



The Year In Review

Dear Valued Partners,

I hope this message finds you healthy, safe, and empowered.

As the Executive Director of the Partnership for Resilience (P4R), I am deeply honored and excited to share some of the incredible strides we have made in the past year. It is through our collective dedication and resilience that we have reached this point of celebration and renewed commitment.

In the spirit of growth and innovation, we have refreshed our brand, ushering in a new era of visibility and impact for P4R. The change is a reflection of our evolution and our drive to continually adapt and improve. Our new look symbolizes the indelible and distinctive differences we are committed to making within the great state of Illinois. This change mirrors the uniqueness and strength of the communities we serve. However, rest assured, while our look may be new, our unwavering commitment to our vision, mission, and to you, our valued stakeholders, remains the same.

The past year has been a testament to our commitment to foster new relationships while strengthening existing ones. We have continued to build bridges with community members, community-based organizations, private and public stakeholders, school districts, state agencies, and content experts in the fields of medicine, behavioral health, and education.

Our sole aim remains to mitigate the impact of toxic stress in the lives of children, their families, and the communities where they live. We believe that by creating resilient communities, we can transform lives, and we are so grateful to have you with us on this mission.

With deepest gratitude,

Kristine Argue-Mason
Executive Director
Partnership for Resilience

Newsletter Preview
Initiative Updates
Parent Mentoring Program
Project Launch
Community Partnership
REACH



**Thank you for your ongoing partnership,
support and belief in our work.**



Southland Initiative

The Southland Initiative is rooted in the south suburban region of Cook County. This initiative propels the work being done to increase awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences. The central mission is to mitigate the impacts of toxic stress in the lives of children, their families and the communities where they live. This initiative is powered by several grants, and strategic partnerships with school districts, community members, and local organizations.

This pivotal work is supplemented with the combined efforts of programming such as The Community Partnership Grant, The Parent Mentoring Program, Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children’s Health), REACH (Resilience Education to Advance Community Healing), and the Southland Whole Child Initiative.

Educational Support Professional Training (ESP)

Primarily, the initiative involves fostering the relationships of partnering school districts and their resilience teamwork. In 2023, unlike previous programming years where our efforts have been focused primarily on administration and licensed educators, we recognized that the educational support professionals have some of the closest relationships with students. According to the National Educational Association (NEA) ESPs consist of all school members outside of Teachers and Administration who impact the lives of children. These include paraprofessionals, nurses, secretaries, custodians, food service workers, maintenance, tech support, and security teams. With this in mind, we were very intentional in designing our programming year for education support professionals in our partnering districts.



“Thank you so much for seeing everyone and making ways for educators to understand our students and their struggles because it matters. Building relationships can fight trauma and heal it!”



Participants learned ways to mitigate the impacts of toxic stress and build resilience in children. Topics facilitated by P4R staff and knowledgeable professionals in the field which include Dr. David Soglin, Chief Medical Officer La Rabida Children’s Hospital (Retired), Dr. Anne Wells, Research Director - Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Children’s Research Triangle, Dr. Tamara Little-Young, Director of Student Services, Lincoln Elementary School District 156.

Educational Support Professional Training (ESP)-continued

The topics presented included:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Toxic Stress
- SEL Standards
- Adult SEL
- The Importance of Mindfulness & Self-Care

These trainings provided ESPs with valuable insight and tools they can immediately apply in their professional and personal lives. During training sessions, ESPs were provided the opportunity to participate in a Community Educator program designed by P4R to train community members to become ACEs and toxic stress trainers to increase awareness within their communities. The training sessions have been attended by approximately 200 ESPs across participating school districts.

“The panel was very knowledgeable. This was a very interesting session. Learning about ACEs makes me think differently about students' behavior/adults.”



H.E.A.L. Un-Academy Community participants

TEEN SUMMER PROGRAM

The H.E.A.L. Un-Academy was created to introduce the practice of wellness to empower and liberate young people from the impact of generational trauma. In collaboration with The Honeycomb and F.L.Y. Radical Therapy, mental health professionals worked with the youth community at Thornton Township H.S.

Each workshop featured intentional pairings of a mental health professional, to provide education on mental health, and an instructor of a preventative wellness practice. The aim is to educate on mental health and preventative wellness practices intended to invest in the future emotional wellness of BIPOC youth.

The 4-part series connected youth from the Southland and the west side of Chicago creating a community of wellness and communicating emotions, body awareness, ecological systems, and spirit or intuition.

“Thank you for offering the program. I learned so much about myself and what is important to me!”



Community Partnership Programming

Through generous grant funding from the Illinois State Board of Education (Community Partnership Grant), P4R was able to meet the following program objectives designed to address the post-pandemic gaps in opportunity and unfinished teaching/learning that school districts in Illinois were facing by decreasing the gaps in meeting students' social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs.



- Integrated Student Wellness Supports
- Active Parent/Guardian & Community Engagement
- Targeted Engagement



Partnering School Districts

- Dolton West School District 148
- Lincoln Elementary School District 156
- Midlothian School District 143
- Park Forest/Chicago Heights School District 163
- Thornton Township High School District 205
- West Harvey-Dixmoor School District 147

PARENT SPEAKER SERIES

The Parent Speaker Series engaged parents and community members on important topics including ACEs, anxiety, depression, mindfulness, self-care, diabetes, and hypertension. The sessions were facilitated by professionals in related fields and co-sponsored by Partnership for Resilience, school districts, libraries, and social service organizations. Participants gave positive feedback and found the information helpful. Direct feedback cited that the content of the trainings geared towards different kinds of anxiety, the prevalence of anxiety and depression in young people as excellent.

“Thank you for the excellent information and strategies!”,
“Thank you so much for seeing everyone and making ways for educators to understand our students and their struggles because it matters. Building relationships can fight trauma and heal it!”,

Community Partnership Programming

CAREER EXPLORATION PROGRAM

Through our partnership with Your Career Tapestry, programming for middle school students was designed to offer personalized career guidance and SEL life skills. The program was held weekly after school and helped students discover their strengths, interests, and related career pathways. The program received positive feedback from teachers and administration who reported that it reinforced their career exploration content and provided valuable life skills practice for students.



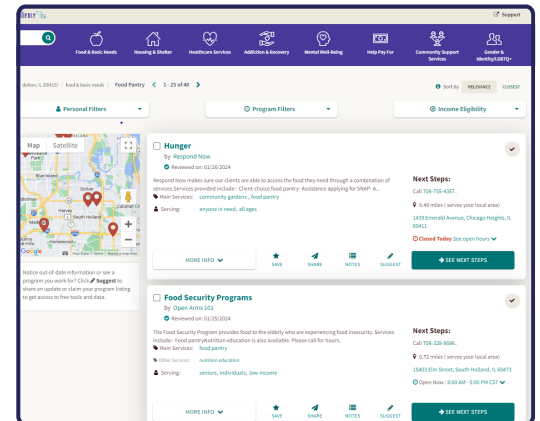
Career Exploration Year-End Celebration Events:

- District 143 Midlothian - Kolmar Elementary School
- District 148 - Dolton-West - Washington Elementary School

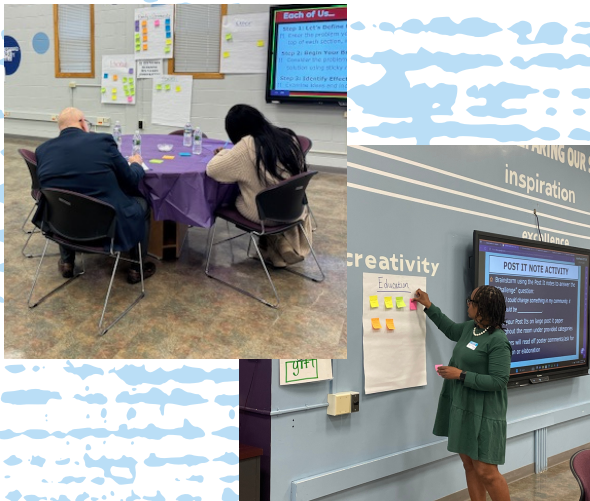


RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Partnership for Resilience has partnered with FindHelp.Org to create a free online resource directory to help parents and the community find various support services and resources in their area. The directory is accessible via the Partnership for Resilience website and includes resources for the physical, mental, and emotional needs of young children, as well as practical assistance with food, housing, transportation, early childhood education, and childcare.



COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE: "CHAT & CHEW"



We believe that family and community engagement is crucial for our success. To achieve this, we launched "Chat & Chew" sessions for adults to brainstorm and address the needs of the Southland community. We brought together partners committed to serving the Southland, hosted representatives from 9 surrounding communities in the Southland. We expanded our reach by involving educational, health, and civic institutions. Follow-up planning efforts will aim to include youth voices to develop a children's cabinet to serve the Chicago Southland.

Project LAUNCH

In August 2019, Children's Research Triangle (CRT), in conjunction with the Partnership for Resilience, received a 5-year grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) to improve the well-being of young children in Chicago's Southland. Project LAUNCH developed a community partnership to guide the work we do in the Southland. Project LAUNCH is:

- Increasing the number of screening and assessments being done in the community, with both young children and their parents
- Integrating behavioral health services into primary care settings
- Expanding the number of service providers in the community who can work with young children and their families
- Growing early childhood mental health consultation in Southland communities
- Utilizing public awareness campaigns to increase community knowledge and service access
- Providing service linkage for families in the Southland.

In year 4, after the COVID-19 pandemic, Project LAUNCH was able to successfully implement new community engagement by organizing a Parent Council that worked in tandem with its established Young Child Wellness Council (YCWC).

- The Parent Council, which began in January of 2023, played a significant role in building momentum for services in the Southland area. With an initial gathering of 7 parents, they were introduced to the spectrum of prevention by Robert Powell and Kristine Argue-Mason, the Executive Director of the Partnership for Resilience. Many members of the Parent Council also serve as educators in the Southland community, further enriching their perspectives and contributions.
- The Young Child Wellness Council took an active approach to ensure unity among partners and gather input from council members through monthly surveys. This allowed them to identify areas of improvement and plan for future projects. Moreover, they sought ways to engage families and the community to better serve the Southland area.

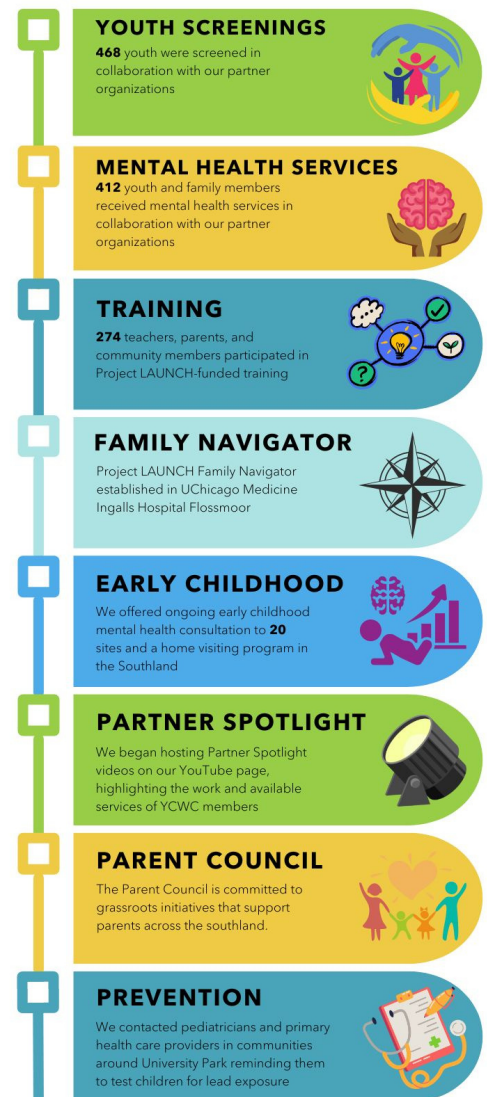


Also notable was the implementation of the YouTube channel Partner Spotlight; this channel highlights partners and the services they offer in the community. Sharing this information with the council and community members, served as an effective platform to inform the community about the availability of services.

Collaboration between the Young Child Wellness Council and the Parent Council lead to positive outcomes, strengthening the efforts to engage community members. This collaboration allows for strategic relationships to be formed with school districts, and providers enabling the council to participate in back-to-school fairs, parent nights, parent-teacher conferences, and other events.

PROJECT LAUNCH

HIGHLIGHTS





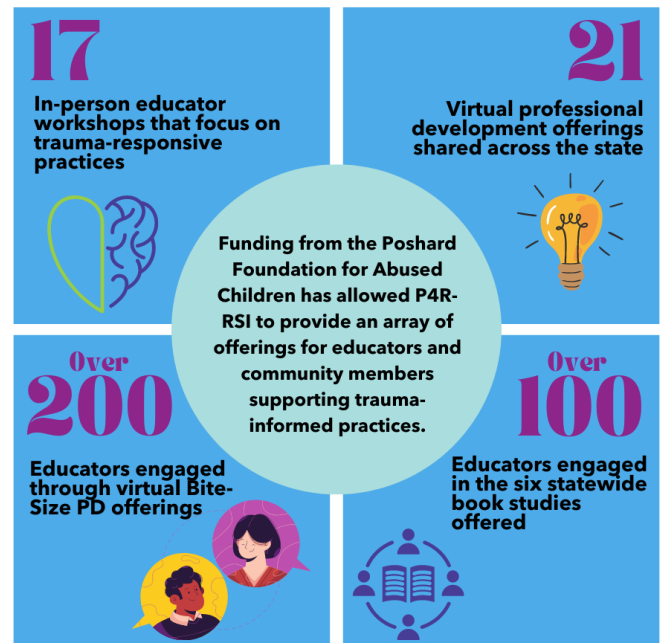
Resilient Southern Illinois

Resilient Southern Illinois (RSI) is an initiative in the bottom 16 counties of Illinois that strives to build trauma-responsive schools and communities. RSI works with member districts and provides coaching for districts and schools to create diverse resilience teams, assess the domains of a trauma-responsive school, determine domain areas of focus, and build action plans to support implementation.

RSI member district teams are invited to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) three times a year. This allows teachers, educators, social workers, administrators, or other school staff to share trauma-responsive practices, network with like-minded colleagues, and receive professional development. The PLC theme for the current school year is "From Policy to Practice", and the series is designed to support school communities in strengthening their commitment to trauma-informed practices by reviewing educational policy.

The annual educator beliefs survey was distributed to all staff members in RSI districts during the fall. The newly updated beliefs survey included 44 items that targeted knowledge of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma-sensitive schools, social-emotional learning, parent-community engagement, staff comfort level in developing a trauma-sensitive climate, and effective implementation of a trauma-sensitive climate. Participants were asked to rate each item on a five-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The results were shared with each district during the Fall PLC and are being used to guide action plans and priorities.

In 2023, P4R-RSI offered...



"Hearing that even the facilitators of this PD experience are facing the same types of stressors daily helps me to feel less alone in these feelings I experience when stressed in the work environment... I always leave the PD sessions hopeful and refreshed after an otherwise tough start to the week." - K. Wittstock, teacher

Thanks to the Illinois Education Association in Carterville for providing the space and lunch for in-person offerings.



Resilient Southern Illinois

RSI is working in communities as well to encourage cross-sector partnerships that support the whole child through children's cabinets and success planning in Southern Illinois. In partnership with the Southern Illinois Coalition for Children and Families (SICCF), RSI assisted with standing up the Carbondale Community Cabinet for Children and Youth. This cabinet was established to support the greater Carbondale area and all four districts that feed into Carbondale High School District #165. In addition, RSI and SICCF have assisted the Johnson County Safety Committee in their transition to form the Johnson County Cabinet for Children and Youth that has expanded to include early childhood education and care. This cabinet supports all four districts that feed into Vienna High School #13-3. Both cabinets are striving to better address the unmet needs of children and youth through the collaboration of public and private stakeholders.

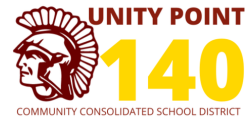
In addition, two RSI member districts, Carbondale Elementary School District #95 and Unity Point Community Consolidated School District #140, are participating in Harvard's Success Planning Community of Practice and have created cross-sector teams. These teams are working to increase their success planning efforts and capture a whole-child approach that supports each and every student.

On August 28, 2023, RSI in partnership with Centerstone's Building Compassionate Communities, and Prevent Child Abuse Illinois hosted a screening of the movie Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope at the Varsity Center in Carbondale. The screening was followed by a panel discussion of regional experts in education, mental health, juvenile justice, healthcare, and underrepresented minorities to provide a focused conversation and Q & A session. A special thanks to the 55 community members who attended and our panelists, Dr. Matt Buckman, The Honorable Amanda Byassee Gott, Brooke Lam, Cheryl Graff, Carrie Vine, Dr. Kathy Swafford, Tor Crowder, and Nancy Maxwell for sharing their opinions, experiences, and expertise.

RSI would like to thank our member districts and community partners for your support. We could not do this work without you and look forward to a continued partnership to spread trauma-informed practices throughout the region.



GIANT CITY SCHOOL
Inspiring Our Students



VIENNA PUBLIC
School District #55
"Committed to Unlocking All Students' Potential"



Parent Mentor Program (PMP)

The goal of the Parent Mentor program is to have parents and school staff work together to support and improve the learning and social-emotional development of the children they serve and their parents. The program supported parents and caretakers in their quest to be of service to the communities they serve while supporting children associated with the Parent Mentor Program.



Parent Coordinators and Parent Mentors from School District 148 Participating in an "End of the Semester Holiday Celebration".

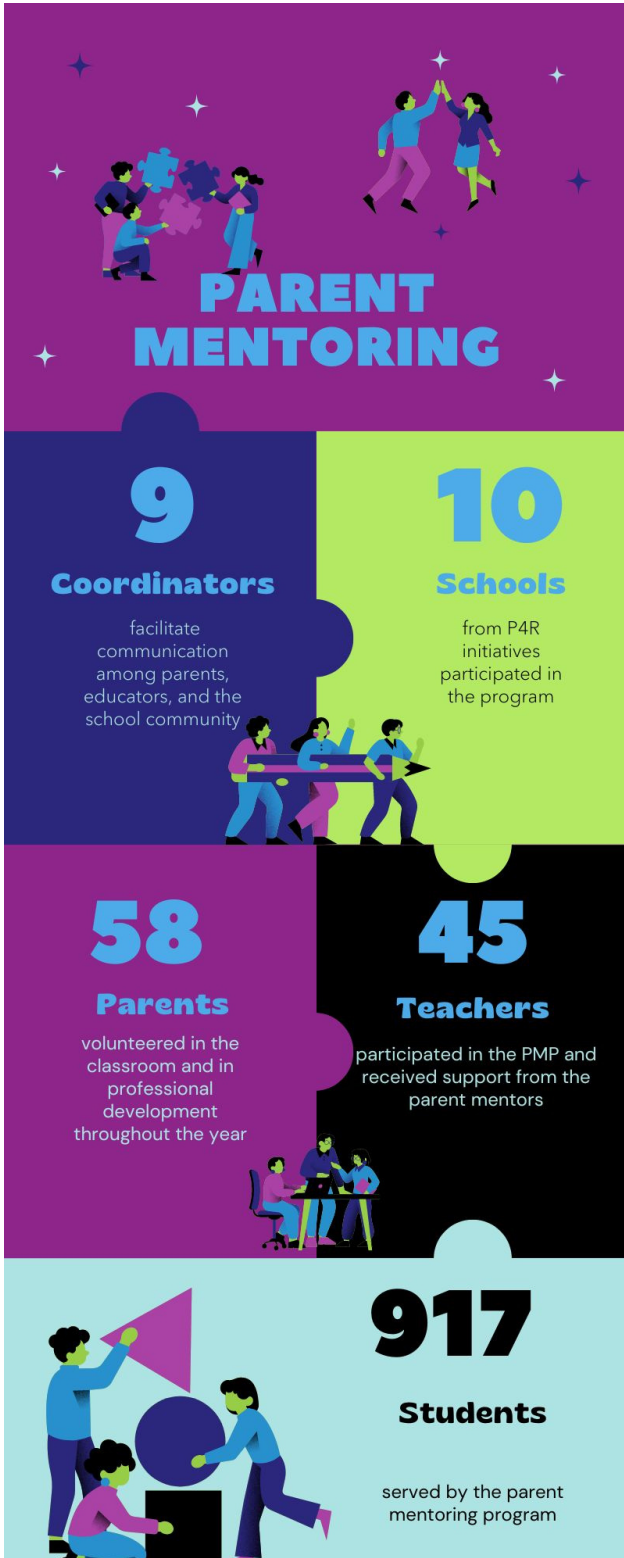
The primary stakeholders of the program were students, parents, teachers, and administrators. All program stakeholders benefited from mutual support. Parents were able to gain greater insight into the instructional and day-to-day classroom activities, teachers were able to garner classroom support through parent participation, and students were able to receive more individualized support from participating parents. The administration and overall school community were able to build community partnerships as a result of the program.

In addition to supporting students, parents are incentivized with a modest stipend for 100 hours of service per semester. Parents are also offered an opportunity to apply to what is known as the Ladders program. The Ladders program provides parents with an opportunity to take work to become paraprofessionals or begin an educational program to become classroom teachers.

The PMP is an ISBE grant-funded program. Organizations are encouraged to secure supplemental financial contributions to help support the program from partnering schools.

A partnership has been established between the Partnership for Resilience and the state PMP sponsoring organization, Parent Engagement Institute (PEI). Having a parent mentor support manager (PSM) through PEI has helped to enhance program successes and rectify program challenges.

Continued building of partnerships between parents, schools, and the community through the PMP has the potential to enhance relationships of educational and community stakeholders while improving student academic and social/emotional performance.



REACH

The Partnership for Resilience continues to be a thought partner and collaborator with Lurie’s Children’s Hospital Center for Childhood Resilience, the Stress and Trauma Treatment Center, and the six Social-Emotional Learning Hubs created by the Illinois State Board of Education in the Resilience Education to Advance Community Healing (REACH) Initiative. REACH entered its third year this fall with 585 schools and 309 districts currently enrolled across Illinois.

The Partnership for Resilience leads the Communities of Practice through REACH. This professional learning opportunity is experiential and is focused on providing space for school community members to come together to focus on a common interest or topic related to trauma-responsive practices in schools.

Through our efforts, REACH has increased collaborative partnerships with community organizations statewide through a request for proposal (RFP). Six organizations joined REACH as CoP facilitators: Affirming Voices, The Catalyst for Educational Change, F.L.Y. Radical Therapy, Mindful Practices, The Praxis Institute, and Prevent School Violence Illinois. Over the year, two hundred-seven people have participated in CoPs with topics focused on wellness, trauma-responsive MTSS, restorative practices, and trauma-informed classroom practices, and promoting youth voice.

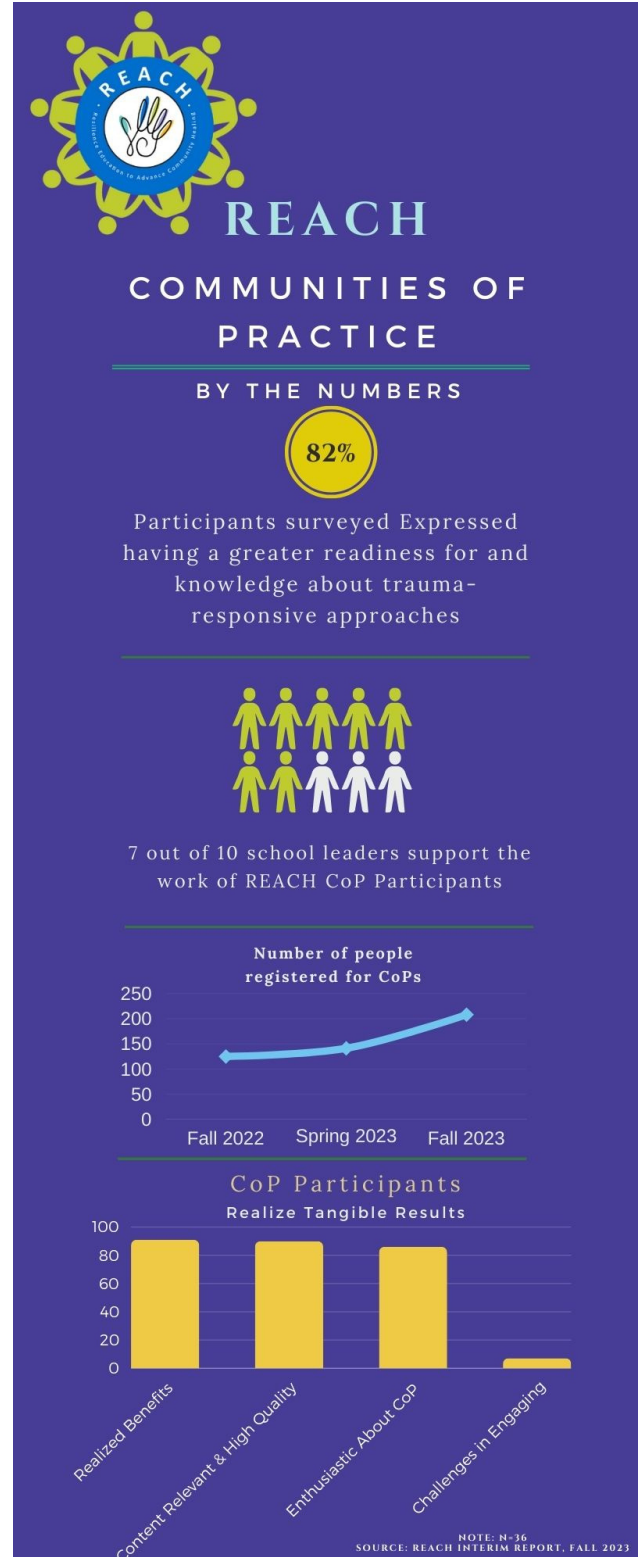
REACH Communities of Practice continue to expand as our offerings shift from virtual statewide only, to a variety of hybrid, virtual and in-person offerings regionally and district-based. We have also partnered with SEL hubs to co-facilitate regional offerings. Recently, our work was shared at the University of Maryland’s National Center for School Mental Health’s annual Advancing School Mental Health Conference. Our next round of CoPs begins in the spring of 2024 and we are excited to continue to Learn-Share-Grow with school communities across the state.



REACH Communities of Practice Program Leads from Partnership for Resilience and the Center for Childhood Resilience



REACH Communities of Practice Facilitator Orientation 2023





Springfield Resiliency Initiative

SRI Updates

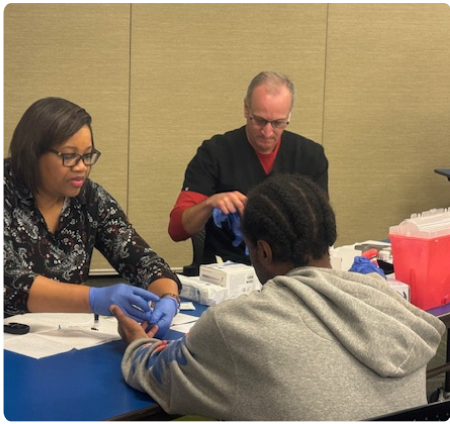
SRI is the Springfield Resiliency Initiative, a joint adventure between Springfield Public School District #186 and Springfield Education Association in consultation with the Partnership for Resilience to guide a cohort of schools in transforming into trauma responsive, equity centered, restorative schools.

The work of the Springfield Resiliency Initiative is guided by the Partnership for Resilience, District SRI Support Leader and the SRI Steering Committee.

A primary focus this year has been training all education staff within the district through a three-part professional development series to support the efforts of becoming trauma-responsive and healing-centered. These professional development sessions are focused on Adult SEL to foster and promote staff abilities to have regular opportunities to cultivate their own social, emotional, and cultural competence, collaborate with one another, build strong relationships, and maintain a strong community.

These sessions also focus on further developing supportive school and classroom climates to ensure supportive, culturally responsive learning environments that are focused on building relationships and community. To date 71 % of schools have completed the first session 24% have completed the second session and 14% have completed the third session.





P4R's Wellness Series in partnership with Mobile Care Chicago and University of Illinois Chicago - College of Pharmacy Chicago hosted by Harvey Public Library, Harvey Illinois



P4R's Educational Support Professional Training District 148 -Dolton West

LOOKING TOWARDS 2024

As we conclude this edition of our newsletter, we're excited about the journey ahead. Your ongoing support and engagement are the driving forces behind our collective success.

We continue to envision an Illinois where systems support schools, families, and communities to ensure that all children have the tools they need to be successful in life.

We value your continued participation, and together, we look forward to shaping a future filled with collaboration, growth, and shared achievements.

Thank you for being an integral part of our vibrant community.

PARTNERSHIP FOR RESILIENCE

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Learn more about us at
<https://partnership4resilience.org>

