they talked to somebody. After completing the program, 31% (25) of teens indicated that they now 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: listen to music (75%, 61), go somewhere to be alone (55%, 45), take a nap (41%, 33), play video/computer games (38%, 31), Do something active (36%, 29), do something artistic (32%, 26), or talk to somebody (31%, 25).

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:

- It helped me realize that I need to manage my feelings and prioritize myself, which helps me express them better.
- It helped me learn how to take a step back and really understand the situation and to not stress out.
- It helped me improve on how to express my feelings towards things and actually communicate them.
- It helped me by giving me tips on how to handle my emotions differently & not to always come off as grumpy when people actually care on how you feel
- It helped me to understand that it's ok to voice my thoughts and feeling no matter what



- help me to communicate more than to bottle up my feelings
- Helped me to know that I can ask for help and not be weak
- I now know how to embrace my feelings and let it out when I'm sad
- I could talk and no one laughed at me
- To see how you can understand someone's viewpoint.
- They made me stop invalidating my own feelings

PART ONE OUTCOMES

While we had 27 teens complete a post-training survey, only 12 completed all of the questions so some of the following results are based on 12 teens instead of 27.

- Favorite Lessons ranked, as seen in Chart 1, shows that Self-Care was ranked as the favorite lesson by 25% (3) of the teens. Thirty-three percent (4) of the teens ranked Self-Care and Relaxation as their least favorite lesson.
- 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 noticeable struggle discussing the individual meanings, the overall takeaways we intended were still present. Some comments include:
 - To not just take care of your body image but your mental health too.
 - [I learned] how to control myself.
 - That I am important and I matter. Also, I can overcome anything.
 - That everybody comes from a different background.
 - I realized that being resilient is more than a feeling, it's an action.
 - Trauma is a big problem that needs to be talked about.
 - I learned how to deal with it [trauma] and better take care of myself during it.
- At the end of the program, 83% (10) of the teens agreed that the topics were useful. Ninety-two percent (11) 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. Seventy-five% (9) agreed that the sessions were interesting, kept their attention, and that the topics made them think about things that they have not thought about before.



- Concerning challenges they faced when attending the sessions, most (67%, 18) claimed that they did not experience any challenges. Those who did experience challenges to attend the meeting, 15% (4) discussed that there was weak internet in their area, and 7% (2) indicated that their house was noisy and busy which made hearing and concentrating hard. Seven percent (2) also selected “other” with the only comment being that they had difficulty staying motivated to participate”.
- Nearly all, 85% (23), 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:
 - it’s a best place to talk about your problems
 - because it’s help you get better understanding about a lot of different things
 - It will help others like it helped me
 - It’s okay to ask for help
 - It was very fun and helpful
- When we asked the facilitators about challenges they faced when facilitating the sessions, 15% (4) said that they did not experience any challenges. Those who did experience challenges mentioned a lack of teen participation (5, 19%), technology issues for the teens (6, 22%), or having additional responsibilities that conflicted with the session’s time (3, 11%). Not all facilitators were able to answer the following questions so the results are based on seven. At the end of the program, while 57% (4) facilitators felt that the teens had a good understanding of resiliency and 4% (3) felt that the teens had a good understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences, only 14% (1) felt the teens understood Trauma-Informed Care. All 100% (13) 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 would recommend this program to both teens and peers because it is a great learning experience! Teens are equipped with tools on how to handle important topics (such as stress, resilience, setting goals) and facilitators get to guide this process. As a facilitator, I thoroughly enjoyed being able to teach, equip, and bond with the teens in my group.
 - For facilitators, I think it is a great opportunity to talk to teens about things that we probably wanted advice, strategies, etc about when we were the same age. It is fairly low commitment as well. For teens, I think it gives a space where they can talk about their life or struggles free from judgment.
- All (100%, 12) 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 (9, 75%), anxiety (10, 83%), and suicide (9, 75%). They also all indicated that they are now more aware of the availability of community resources (10, 28%) and where to find them (11%, 29). Ninety-two percent (11) of the teens said they now understand better ways to care for their mental health.

PART TWO OUTCOMES

- We had 54 teens complete the post-program survey. Favorite Lessons ranked, as seen in Chart 1, shows that the session on Mental Health ranked as the favorite lesson by 22% (12) of the teens. Forty-four percent (24) of the teens ranked Celebrate the Learning, which is an overview of the program, as their least favorite session.
- At the end of the program, 94% (51) of the teens agreed that the topics were useful and that they feel better prepared to manage issues after participating in the program. Ninety-six percent (52) of the teens agreed that they understood the material, 91% (49) indicated that they learned new things, 88% (48) agreed that the sessions were interesting, 85% (46) agreed that the sessions kept their attention, and 81% (44) indicated 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%, 29) claimed that they did not experience any challenges. Those who did experience challenges to attend the meeting, 50% (27) discussed that there was no internet, weak internet, or that cell data/service was bad in their area, and 0.05% (3) that their device lacked either a microphone or camera.
- Nearly all, 96% (52), 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:
 - Resilient Teens taught me so much growing up that I never knew about, it always helped me to stand up for what I believe in & speak up if there's something bad bothering me
 - I would recommend it because it is a great program that helps many children walk through their day-to-day life.
 - It builds on what you learned from part one and teaches about more things to help you in adulthood
 - You can be yourself
 - because it teaches you lessons you thought you knew a lot about but you may not



- To help people understand their feelings and helping them out through their problems.
- When we asked the facilitators about challenges they faced when facilitating the sessions, 36% (5) claimed that they did not experience any challenges. Those who did experience challenges mentioned a lack of teen participation (5, 36%), technology issues for the teens (3, 21%), or having additional responsibilities that conflicted with the session's time (1, 7%). At the end of the program, while 93% (13) facilitators felt that the teens had a good understanding of resiliency and 79% (11) felt that the teens had a good understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences, only 57% (8) felt the teens understood Trauma-Informed Care. All 100% (14) 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:
 - It serves as a really good way to get in touch with our community and help out kids that are at risk by educating them and giving them someone to talk to. as teachers/mentors to our patients and need to sometimes have difficult conversations.
 - I believe that not only does resilient teens help teenagers in our community, but it also helps us learn a lot about ourselves and how we can improve ourselves in terms of helping others and us.

We asked the teens if the program helped them to think about plans after high school, and 87% (47) agreed that it did. While most (59%, 32) indicated they are planning to go to college, other options mentioned included becoming an entrepreneur, attending a tech/trade school, and joining the military. When asked how teens see themselves when they look in the mirror, their responses were mostly positive. Seventy percent (38) indicated that Resilient Teens helped them to see themselves more positively.

Part two also discussed healthy habits. Most teens (89%, 48) indicated the program helped them to eat healthy foods. Additionally, (91%, 49) agreed that they learned more about the importance of being active. Other topics the teens agreed they benefited from were better understanding finances (94%, 52), and knowing what healthy relationships look like (93%, 50).

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:
 - I wish there was a way to do this in-person. I think the kids get a little burnt out over being on zoom/having their camera on. I know it isn't practical, but it would be nice to be able to actually interact with the kids in person.



- A way to make teen participation happen
- 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:

- Time management
- More self-care
- Sexualities and support for those afraid to show their truth
- Sex education
- Relationships
- Critical thinking

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 Communities of East Georgia.



Training

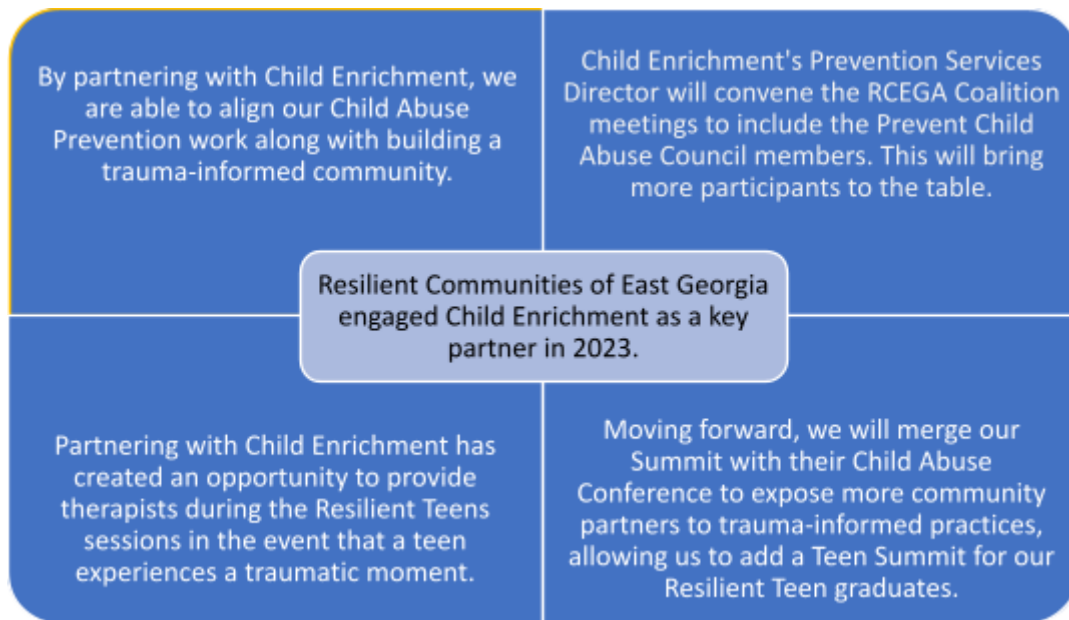


Resilient Communities of East Georgia held its third annual Summit on September 28, 2023, at the Savannah Rapids Pavilion in Columbia County, which attracted more than 150 participants from education, law enforcement, youth-serving organizations, healthcare, behavioral health, community organizations and youth.

- Participants received an overview of Adverse Childhood Experiences and Positive Childhood Experiences and watched a video of Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris on how childhood trauma impacts the health of adults.
- They worked in small groups using the Resilient Georgia learning cards and identified different types of trauma and how that impacted a person's mental wellbeing. They took the trauma survey and learned their own number of traumas experienced.
- They also got to experience the Community Resilience Model using the six wellness skills designed to help adults and children learn to track their own nervous systems to bring the body, mind and spirit back into greater balance, and to encourage people to pass the skills along to family, friends and their wider community.
- Participants heard from Medical College of Georgia students about their work with Resilient Teens and how the partnership has enhanced their educational experience.



Innovative Partnerships



Spotlight

Resilient Communities of East Georgia awarded its first Resilience Award to Dr. Kimberly Vess for her commitment and contributions to the Resilient Teens program and mentoring future physicians.



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 inaugural award aims to convey the importance of resilience and the remarkable achievements of those who embody it.

We are here today to honor a person who has spent four years building resiliency in more than 200 medical students who have impacted more than 400 teens. When Covid hit, she turned a disappointing and dangerous situation into an opportunity for young people to gain resilience skills and advance their career goals.

She has shown grace under pressure and has been a guiding force for everyone involved in Resilient Communities of East Georgia. When I think of resilience, it is the art of turning adversity into opportunity and adaptability in times of change. Our first recipient embodies that approach.

May this award serve as a reminder of the strength that lies within the human spirit.

Although Dr. Kimberly Vess is moving on to greater challenges, her story will continue to inspire us all to face challenges with resilience and determination.

Congratulations, Dr. Vess, you are our superstar!





Teen Success Story

Jada Broomfield, 16, of Jefferson County participated in Resilient Teens this fall and was accepted into the dual enrollment program at Georgia Southern University. Here is what she had to say about Resilient Teens.

This experience has helped me become a better person. One example is showing me the importance of delegation and self-care. How delegating tasks and work can help you with stress. I really enjoyed this program tremendously. This experience helped me develop empathy, compassion, and a sense of responsibility towards others. It taught me the importance of self-care and emotional control. Overall, this experience helped shape me into a more compassionate and socially aware individual. This program has given me ways to prevent burnout and a way to be more productive. Applying those skills has helped me improve. It was informative and so fun. I really enjoyed it. Having a way to give back into the youth is very admirable. Thank you to Resilient Teens for making me a better student, person, and friend.





Inspired Action

Resilient Communities of East Georgia has raised its profile in Year 4 with the addition of marketing materials, updates to the websites and weekly social media posts. We have made several community presentations sharing the importance of Trauma-Informed Care and Resilient Teens.

- § Website: <https://www.resilientcommunitiesga.org/>
- § YouTube Channel:
- § Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ResilientEastGA>
- § Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/resilienteastga/>
- § Created Master PowerPoint File for Presentations
 - Updated as needed
- Sponsored Resourced Augusta Conference
 - § Sponsored lunch, Head Sponsor Table + Speaking Engagement to 200+ attendees
 - § Provided Trauma Informed Checklist Questionnaire to gather data
 - § Solicited participation for Regional Advisory Board
- Resilient Teens
 - § Website: <https://www.resilientteens.org/>
 - § Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/resilientteens/>
 - § Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/resilient_teens/
 - § Created 7C's Brochure for parents and teens

- Transforming Our Community Summit: September 28, 2023
- Speaking engagements with local civic groups
- Specific training topics to local organizations and businesses



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Attendees, please take the survey to help us collect data about our community's awareness of trauma-information care.

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.

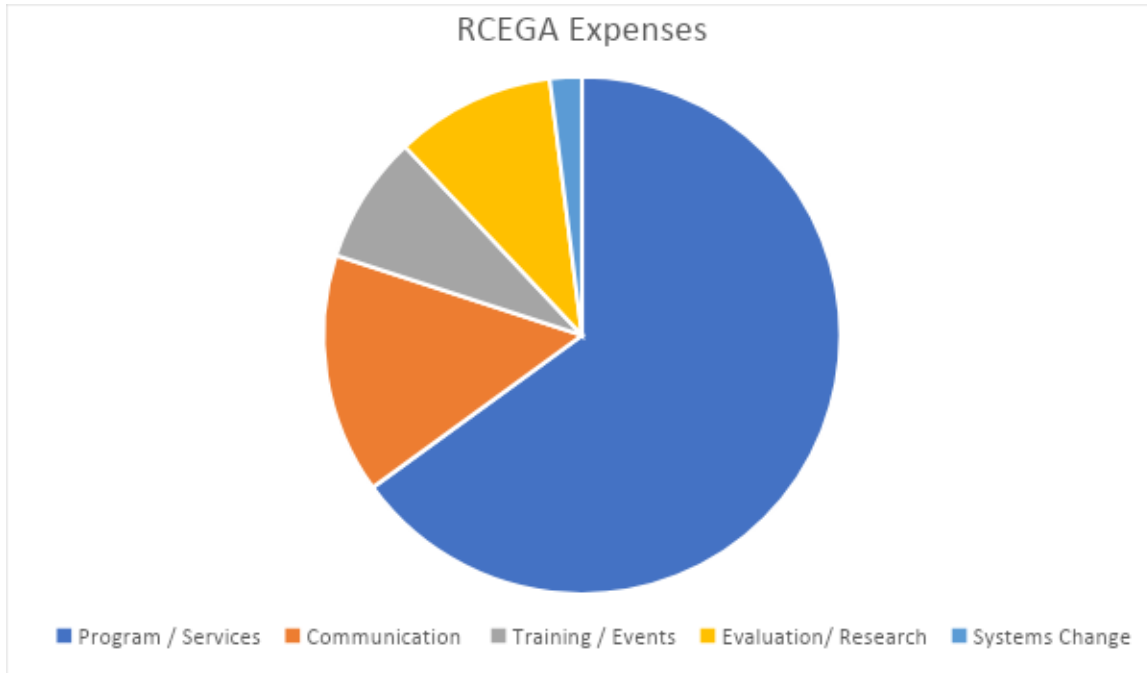


SCAN HERE TO GET IN TOUCH

RESILIENTCOMMUNITIESGA.ORG | RESILIENTTEENS.ORG



Income and Expenses/Financials



Revenue:

\$200,000 Pittulloch Foundation/Resilient Georgia
\$100,000 Medical College of Georgia Foundation
\$100,000 In-Kind donations from Family Connection and Community Partners

Total:

\$400,000

Expenses:

\$260,000 Programs / Services
 \$ 60,000 Communications / Marketing
 \$ 32,000 Training / Events
 \$ 40,000 Research / Evaluation / Data Collection
 \$ 8,000 Systems Change/ Policy/ Environment

Total:

\$400,000