



RESILIENT

— CHILD FUND —

HEALING THE FUTURE



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What is the Resilient Child Fund?

The Resilient Child Fund is a grass-roots, non-profit 501(c)3 socially conscious and child-centered organization founded in 2018 in Hurley, NY, that aims to reduce the effects of childhood adversity for individuals and the communities in which they live.

What is our mission?

To ensure that every child who has experienced trauma or toxic stress has access to life saving Creative Art Therapies: music, arts, drama, dance/movement and play.

Who are we? The Leadership of the Resilient Child Fund

We are a group of social workers, therapists and human services administrators who spent our careers providing therapy to children in need and who administered child programs. We are invested in supporting individuals, childcare organizations, schools, mental health organizations and day care initiatives in our local communities. We are concerned about the future for all children and want to make a significant difference in their lives. The model we have developed combines creative arts therapies with knowledge of early brain development to mitigate the effects of childhood adversity.

The Resilient Child Fund is completely run by a volunteer board. To date, we have no employees, no overhead, and 95% of all funds raised go directly towards helping a child heal from adversity.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

The United States is currently experiencing a crisis in children's mental health. Given the increase in childhood depression, anxiety, suicide and substance use along with the limited mental health resources in our community, we provide a preventive approach that saves taxpayers and communities millions of dollars each year in health care costs and societal financial burdens.

Two thirds of America's children have experienced one or more types of childhood adversity.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) include

- Psychological, physical, or sexual abuse
- Community or school violence
- Witnessing or experiencing domestic violence
- National disasters or terrorism
- Commercial sexual exploitation
- Sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- Refugee or war experiences
- Military family-related stressors (e.g., deployment, parental loss or injury)
- Neglect
- Serious accidents or life-threatening illness
- Food insecurity
- Homelessness

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) facts

- In 2019, 1,840 children died of abuse and neglect in the United States.
- Each day, more than 1,000 youth are treated in emergency departments for physical assault-related injuries.
- In 2019, approximately 1 in 5 high school students reported being bullied on school property in the last year
- 8% of high school students had been in a physical fight on school property one or more times during the period 12 months before this survey.
- Each day, about 14 youth die from homicide, and more than 1,300 are treated in hospital emergency rooms for violence-related injuries.

Other statistics

- The American Society for the Positive Care of Children, cites 7.2 million reported cases of child abuse per year.
- National Children's Alliance reports that of these, 600,000 cases of child abuse have been confirmed annually. This equates to roughly 1 percent of children.
- The CDC cites a total economic lifetime burden of people with these issues of \$592 billion.

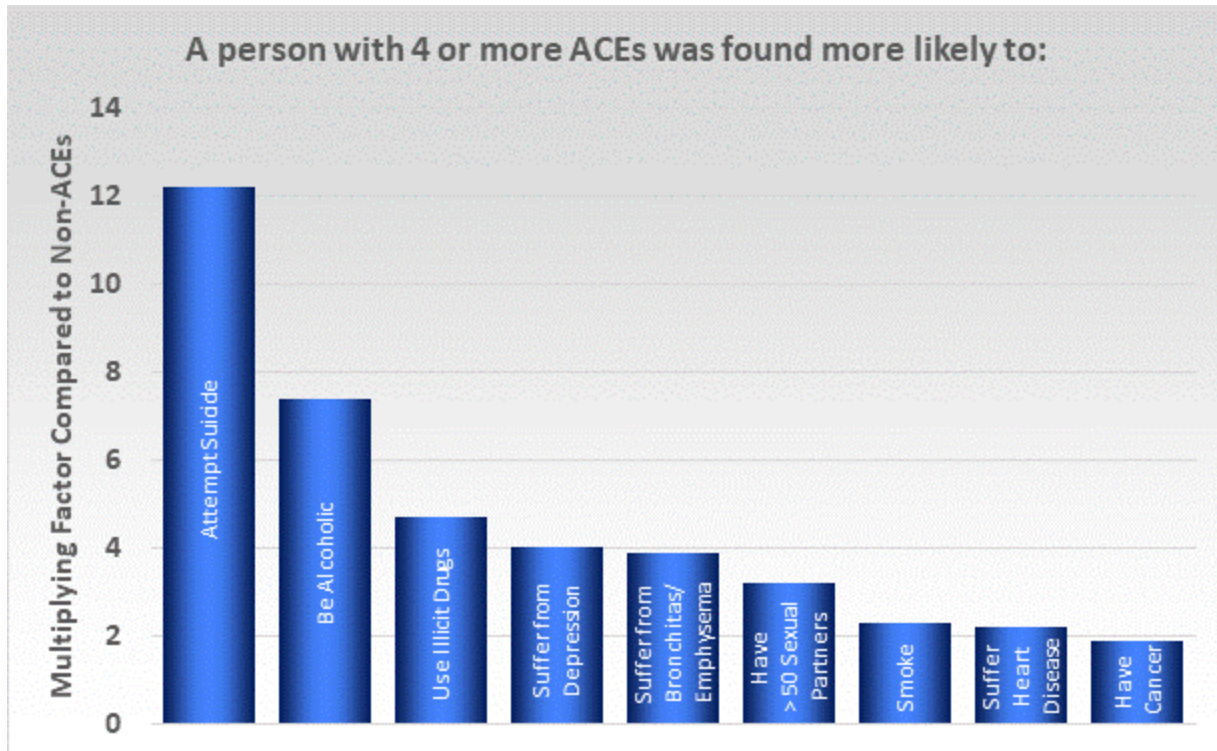
High levels of adversity impact child development

The Center for Disease Control's Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) study surveyed 17,000 Kaiser Permanente employees from 1995-1997, where they completed confidential surveys regarding their childhood experiences and current health status and behaviors. They discovered a direct correlation between early childhood adversity (what we call ACEs) and adult health outcomes such as:

- Neurobiological effects (e.g., brain abnormalities, stress hormone dysregulation, learning Issues)
- Psychosocial effects (e.g., poor attachment, poor socialization, poor self-efficacy, violence, struggles with finances and job retention)
- Health risk behaviors (e.g., smoking, obesity, substance abuse, promiscuity, chronic health problems, depression, anxiety, suicide)

A person with four or more ACEs was found to be

- 12.2 times as likely to have attempted suicide
- 7.4 times as likely to consider themselves to be an alcoholic
- 4.7 times as likely to have ever used illicit drugs
- 4.0 times as likely to suffer from depression
- 3.2 times as likely to have had 50 or more intercourse partners
- 2.3 times as likely to currently smoke
- 3.9 times as likely to have chronic bronchitis or emphysema
- 2.2 times as likely to have had heart disease
- 1.9 times as likely to have had cancer



These effects may then be passed onto their children, creating intergenerational health and financial issues. The Resilient Child Fund breaks the cycle of adversity for today's children and their children to come, providing healing dividends well into the future.

Many social problems have their roots in childhood adversity

- Homelessness
- Prostitution
- Criminal behavior
- Opioid epidemic
- Unemployment
- Parenting problems
- Family violence
- High utilization of health and social services

The CDC estimates that ACEs related illness costs \$748 billion in North America. Stopping ACEs before they start would relieve an over-burdened healthcare system and save \$56 billion per year. Reducing and treating ACEs on a societal level saves taxpayers and the government billions of dollars each year.

ACEs related illnesses costs nearly \$750 billion dollars; preventing ACEs would reduce US healthcare costs \$56 billion annually.

Since the COVID pandemic

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation a health policy research group, and the CDC, the suicide rate for adolescents increased 62%. Depression and anxiety have increased 32% and 29% stated they had seriously considered suicide since the pandemic.

While mental health needs have increased, access to mental health care for pediatric beneficiaries has declined. Reasons for not receiving care include cost and a lack of providers, and culturally competent care. Programs are closing and there are not enough therapists who are trained to work with children. Many therapists, who might want to work with children do not do so for one of two reasons. Either they do not have the training to work with children or families cannot afford to see them. The Resilient Child Fund increases available resources by training professionals in Creative Art Therapies. Grants are awarded to therapists to supplement their income when working with families who cannot afford treatment.

While mental healthcare needs have increased, access to therapists for pediatric patients has declined.

The Resilient Child Fund addresses this through training in Creative Art Therapies and through grants awarded to families in financial need.

The Resilient Child Fund addresses all of these issues by providing free or low-cost therapy and increasing therapeutic services by training and educating professionals.

THE SOLUTION

ACEs can be prevented and healed

Nurturing relationships, exercise, eating healthy, mindfulness, therapy and educating the public about the effects of ACEs can break the cycle of violence for generations to come. The Resilient Child Fund's mission is to ensure that every child who has experienced trauma or toxic stress has access to life saving Creative Art Therapies: music, art, drama, dance/movement, play.

Parents and caregivers play a critical role in determining whether a child will flourish and achieve their highest potential. We support parents of at-risk children by incorporating them into the therapeutic process so they can become more skilled at intervening with and supporting their children. We create a safe space for children to express what words cannot express.

Creative Art Therapy allows the unspeakable to be spoken

It can be difficult for children to express what they are feeling in words. Unexpressed emotions cause feelings of anxiety and stress that can emerge as anger, withdrawal, physical pain, lack of concentration or any other number of behavioral or physical symptoms. When children don't know how to put words to their inner turmoil, creative healing arts allow the unspeakable to be expressed and an experience of relaxation occurs that supports emotional and physical healing. Creative Art Therapy increases resilience.

Free or low-cost Creative Art Therapy

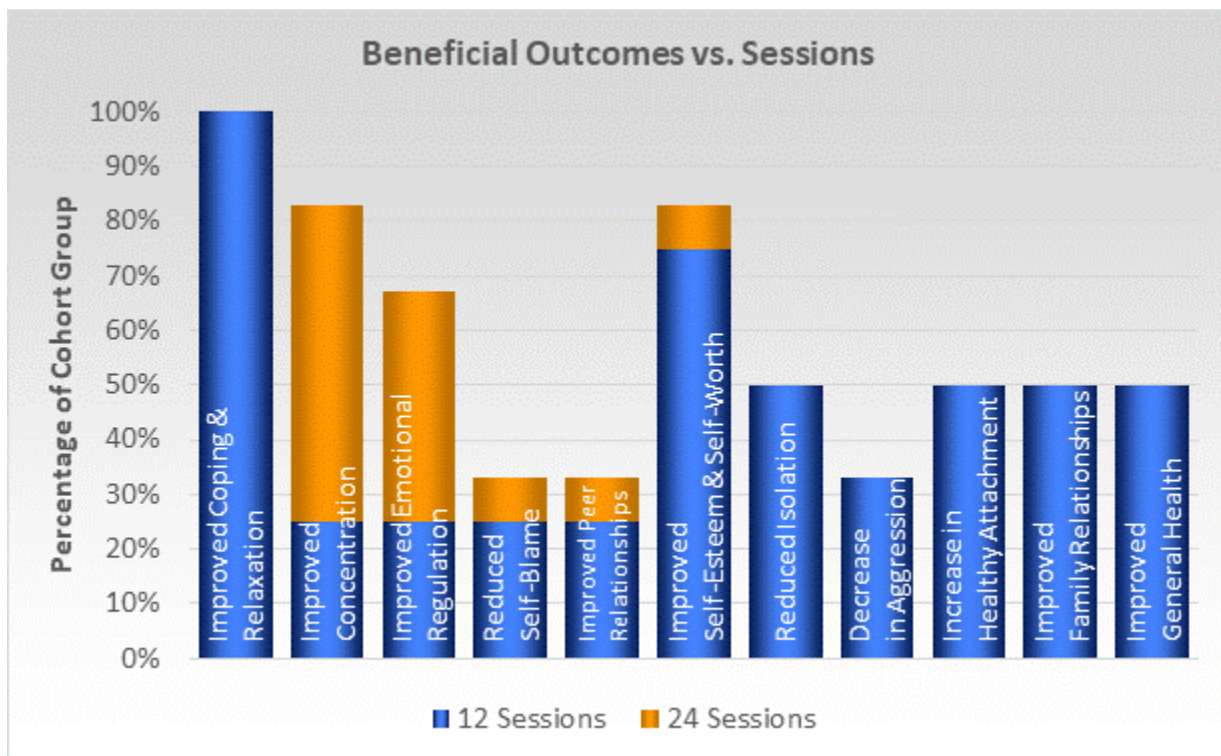
The Resilient Child Fund provides grants to skilled therapists/teachers to help children and teens cope with traumatic life events in a Creative Art Therapy session so that families in need can receive free or low- cost therapy. When children are nurtured through this approach, they learn to cope, they become contributing adults in our communities, and our world benefits. We partner with parents, teachers, and therapists to improve children’s lives.

Awards are given for 12 to 24 weeks of individual therapy for children and families in need who might not otherwise be able to afford it.

The Resilient Child Fund conducts a Pre-Treatment Assessment and Post-Treatment Assessment for every child it serves. This shows the efficacy of Creative Art Therapy and measures a child’s progress in managing mental health and behavioral challenges.

Post-therapy analysis

Post-therapy interviews were performed on two cohort groups of participants: the first group received 12 therapy sessions; the second 24. Regardless of the number of sessions, all of the program participants showed improvement in ‘Coping and Relaxation’ and half showed ‘Reduced Isolation’, ‘Increase in Healthy Attachment’, ‘Improved Family Relationships’ and ‘Improved General Health’. The biggest benefit of additional sessions was realized in ‘Improved Concentration’, ‘Improved Emotional Regulation’, ‘Reduced Self-Blame’, ‘Improved Peer Relationships’ and ‘Improved Self-Esteem and Self-Worth’.



Additionally, several participants showed an improvement in school grades, healthy eating and daily exercise. We believe the improvements in these desirable characteristics would improve further if additional sessions were available.

Improved Concentration and Emotional Regulation more than doubled as a result of doubling the number of sessions, suggesting some desired outcomes would benefit from more sessions and or longer program participation.

Dollars and sense

The CDC cites a total economic lifetime societal cost of these issues of \$592 billion. With 600,000 confirmed cases in the US, or approximately 1% of this cohort group, this suggests 1% of the total population, or 3.3 million Americans are similarly afflicted and represent a societal cost of \$175,000 per person of abused/neglected childhood.

If there is a direct relationship of the post-therapy treatment and reduced ACEs characteristics, our data suggests \$600 spent on 12 sessions reduces ACEs related lifetime societal costs by 46% or \$80,500. For 24 sessions at \$1200, ACEs related lifetime societal costs are reduced by 57% or \$100,000.

Arguably, the coping skills learned as a nine year old do not entirely apply to a teenager experiencing ACEs. If we assume half of the life-lessons are retained, the lifetime societal cost-avoidance reduces to \$40,250 and \$50,000 for 12 and 24 sessions, respectively.

Simply put, every dollar spent on 12 sessions nets a lifetime societal cost avoidance of \$67 and every dollar spent on 24 sessions nets \$42!!

Assuming a conservative lifetime benefit of 50%, our program can yield nearly \$67 societal cost avoidance for every \$1 spent on Creative Art Therapy!

Creative Art Therapy training

The Resilient Child Fund increases available resources by training professionals in Creative Art Therapies and providing staff development taught by a Certified Art Therapist. Grants are awarded to therapists to supplement their income when working with families who cannot afford treatment.

The Resilient Child Fund has collaborated with the Poughkeepsie, NY school district, including Day One Early Childhood Learning Center and a refugee resettlement center located in NY for unaccompanied minors. We have trained early childhood staff, teachers of all ages, and mental health workers so that children can get a healthy start from the beginning with their educational experience in a classroom or group setting.

Education: Changing the paradigm from, “What is wrong with you?” to “What has happened to you?”

The Resilient Child Fund provides screenings and panel discussions of the award-winning documentary *Resilience; The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope* to raise awareness about ACEs, trauma, and prevention. Created by Jamie Redford, this film discusses the Center for Disease Control’s study on Adverse Childhood Experiences. This led to the creation of a Task Force in Dutchess County NY that brought together parents, professionals and community members to address unmet needs in the community. Educating the public, doctors, school personnel and mental health workers about the effects of ACEs, along with mitigating factors, leads to an increase in policies, strategies and interventions for individuals and communities.

Educating people about ACEs

- Changes how people think about the causes of ACEs and who could help prevent them.
- Shifts the focus from individual responsibility to community solutions.
- Reduces stigma around seeking help with parenting challenges or substance misuse, depression, or suicidal thoughts.
- Promotes safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments where children live, learn, and play.

MOVING FORWARD

The Resilient Child Fund aims to increase the number of children and communities served through an increase in trainings and education made possible by increased funding through our track record of measurable positive outcomes.

Through our work the Resilient Child Fund breaks the cycle of trauma, violence and despair for today’s children and generations to come. When children are healed, they become healthy adults, social problems decrease; saving the government and our over-burdened healthcare system billions of dollars. Through therapy, training and education, together, we can heal the future.

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