



Press Release

May 31, 2021

LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER: BRIDGES TO RESILIENCE CONFERENCE

5th annual Bridges to Resilience Virtual Conference
Weds., June 9, 2021, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Keynote speaker, Robert F. Anda, MD, MS –
Co-founder and Co-Principal Investigator, ACEs Landmark Study
Learn more and register by June 3 at bridgestoresilience.com

(SANTA BARBARA, CA.) – The annual *Bridges to Resilience* conference is the most recognized conference in California’s coastal tri-counties, focused on educating and increasing awareness about the widespread impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and providing hopeful strategies to build resilience within our communities and system of care. This live, virtual day of learning and networking on June 9 will strengthen trauma-informed care networks by raising awareness of ACEs and elevating resources that can help to prevent, treat and heal the harmful consequences of ACEs and toxic stress. Cross-sector participants include physicians and other healthcare professionals, educators and early care providers, social workers and therapists, police and probation officers, philanthropists and community agencies, faith leaders, parents and foster parents. Continuing education credits are available for healthcare professionals.

Generous Sponsor Support - In addition to grant support from California’s ACEs Aware Initiative, this conference is possible with the partnership of our generous local sponsors.

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About Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) - ACEs are specific childhood traumas including abuse, neglect and family dysfunction. Researchers have found that ACEs can cause chronically elevated stress hormones that negatively impact development of a child's brain and immune system. The result is an increased risk of physical and behavioral health problems in adulthood—from heart disease and stroke, to alcoholism and suicide. The more ACEs a child experiences, the greater the risk: children with six or more ACEs have 20 years shorter life expectancy.

Research has also identified factors that can build resilience, mitigating ACEs. For example, pediatricians can screen patients for ACEs, apply early intervention strategies, and provide referrals to other community services. An always-available trusted adult can help children develop resilience and empathy. Protective factors, such as parenting skills and concrete support in times of need, can help families break the cycle of abuse.

“We know that ACEs can dramatically impact life outcomes in adulthood,” said Finch, “and that the consistent support of caring adults can strengthen a young person's resilience. Now comes the exciting part as our community begins to build a collaborative, trauma-informed network of care that can improve life for generations of children and families.”

Conference co-chairs

Barbara Finch, Santa Barbara County KIDS Network | Terri Allison, Resilient Santa Barbara County | Florene Bednersh, Children and Family Resource Services | Lisa Fraser, Center for Family Strengthening, San Luis Obispo County | Kathleen Van Antwerp, Ventura County Partnership for Safe Families |

About Bridges to Resilience Collaborative – KIDS Network and the *Bridges to Resilience* conference gave rise to Santa Barbara's growing ACEs initiative, Resilient Santa Barbara County. Through the ACEs Aware Provider Engagement Grant, KIDS Network led a tri-county planning process for this year's conference to engage new partners and strengthen care networks in Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties. The three neighboring counties have a long history of regional collaboration. The Coastal Tri-Counties Child Abuse Prevention Coalition provided a springboard for the current project. Multidisciplinary prevention teams from each county offered a base from which to build cross-sector networks of care that align with the goals of the ACEs Aware initiative. Medi-Cal managed care plans, CenCal Health and Gold Coast Health, joined with Cottage Health, Dignity Health and the Pediatric Resiliency Collaborative to engage primary care and specialty healthcare providers. Community partners, including representatives of First 5 Commissions in all three counties, have engaged educators, early care providers, and human service organizations to ensure that featured presentations are enhanced with information and networking opportunities to highlight local resources and intervention strategies.

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