

NC Center for Resilience and Learning:

Supporting Trauma-Informed Schools Across NC

THE NEED

Many children in our classrooms experience Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which can lead to trauma and toxic stress. An example of an ACE includes experiencing a potentially traumatic event like abuse or neglect, or living with a caregiver with a mental illness or substance abuse problem.

What is not included in the definition of an 'ACE' are instances of racism and discrimination, poverty and food insecurity, or the experience of a global pandemic, — yet these experiences, too, cause significant stress and trauma for students throughout our country today.

The NC Center for Resilience and Learning aims to build understanding and awareness about trauma and its impacts while also helping schools focus on resilience, support, and safety for their staff and students.

THE CENTER

Becoming a trauma-informed school is a process that takes time and requires intensive professional learning and coaching. The NC Center for Resilience & Learning works closely with districts and schools to deliver experiences and coaching that aligns with your goals and vision.

Our work aims to create systems-level change by shifting the culture and mindset of an entire school so that staff begin to see a child's behavior in the context of their life experiences, in consideration of possible trauma history or stress response system triggers.

This helps educators shift how they approach things like discipline and social-emotional learning (SEL) in ways that ultimately create safer and more supportive environments in the classroom.



By self-report, nearly **2/3rds** of adults report experiencing a significant Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) **before the age of 18**, and more than **1 in 5** reports experiencing **3 or more** types of ACEs.¹

Students who experience three or more ACEs score lower than their peers on **standardized tests**, are more likely to be **suspended and expelled**, and are:

2.5 X more likely to fail a grade²

32 X more likely to be identified with learning and behavioral problems³

The more ACEs a child experiences, the higher their long-term risk of⁴

- substance abuse
- obesity
- diabetes
- heart disease
- cancer
- stroke
- depression

Resources

1. Merrick, M.T., Ford, D.C., Ports, K.A., & Guinn, A.S. (2018). Prevalence of Adverse childhood experiences from the 2011-2014 behavioral risk factor surveillance system in 23 states. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 172(11), 1038-1044.
2. Perfect, M., Turley, M., Carlson, J., Yohanna, J., & Saint Gilles, M. P. (2016). School- related outcomes of traumatic event exposure and traumatic stress symptoms of students: A systematic review of research from 1990 to 2015. *School Mental Health*, 8, 7-43
3. Burke, Hellman, Scott, Weems, & Carrion (2011). The impact of adverse childhood experiences on an urban pediatric population. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 35, 408-413.
4. Felitti VJ, Anda RF, Nordenberg D, Williamson DF, Spitz AM, Edwards V, Koss MP, Marks JS. The relationship of adult health status to childhood abuse and household dysfunction. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. 1998;14:245-258.

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LET'S WORK TOGETHER

We provide professional learning for educators to increase understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma, the brain science behind the stress response system, resulting impacts on student learning and behavior, and trauma-informed strategies and interventions to support student resilience. We provide a range of options, from 2-hour overviews, full-day interactive workshops to ongoing coaching and consulting.

OUR OFFERINGS

- **Staff professional learning:** Professional learning on trauma and the effects it can have on students. Participants learn school-based resilience-building strategies.
- **Individualized coaching:** Ongoing consultation with structured teams to support schools in creating their own trauma-informed action plan.
- **Online course paired with coaching:** Through Participate.com, participants engage in online courses and events about trauma-informed care.
- **Other offerings:**
 - Leadership development
 - Data collection and evaluation support
 - Online and printed tools and resources

TESTIMONIALS

"I truly believe that the work you helped us facilitate has made a world of difference in our school community!"

"Before, when seeing behavior problems, it was about what's wrong with me as a teacher or wrong with this kid; now I am asking why – where is the behavior coming from? And how should I respond to it? Having those conversations in the forefront has helped teachers think differently about why students behave the way they do and how to respond."

THE OUTCOMES

Since 2017, the NC Center for Resilience & Learning has:



Provided professional learning and coaching in **32** districts across the state of North Carolina



Schools report up to a **63%** decrease in suspensions and discipline referrals after professional learning



Provided year-long professional learning and coaching in over **59** schools and counting

Email the NC Center for Resilience & Learning's Director, Elizabeth DeKonty - edekonty@ncforum.org | Learn more at ncforum.org/resilience