

ACEs and Community Resilience Workshop Summary

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Toward Common Ground



Grey Bruce
Children's Alliance

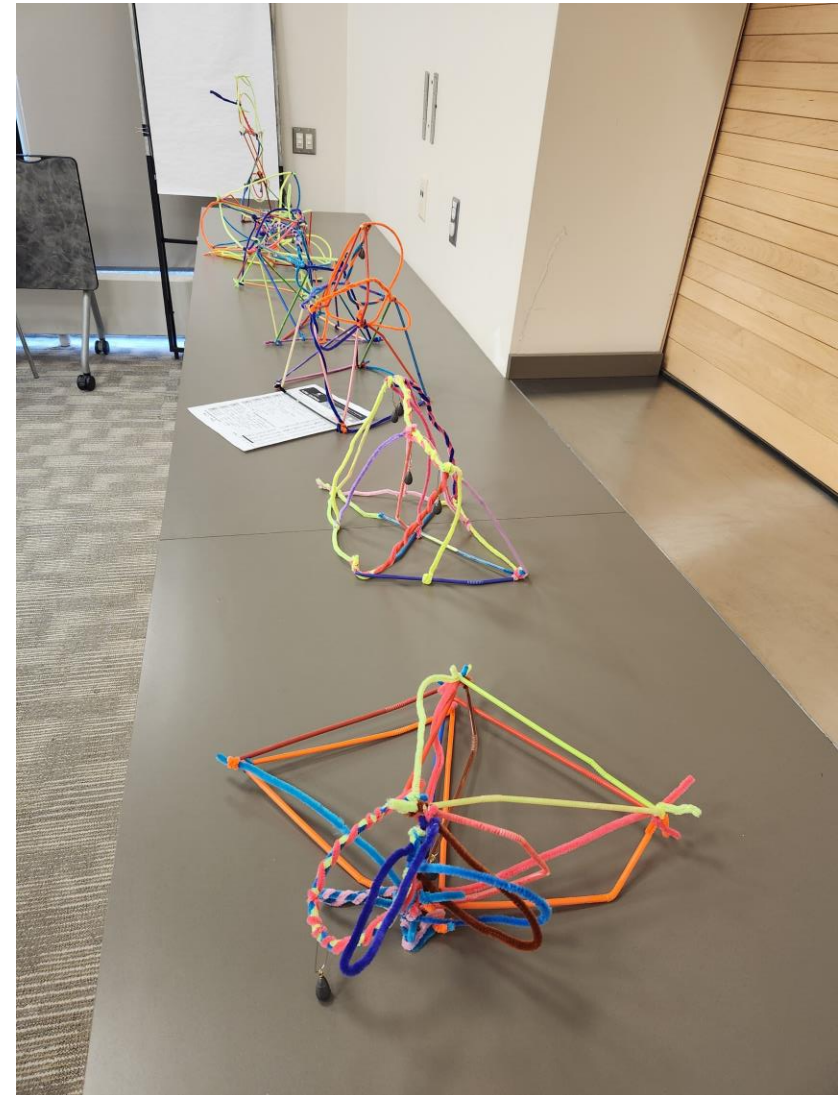


Community Resilience
Coalition

Guelph & Wellington

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Introduction

The ACEs and Resilience Workshop, sponsored by the Grey Bruce Children's Alliance, was held on November 27, 2024. The aim of the Workshop was to share information with community leaders, foster relationships, and identify ideas for coordinated action to promote community resilience.

The workshop was attended by 61 people, representing 26 organizations across Grey Bruce.

Specific objectives were to:



Learn: about the effects of adversity on lifelong health and well-being and the science of resilience, local initiatives designed to promote resilience, and Ontario communities' approaches to fostering resilience.



Connect: create new connections and/or foster existing relationships with other leaders in the community.



Act: identify possible solutions and actions to promote resilience across Grey and Bruce Counties.

The report includes a review of evaluation findings.

The following document provides a summary of possible solutions and actions identified by community members to promote resilience across Grey Bruce.

Resilience-promoting initiatives in Grey Bruce

Resilience is a person's capacity to successfully adapt to adversity and maintain their well-being. It is influenced by genetics, relationships, life experiences and environments.

A person does not become resilient on their own. Resilience is nurtured through positive interactions, protective factors, and by mitigating toxic stress. Reducing sources of stress, enhancing skills, and creating supportive environments can strengthen resilience, especially for those with past adversities. While resilience can be strengthened at any age, the best time to develop resilience is at a young age.

Participants shared, and learned about, several resilience-building initiatives already happening in Grey Bruce.

Some examples include:

- Collaborative partnerships, such as Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership, the Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force, and the Grey Bruce Ontario Health Team
- 211, facilitated by United Way, which provides 24/7 access/connection to multiple human services
- Opportunities for young families, including EarlyON Child and Family Centres and Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program
- Food access programs such as OSHaRE Community Food Centre and other food banks
- Financial subsidies to support access to recreation opportunities

Ideas to promote resilience

Following learning sessions about resilience-building initiatives already happening, participants were asked to share their ideas to better promote community resilience.

Participants responded to the question:

What should we do to promote community resilience?

The following themes emerged after an analysis of the group discussion and individual ideas:

1 A strengthened systemic approach. Participants suggested that a more coordinated and collaborative approach is needed to promote strong families and thriving youth. Consider a shared action plan and response with a committee to lead system change.

2

Places and hubs for families. Participants suggested hubs – physical or virtual locations where families can access activities, resources, and services in a non-judgmental and trauma-informed environment. ‘Hub’ functions could also support system navigation and case management.

3

Adequate income. Policies that improve household financial circumstances are needed to ensure that basic needs such as food, housing, childcare and transportation are met. Participants acknowledged the importance of a living wage to promote resilience and supported continued advocacy.

4

Meet social, health and service needs. Supporting safe, stable and equitable environments for local families is important. This includes a community that addresses critical needs and supports social connectedness.

Taking action

Individually, and as a group, participants reflected on the ideas generated and considered how they may inform next steps for Grey Bruce. The following presents a summary of the comments shared.

What? So what? Now what?

- **Place.** Grey and Bruce Counties share a large geography. Some people need to travel large distances to access services and resources. Some rural areas also have limited connectivity. Mobile or school-based services may be one solution.
- **Health equity.** Next steps should prioritize health equity – promoting fair opportunity for all to reach their full potential.
- **No wrong door.** Participants highlighted the importance of collaboration and communication across systems and services providers to make it easier for community members to access what they need.
- **Radical collaboration.** Work from an abundance mindset and think creatively and collaboratively to identify resources and implement shared policies and best practices. Radical collaboration can also work to dismantle a siloed approach.
- **Opportunities for fun and reflection.** Resilience-building can be challenging. Consider how to create opportunities for reflective practice, relationship-building, and 'fun' for service providers.

Taking action

- **Share information and raise awareness more broadly.** Work to raise awareness about the importance of childhood to lifelong health and well-being and share opportunities for learning across the community.
- **Increase memberships in the Grey Bruce Children's Alliance.** Additional partners may help to increase the impact of the Alliance.



Evaluation findings

At the conclusion of the ACEs and Resilience Workshop, a QR-code with links to an evaluation survey was shared with participants. A link to the evaluation survey was also sent to all participants by email after the Workshop.

14 participants responded to the evaluation survey.

Most respondents indicated they had a very positive experience at the ACEs and Resilience Workshop. 91% of respondents rated their experience with 4 or 5 stars. The average rating was 4.6 stars.



100%

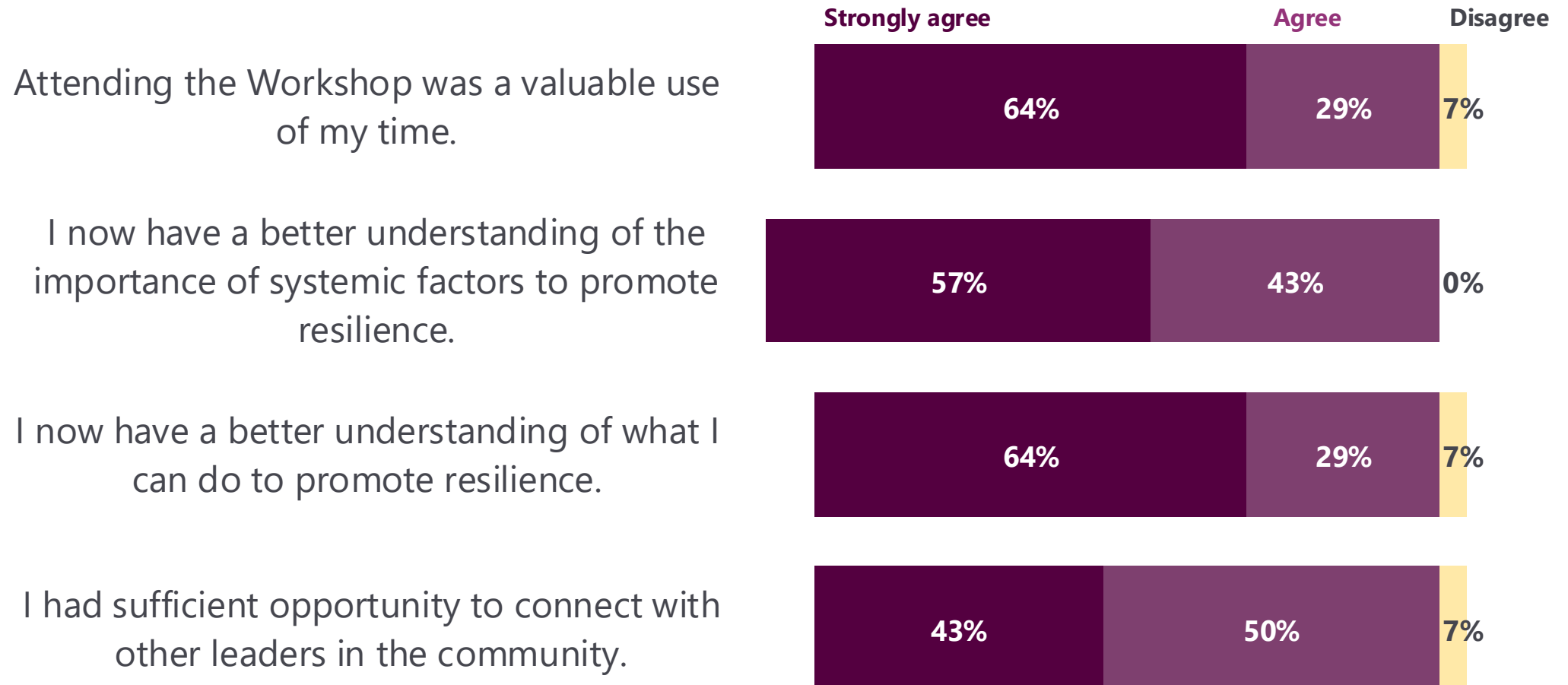
of respondents plan to act on what they learned at the ACEs and Resilience Workshop.

Respondents plan to:

- **Share information** and lessons learned with others, such as team and board members, to identify new opportunities.
- **Join the Grey Bruce Children's Alliance.**
- **Foster connections** with other service providers and offer more warm referrals.

Evaluation findings

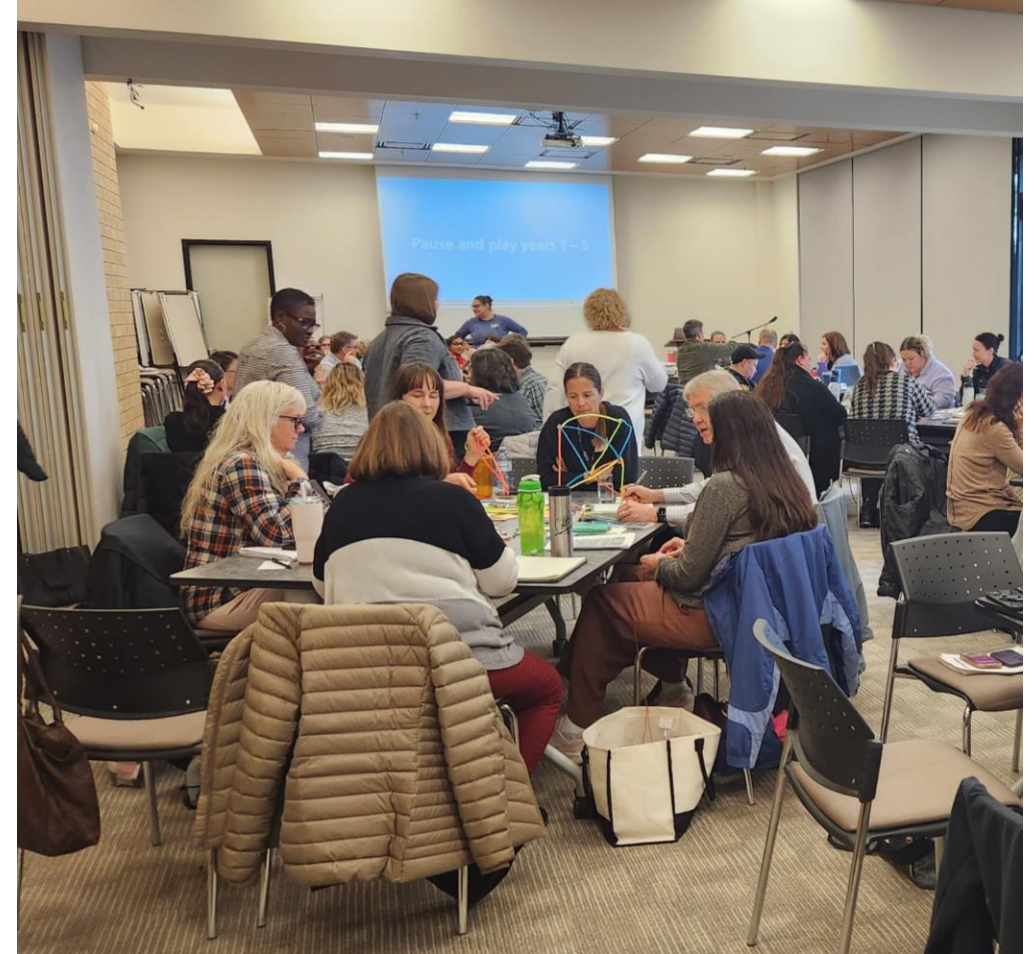
The vast **majority of respondents also agreed that attending the Workshop was a valuable** use of time, they learned about resilience, and had sufficient opportunity to foster connections.



Evaluation findings

Participants enjoyed:

- **Learning:** Several respondents indicated they most enjoyed learning about the science of resilience and especially appreciated playing the Brain Architecture Game. One respondent learned new information about resources available in the community.
- **Collaboration and connection:** Many respondents appreciated the opportunity to work collaboratively to identify community solutions and connect with others.



Evaluation findings

To improve future community resilience building opportunities, respondents suggested:

- **Offering more workshops to a broader audience.** One person suggested a follow-up session be planned within 6 months to assess progress and respond to roadblocks
- **Meeting people where they are at.** Two respondents suggested existing relationships be maintained to support the most vulnerable and enhance access to services across the community.
- One person suggested **improving accessibility of the space**, including providing access to better audio and visual materials.



Recommendations for next steps

Workshop participants demonstrated a high degree of care for children, youth, their families, and their community. They also expressed a strong desire to lead systems change and improve outcomes for all.

The following recommendations are based on the ideas shared at the Workshop and through evaluation feedback.

1

Grey Bruce Children's Alliance. The Grey Bruce Children's Alliance is well-positioned to lead community resilience-building initiatives. To promote success, consider:

- Conducting a mapping exercise to understand how the Children's Alliance aligns with or differs from other community committees. Highlight key strengths, opportunities, gaps, and missing partners.

- Using information generated through the mapping exercise to implement a communications campaign to recruit new members to the Grey Bruce Children's Alliance.
- Using ideas generated in the Workshop to inform the development of workplans, advocacy, and communication about ACEs and resilience. For example, partner with the Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force to advocate for decent wages and work.

2

A bold community initiative. The creation of physical spaces for children, youth, and their families was identified as a promising idea to promote community resilience. Bring this idea to the Grey Bruce Children's Alliance for consideration. Possible next steps may include a formal needs assessment, funding applications, and partnership agreements.

Grey Bruce Children's Alliance

For more information about the Grey Bruce Children's Alliance:

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