

Focus on Resilience: Reaching Teens in Monroe County

Building on the investment Monroe County has made in understanding and responding to trauma, in 2016, member districts of the [Consortium on Trauma, Illness and Grief in Schools \(TIG\)](#) asked this question, “If *Resilience trumps ACEs*, how do we build resilience in our schools?” This seemingly simple question proved to be the catalyst that launched a comprehensive new initiative aimed at improving overall mental, physical, and behavioral health among teens.

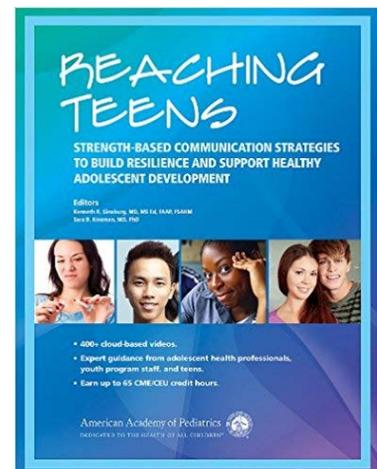
In December of 2017, over 250 educators, youth programming staff, clinicians, and key community stakeholders gathered to learn how they, as caring adult professionals, can contribute to the growth of resilience in Monroe County. This day launched a community, already committed to fostering resilience in all youth, to move forward with the understanding that they can make an impact on young people who have experienced adversity and are the most vulnerable. This movement was facilitated by the Monroe County Office of Mental Health (MCOMH), and guided by [Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg](#), doctor of Adolescent Medicine and national expert on fostering resiliency in youth. In February of 2018, the Resilience Learning Collaborative held its first meeting and Monroe County has become the only community in the nation where schools are leading the charge in becoming a Reaching Teens Community.



February 2018: Over 60 Site Champions attended the Kick-Off Meeting

What is Reaching Teens?

Published by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Reaching Teens builds upon the three pillars of: Positive Youth Development, Resiliency Development, and Trauma-Informed Care. It is a comprehensive resource to guide increasing adult capacity to engage youth and build resiliency. Available as a text with associated digital content or accessible in an all-digital format, Reaching Teens is a practical guide to implement a comprehensive staff training initiative. Each chapter is designed to be read in less than 12 minutes! By sharing this single, well-established resource, MCOMH seeks to reinforce Monroe County’s System of Care values while creating a culture of support for the site-based teams making positive changes.



Who’s partnering in the Resilience Learning Collaborative?

The group includes 14 school districts, Rochester Regional Health (RRH), Center for Youth, Hillside Family of Agencies, Villa of Hope, and the Education Success Network. This vibrant collective is led by an Advisory Council with representatives from RRH, Hillside, three school districts, the Greater Rochester Health Foundation and the Children’s Institute.

What is the goal of this initiative?

In coming together as a multi-disciplinary team with a shared approach and language, the Resilience Learning Collaborative aims to improve collective outcomes for youth throughout Monroe County's System of Care.

What's next?

The team meets quarterly to develop shared resources, address barriers and monitor progress. On July 18th, they will host their first Ed Camp that will allow site champions, teams and the 250+ stakeholders to come together for an entire day of action, furthering individual and collective goals.

How do I learn more?

If interested in becoming involved in Monroe County's team or establishing a similar collaborative in your own community please contact: Amy Scheel-Jones, Sr. Consultant Practice Transformation ascheel-jones@ccsi.org.

Monitoring Impact

In 2015, MCOMH partnered with the Department of Public Health and local school districts to include 11 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) questions in the Youth Risk and Behaviors Survey (YRBS). This groundbreaking initiative provided an analysis of the prevalence of ACEs in our community, as well as illustrated the relationship between an accumulation of ACEs and high-risk behaviors, risk for lower academic performance, and concerning health, mental health, and behavioral outcomes. The Resilience Learning Collaborative will use this survey data to monitor impact over time. For more information, visit: [From ACEs to Assets, Building Resilience in Monroe County.](#)