Since 2015, the Building Community Resilience (BCR) collaborative has grown from five sites to a national network of cross-sector partners, including a major public health initiative focused on community resilience and a Policy Lab focused on advancing equity in policy. In 2019, in recognition of our growing influence in the field, the Center for Community Resilience was established within the Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness.

The Center for Community Resilience (CCR) seeks to improve the health of communities by enabling cross-sectoral partners to align policy, programs and practice to address adverse childhood experiences in the context of adverse community environments—the Pair of ACEs. Our innovative framing of ACEs, with the explicit focus on equity and prevention, has influenced local initiatives, programs, public health practice and local, state and federal policy. Over the past five years, the Building Community Resilience networks have successfully led systems and policy change focused on addressing long-standing economic, social and health disparities by partnering with community, integrating service delivery and building political will for change.

Today, our partners are responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic that threatens the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve. The pandemic has put on full display measurable inequities along the nation’s most fragile fault lines—race, immigration status and economic status. The groundbreaking work of CCR has been pivotal in influencing public health and child health advocates to center equity in their efforts to address trauma and build community resilience, enabling communities to not only bounce back in the face of adversity, but to ultimately thrive. In the following pages I'm pleased to share our successes and our vision for the future.

Dr. Wendy Ellis
Director
The Process

Childhood adversity or trauma, such as exposure to abuse and neglect, parental substance abuse and incarceration are often rooted in community environments lacking equity, as measured by concentrated poverty, poor housing conditions, higher risk of violence, victimization and homelessness. These are adverse childhood experiences occurring in the context of adverse community environments – the Pair of ACEs.

Using the BCR process, tools and resources, community partners across the country are bringing together diverse coalitions to address long-standing inequities, communicating ACEs as a national public health concern, and shaping policy, practice and programs to support and build resilience.

BCR employs a systematic approach based on four central components applied as a continuous improvement model:

- Creating shared understanding of childhood and community adversity;
- Assessing system readiness;
- Developing cross-sector partnerships; and
- Engaging families and residents in a collaborative response to prevent and address the Pair of ACEs.
Community engagement is a core component of the BCR process to address and mitigate the Pair of ACEs. In the spring of 2018, the BCR collaborative took the bold step of entering into conversations with network partners about the role of racism and structural determinants of health. Even within the collaborative, there was a great deal of trepidation about our ‘standing’ as a group to enter into what could become a toxic conversation at a turbulent time in American politics. Despite the hesitation, the collaborative held together and found support across sites to conduct ‘courageous conversations' within their own communities.

In early 2019, we began development of the **Fostering Equity** modules that represent the BCR network experiences in centering equity at the heart of community resilience. These modules help coalitions understand the historical underpinnings of structural racism and the resulting traumas and disparities, and equip them with tools and exercises that enable them to conduct constructive conversations that lead to policy change. Since the modules were released in February 2020, there have been more than 2600 visits to the Fostering Equity page on the CCR website.
Module I  
“What’s Equity Got to Do with It?” Connecting Policy to Community Outcomes

This module presents the background of 600 years of American policy to explain the social, economic and health inequities we see in communities today. We use national and local data to illustrate the inequitable outcomes driven by public policy (housing, education and criminal justice and law enforcement in particular) to help improve our collective understanding of the vicious cycles that have been instituted deliberately and are not easily broken in our communities.

Module II  
Preparing for the Equity Talk

This module presents a framing that facilitates coalition building through the development of a shared understanding of the past and present, thereby creating a firm foundation for transformational social justice change.

Module III  
Community Engagement Strategies

This module offers tools and strategies for engagement that center the wisdom of community and are derived from our BCR network's collaborative learning over the past five years.

Module IV  
Advancing Equity in Policy

This module provides examples of policy change that can advance equity and support healthy and resilient communities. Within each domain - housing, education, and law enforcement and criminal justice - we highlight key equity goals and provide concrete examples of policies that communities can pursue to achieve those goals.
Translating the Work: Building Community Resilience Networks and Collaborative

For the past five years, the BCR networks and collaborative have worked across sectors to address and prevent childhood adversity by fostering equity to promote resilience. The Pair of ACEs framing has influenced cross-sector and community-based responses to focus not just on the prevalence of childhood adversity but also on educating and activating advocacy for long-term systems change that addresses the root causes of inequity. Across the globe in countries such as Scotland, New Zealand and Kenya, the Pair of ACEs tree—with more than 40,000 downloads—has been integrated into public health initiatives focused on adverse childhood experiences. This iconic image has been featured in several textbooks and has been featured in the curricula of medical, nursing, social work, and public health education across the United States.

BCR has created a wide array of tools to help network sites and the field develop, refine and expand understanding and draw connections between coalition goals and the levers of change. These tools, including the Coalition Building and Communications Guide, the Policy and Advocacy Guide, Strategic Planning worksheet, Pair of ACEs tree and the Partner, Build and Grow worksheets, have been downloaded more than 50,000 times and incorporated in public health initiatives in locations outside the BCR network, including San Diego, North Carolina, Indiana, British Columbia and Scotland.

In 2016, we introduced the BCR Data Dashboard – a novel data collection and analysis tool to provide coalition networks with the methods necessary to evaluate outcomes associated with their efforts. Analysis of data collected from each partner informs local strategies, cross-site learning opportunities, and technical assistance and policy priorities. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation and other federal partners have cited the BCR measurement and data collection tools as models for demonstrating the effectiveness of trauma-informed approaches and a method to demonstrate the impact of cross-sector collaboration. Our networks have used the BCR Data Dashboard to guide collective and coordinated work carried out by each partner. They have also used this tool to demonstrate the effectiveness of their network to gain philanthropic, institutional, and public funding for novel programs.
Data from the BCR Data Dashboard indicate that local and regional networks are strong at raising awareness and providing education on ACEs and resilience; four of the six local networks educated more than 2,000 people in 2018 alone. The BCR Data Dashboard also indicates that partners have increased their adoption of explicit equity statements for their organizations, from 45% of the reporting entities in 2017 to 89% in 2018. Their equity statements are the result of both changes in practice among existing BCR partners and BCR local networks’ ability to attract new partners with an equity focus.

**Translating the Work:**

**Resilience Catalysts in Public Health**

Launched in late 2019, the Resilience Catalysts in Public Health is a national network of local health departments (LHDs) seeking to mitigate and eliminate adverse childhood experiences, build resilience, and foster equity through policy, practice and program change. In collaboration with the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the American Public Health Association (APHA), the Resilience Catalysts network use the Community Resilience (CR) framework developed by CCR Director, Dr. Wendy Ellis. The CR framework connects wellness to a local context focusing on place-based and systems-driven community and population health outcomes and is designed to be used by LHDs as a Public Health 3.0 strategy. As Chief Health Strategists, LHDs work across sectors – including housing, public education and criminal justice – to drive initiatives that address ACEs, injury prevention, opioid misuse, suicide and the impact of structural racism on community characteristics such as homelessness, juvenile incarceration rates and educational attainment.

Notably, the Resilience Catalysts network leverages theory-based logic modeling and system dynamics modeling to identify levers for change, and develop communications tools and policy strategies to implement change in collaboration with their community partners.

The first cohort of Resilience Catalysts network partners are Mesa County, CO, Louisville, KY, Cambridge, MA, and Appalachian District, NC. The second cohort of sites, launched in December 2020, includes Tacoma-Pierce County, WA, Alameda County, CA, Baltimore City, MD, Leon County, FL, and Shelby County, TN. Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Resilience Catalysts in Public Health is considered a major strategy by the agency to implement Public Health 3.0 tactics in pursuit of preventing ACEs, suicide and opioid misuse and fostering equity.
Focus on primary prevention of the Pair of ACEs in public health departments and across systems
Support trauma-informed transformation within systems
Address and eliminate systemic and historic drivers of inequity
Ensure our work is grounded in the science of ACEs
Ensure our work is actively anti-racist
Incorporate whole-family approaches in service delivery
Facilitate and invest in cross-system collaboration and integration

In July 2019 the BCR national team worked closely with the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee to prepare for a full committee hearing examining childhood trauma. As a result of the hearing, the committee asked the BCR team to assist in drafting several pieces of legislation related to: (1) enhancing care coordination for new mothers whose children are Medicaid recipients and funding LHDs to develop system dynamics models to identify possible interventions to reduce and prevent drivers of adversity and facilitate implementation of those strategies; and (2) requiring regulatory changes to account for potential impacts on children’s health and well-being in the same way potential economic impacts are reviewed.

In 2019 the CCR launched the Policy Lab as a joint effort with the Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness at the George Washington University. The Policy Lab provides a national platform to deepen support of the BCR and CR networks policy and advocacy efforts and develops innovative policy solutions to address the Pair of ACEs and advance equity. The Policy Lab’s nonpartisan approach has enabled the development of relationships across party lines and resulted in significant legislative wins.

CCR Policy and Advocacy Principles
- Focus on primary prevention of the Pair of ACEs in public health departments and across systems
- Support trauma-informed transformation within systems
- Address and eliminate systemic and historic drivers of inequity
- Ensure our work is grounded in the science of ACEs
- Ensure our work is actively anti-racist
- Incorporate whole-family approaches in service delivery
- Facilitate and invest in cross-system collaboration and integration

From its inception, BCR has focused on public policy levers to prevent and mitigate the Pair of ACEs at the local, state, and federal level. With our guidance and technical assistance, the advocacy efforts of this network have resulted in significant funding opportunities ranging from federal appropriations bills to private investments in local initiatives and practice change. For example, our federal policy work led to the authorization of a new grant-funding stream to support trauma-responsive supports in schools in areas with a high prevalence of community violence or substance abuse, the creation of a Federal Interagency Task Force on Child Trauma and inclusion of language in Appropriations.

Other Notable Accomplishments of BCR Policy & Advocacy
- In July 2019 the BCR national team worked closely with the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee to prepare for a full committee hearing examining childhood trauma. As a result of the hearing, the committee asked the BCR team to assist in drafting several pieces of legislation related to: (1) enhancing care coordination for new mothers whose children are Medicaid recipients and funding LHDs to develop system dynamics models to identify possible interventions to reduce and prevent drivers of adversity and facilitate implementation of those strategies; and (2) requiring regulatory changes to account for potential impacts on children’s health and well-being in the same way potential economic impacts are reviewed.
• Participation in *multiple expert policy convenings to disseminate policy lessons learned from BCR*, including with HHS’s Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, the National Governors Association, Families USA, and HHS’s Children’s Bureau.

• Development of *close relationships between BCR partners and relevant Congressional committees and offices* Examples include the Alive and Well Communities team’s relationship with Senator Roy Blunt’s (R-MO) Appropriations staff and the greater Cincinnati team’s relationship with Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Senator Rob Portman’s (R-OH) Child Welfare/Finance committee staff. Senator Blunt’s office requested input from the Alive and Well team on key provisions of the FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. Many of the recommendations, including increased funding for key programs focused on community-level drivers of adversity and trauma and specific language related to the traumatic impact of racism were incorporated in the final legislation signed into law in 2019.

• The passage of several provisions to create dedicated federal funding streams for trauma-informed supports in schools and creation of a federal inter-agency task force to address child trauma in the 2018 Opioid bill (H.R. 6). The Redstone Center led the effort to include trauma-specific provisions, including leading a letter signed by over 40 practitioners and advocates in support of these provisions.

• Development of the *Trauma-Informed Care for Children and Families Act*, in partnership with Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) and Representative Danny Davis (D-IL). The BCR team, in collaboration with the Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Programs, organized *four congressional briefings* to educate House and Senate staffers about how this legislation would help support efforts aimed at addressing the Pair of ACEs. In the 116 the Congress, the BCR network supported introduction of the bipartisan and bicameral *RISE from Trauma Act*, which would among other provisions support local cross-sector coalitions engaged in work to address ACEs.

• Along with the local Washington, DC network partners, BCR provided technical expertise to DC Council Member Brandon Todd in *drafting legislation related to the intersection of ACEs and the District’s response to community violence*. The resulting legislation, *Adverse Childhood Experiences Prevention Pilot Program Amendment Act*, is focused on linking the District’s violence interruption and response efforts with ACEs and trauma-aware whole family interventions, such as mental health and parenting supports.

• The DC BCR network also coordinated testimony on legislation to expand Early Childhood Health and Wellness programs, including mental health supports in childcare settings and the Healthy Steps pediatric model. These provisions became law as part of the Birth to Three for All DC Act.

• BCR is also a founding member of the National Trauma Campaign to develop a network of grassroots liaisons in dozens of Congressional Districts to help educate lawmakers about the need to address ACEs and child trauma.
Truth and Reconciliation

The pathway to racial healing – essential in the work to achieve equity and resilience over time– begins with truth. Our nation must reconcile with the complex truth of our past, and our present-day upholding of White supremacy in the form of structural racism. The apparatus of White supremacy has produced and maintains a racial hierarchy that most benefits White people socially and economically. White supremacy persists as a vicious feedback loop intended to structurally and systematically hold back African-Americans and People of Color, thereby reinforcing a belief in White supremacy.

The Center for Community Resilience and the BCR Networks are calling on our partners to join in a national process of Truth and Reconciliation to foster a shared understanding of the cumulative trauma caused by more than 500 years of policy and practice designed to dehumanize, subjugate and limit opportunity for indigenous, African-American, Latino and other communities of color.

In partnership with the Association of Children’s Museums, and with support from the Aspen Ascend Accelerator Fund, CCR launched a new pilot project in 2020 to implement a process of Truth and Reconciliation in Cincinnati, Ohio. Partnering with community stakeholders, parents and youth, the project will foster racial healing and build political will to develop a community-driven policy and advocacy platform aimed at dismantling structural racism and producing a more just and equitable Greater Cincinnati region.

We envision a nation of resilient, equitable communities where the voices of all children and families are included and empowered at decision-making tables across sectors, driving practice and policy change that heals trauma and ends disparities across generations. Our multi-sector, multi-racial networks aim to inspire, support and sustain a national movement of communities that can address the root causes of childhood trauma, foster equity and build community resilience by dismantling structural racism and the systems that maintain a hierarchy of White supremacy.
BCR Policy and Advocacy Guide
A guidebook packed with information and tools to develop effective policy and advocacy strategies for building community resilience.

Infographic Templates
Customizable templates allow users to insert key local data to visualize their community's Pair of ACEs, strength and resilience factors, and policies for building community resilience. A companion guide provides detailed instruction on how to obtain local data for the infographics.

BCR Site Snapshots
A concise and informative view into BCR sites across the country, highlighting each community's local context and innovative programs, practices, and policy changes for building resilience.

CCR Videos
Watch stories of resilience building efforts across the country, updates on strategies and priorities of the BCR collaborative, and testimonies from our partners and community members.
Coalition Building and Communications Guide
These guides help communities and grass roots initiatives foster dialogue and develop a critical foundation of shared understanding for childhood adversities and resilience-building strategies.

Partner Build Grow Tools
A companion to the BCR Coalition Building & Communications Guide, the Partner Build Grow tools include: Mapping Assets, Identifying Potential Partners, Policy Barriers and Opportunities, and Policy Conversation.

Fostering Equity Modules
This guide helps coalitions understand the historical underpinnings of structural racism and conduct constructive conversations that lead to policy change. The path to a Resilient Nation – one in which all our communities can not only ‘bounce back’ in the face of adversity, but thrive – must begin here.

COVID-19 Community Response Resources
As the Center for Community Resilience continues to monitor community and policy responses across the country, we have compiled and will continue to update a list of resources shared by our partners.