

Reconnect for Resilience with RHA Behavioral Health Services

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Resources For Resilience

Ann DuPre Rogers
13 1/2 Eagle Street Suite K
Asheville, NC 28801

ashley.cole@resourcesforresilience.com
O: 828-367-7092
F: Resources for Resilience

MS. Ashley Putnam

13 1/2 Eagle Street Suite K
Asheville, NC 28801

ashley.cole@resourcesforresilience.com
O: 8283677092

Application Form

Question Group

Buncombe County requests proposals for projects to help the community recover from and respond to COVID-19 and its negative economic impacts.

Buncombe County has been awarded \$50,733,290 in Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (Recovery Funding), as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. To date, Buncombe County has awarded projects totaling \$23,093,499, leaving a balance of \$27,639,791 available to award.

Visit <http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding> for details.

This infusion of federal resources is intended to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

Buncombe County is committed to investing these funds in projects that:

- Align to county strategic plan and community priorities
- Support equitable outcomes for most impacted populations
- Leverage and align with other governmental funding sources
- Make best use of this one-time infusion of resources
- Have a lasting impact

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto.

[Click here for the full terms and conditions of the RFP](#)

Organization Type*

Nonprofit

Nonprofit documentation

If nonprofit, attach IRS Determination Letter or other proof of nonprofit status.

RFR_IRS501c3 - Compressed.pdf

Name of Project.*

Reconnect for Resilience with RHA Behavioral Health Services

New/Updated Proposal*

Is this a new project proposal or an updated version of a proposal submitted during the earlier (July 2021) Recovery Funding RFP?

Updated version of previously submitted proposal

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$128,600.00

Category*

Please select one:

- Affordable Housing
- Aging/Older Adults
- Business Support/Economic Development
- Environmental/Climate
- Homelessness
- K-12 Education
- Infrastructure and/or Broadband
- Mental Health/Substance Use
- NC Pre-K Expansion
- Workforce

Mental Health/Substance Use

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

Resources for Resilience™ (RFR) is committed to providing resiliency training to the staff and clients of RHA Behavioral Health Services (RHA), to prevent compassion fatigue and burnout among staff and to increase resiliency and wellbeing among staff, clients and families. As a NC 501(c)3 nonprofit formed in response to the public health crisis of ACEs, we seek to address the ongoing stress that many people face, by offering trauma-informed and resiliency-focused programs to community members, as well as to those working in social service, behavioral health, and education system settings. We understand the negative effects of both acute and chronic stress on our ability to thrive, and we offer community-wide programs that raise awareness and promote resilience. The strategies that we offer are meant for anyone to use as we work to prevent future adversity and help people stay healthy and connected in the aftermath of singular stressful events or when confronted with ongoing adversity.

Project Plan*

Explain how the project will be structured and implemented, including timeframe.

RFR will partner with RHA to provide training for their staff, as well as RHA clients and their families. Our goal is to increase resiliency and reduce burnout among staff, and to increase resiliency and wellbeing among clients, through our Reconnect for Resilience™ (Reconnect) Trainings, enhanced by our Implementation package.

We will provide a total of 16 Reconnect trainings. Reconnect is a trauma-informed, resiliency-focused curriculum that offers practical strategies to promote a culture of resilience. It includes education about the nature of trauma and its biological effect on the brain and the nervous system, as well as nervous system stabilization resiliency tools that participants can apply to self-regulate, restore self-compassion, and re-connect to others. Through demonstrations and group practice within the training, participants learn how to use these tools for themselves and how to apply them in work, home and community settings.

To ensure sustainability, we will provide two cohorts of our Implementation package for staff who complete a Reconnect training and wish to receive ongoing support. Each cohort consists of up to 20 participants who will receive one 6-hour Resiliency Champions training, three 4-hour virtual coaching sessions, and six 1-hour technical assistance calls. Implementation coaching will prepare participants to be leaders in implementing the resiliency tools within RHA and its partner agencies. This implementation support will allow for the anchoring of change in a more trauma informed and resiliency focused work culture among staff, as well as between staff and the people they serve.

We believe that by providing Reconnect trainings for both staff and the people they serve, a common language of wellness and resilience becomes rooted, creating space for meaningful connection, less compassion fatigue, and a healthier, more resilient workforce. RFR is deeply committed to the mental health and wellness of our community, and through our Reconnect for Resilience™ curriculum, we are focused on building resilience in an environment where individuals feel safe and connected, while having strategies to better respond to stress.

Year 1 Activities:

Relationship building with key staff and administrators within RHA
Complete 4 Reconnect for Resilience™ trainings

Year 2 Activities:

Ongoing relationship building with key staff and administrators within RHA
Complete 4 Reconnect for Resilience™ trainings
Begin 1 cohort of our implementation package

Year 3 Activities:

Ongoing Relationship building with key staff and administrators within RHA
Complete 4 Reconnect for Resilience™ trainings
Complete first cohort of our implementation package

Year 4 Activities:

Ongoing relationship building with key staff and administrators within RHA
Complete 4 Reconnect for Resilience™ trainings
Begin second cohort of our implementation package

Statement of Need*

Describe the need that this project will address. Include data to demonstrate the need, and cite the source of the data.

In its 2018 Community Health Assessment, Buncombe County identified those with high adverse childhood experiences (ACE) scores as a priority population. This includes the 39.9 percent of Buncombe County adults who reported emotional abuse in childhood and 23.5 percent who reported household mental illness. According to the 1994 ACE Study, these residents are at higher risk for developing chronic disease and other physical, emotional, and social consequences in adulthood. We also know that, for many of the county's most vulnerable residents, the effects of these early experiences are compounded by the adverse community environments in which they live. Known together as the "Pair of ACEs," these factors can lead to significant health disparities as we have seen throughout the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racialized trauma.

A study published in 2018 in *The Journal of Clinical Psychology* found that over half of the psychotherapists surveyed experienced moderate to high levels of burnout. Additionally, these same findings were confirmed in a 2020 study published in *The American Journal of Psychiatry*. They found that psychiatrists experienced burnout and depression at significant rates and needed support to help alleviate this ongoing issue.

Our goal, which we believe aligns with the county's 2020-2025 strategic plan, is to provide tools to prevent compassion fatigue and burnout among the RHA workforce and to provide resiliency-focused trainings for individuals and families served by RHA. Our trainings will also provide insight into the impacts of traumas of oppression and adverse community environments and how these issues contribute to greater health disparities. Through our trauma-informed and resiliency-focused lens, staff will be able to better support both their clients and their own wellbeing; while clients and their families will have more resiliency tools to co-regulate and self-regulate in the face of ongoing adversity.

Link to COVID-19*

Identify a health or economic harm resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency, describe the nature and extent of that harm, and explain how the use of this funding would address such harm.

The stress of isolation, juggling childcare, job loss, ongoing changes in daily schedules, economic hardship, securing quality affordable housing, academic and work performance demands, anxiety about contracting the virus, and grief over the loss of loved ones are just a few ways that COVID-19 has affected our community's mental wellbeing – all against a backdrop of high rates of ACEs, mental health concerns, and substance use struggles.

Buncombe County residents identified improved access to behavioral healthcare as a priority in the 2018 Community Health Assessment, well before the onset of the pandemic. We know from data presented by the CDC in August 2020 that symptoms of anxiety and depression increased nationwide from April to June 2020 compared to the same period in 2019 before the pandemic. RHA serves community members who are most at-risk or have been disproportionately affected by the pandemics.

This public health emergency is responsible for the emotional toll and physical exhaustion that our Buncombe County workforce is experiencing and is compounding the effects of ACEs and the health-damaging blow of loneliness. Additionally, public health authorities have acknowledged that healthcare workers, including secondary mental health workers, experienced increased stress due to the pandemic and need ongoing supportive services to alleviate this issue.

RFR's work is focused specifically on public health promotion through training and community education in response to public health crises – first ACEs and, more recently, the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racialized trauma. By helping communities recognize symptoms, expand coping skills, and foster environments and interactions that build resilience, RFR's programming not only improves a community's

understanding of the impact of significant stress and trauma, but also directly helps individuals and systems develop healthier responses to stress and trauma.

Population Served*

Define the population to be served by this project, including volume and demographic characteristics of those served.

RFR is partnering directly with RHA for the resilience of their staff and the Buncombe County residents they serve. RHA serves residents who have been disproportionately affected by the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racialized trauma. These residents include their own staff and frontline workers, as well as People of Color, those who are living in poverty or have been displaced from their homes, those struggling with behavioral health concerns, and individuals with high ACE scores who utilize their services and supports. We estimate that as many as 640 RHA staff, clients and family members could be directly impacted by our proposed initiative, with an even greater indirect impact.

All clients and their families served through RHA, will have the opportunity each year funded through the grant to attend a Reconnect for Resilience™ training. These offerings will be separate from those offered to staff and supported in the uniqueness of the target audience by having a specialty training team. RFR has Resiliency Educators who have tailored experience as Peer Support Specialist, Qualified Professionals, and other tailored backgrounds that will be critical in supporting the overall success of the delivery of the content and resiliency tools.

Results*

Describe the proposed impact of the project. List at least 3 performance measures that will be tracked and reported. If possible, include baselines and goals for each performance measure.

As staff, clients and families develop a common language about trauma and resilience, we expect that they will respond to their own stressors more effectively. We also expect that they will be better equipped to provide others with safety, support, and access to services, as they respond to the long-term effects of the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racialized trauma. Our aim is for the common language, shared understanding, and concrete tools gained through this initiative to not only support the resilience of our Buncombe County workforce but also clients and families receiving services. As part of the program evaluation process, training participants will complete an online survey to assess their training knowledge. RFR will look specifically at the following categories of learning as they relate to our Reconnect curriculum:

1. By December 2026, up to 640 RHA staff and clients will have participated in Reconnect trainings. (Measured via attendance logs)
2. By December 2026, 50% of staff participating will report decreased feelings associated with burnout. (Measured via post-evaluations)
3. By December 2026, 80% of participants will report that their helping skills improved as a result of attending a Reconnect training. (Measured via post-evaluations)
4. By August of 2026, up to 40 RHA staff will have completed our implementation package. (Measured via attendance logs)

5. By August 2026, up to 75% of RHA staff receiving implementation coaching will report feeling confident in teaching these tools to fellow co-workers. (Measured via post-evaluations)

6. By December 2026, 80% of all staff, clients, and families will report a gained understanding of the importance of positive experiences, co-regulation, and connection in building their own and others' resilience, including how the resiliency tools support remaining in their resilient zone. (Measured via post-evaluations)

Evaluation*

Describe the data collection, analysis, and quality assurance measures you will use to assure ongoing, effective tracking of contract requirements and outcomes.

The primary goal of this project is to strengthen the resiliency of staff of RHA and its partner organizations. We believe that when there is a common language about trauma and resiliency, staff will respond to their own internal stressors more effectively and be better equipped to continue providing people in crisis with safety, support, and access to services. RFR is engaged in an ongoing, academically rigorous evaluation of our programs' effectiveness. Preliminary results have indicated that participation in our Reconnect training results in not only increases in knowledge around trauma and resilience, but also immediate reductions in burnout and increases in resiliency skills among participants. Additionally, data has indicated that these impacts are sustained over six-months post training. Therefore, we are confident that this project will have an immediate and lasting impact on the resilience of staff within RHA so that they can continue providing high quality crisis intervention services to our most vulnerable residents.

Our evaluations include online surveys to assess changes in knowledge, feelings of burnout, and resilience skills, as well as participants' willingness to utilize the tools in their personal and professional lives. We utilize a pre/post and six-month post evaluation tool to gauge not only immediate impact, but ongoing changes.

Equity Impact*

How will this effort help build toward a just, equitable, and sustainable COVID-19 recovery? How are the root causes and/or disproportionate impacts of inequities addressed?

At RFR, we believe everyone has the right to experience better days. We believe that an investment in equity is an investment in a future that is far brighter and more just than our past. Therefore, we are committed to advancing equity and dismantling White Supremacy Culture through both our internal and external processes.

Research tells us that higher Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) scores can lead to higher rates of everything from cancer and heart disease to addiction and early death. We also know that individuals living in Adverse Community Environments, including those impacted by systemic racism and poverty, are at an even greater risk for ACEs and poor health outcomes. These health disparities – such as higher rates of COVID-19 and other diseases – occur disproportionately in low-wealth communities and in Communities of Color and are being addressed through our Reconnect training.

In 2021, we revised our curriculum to include a more comprehensive section on traumas of oppression, allowing us to facilitate difficult conversations while using the resiliency tools to stay in a place of connection. We explicitly name how unjust systems perpetuate conditions that cause trauma, as witnessed with Adverse Community Environments and Historical Trauma.

This project will advance equity by ensuring RHA staff are aware of the disparities associated with the pair of ACEs and the unique cultural and somatic contexts in which racialized traumas and other traumas of oppression are experienced. We also believe in the principals of collective liberation and feel that by supporting RHA staff in deepening their understanding of trauma and resiliency, they will be better able to support those in crisis with deeper understanding, compassion, and connection, creating ripples of impact throughout Buncombe County.

Project Partners*

Identify any subcontractors you intend to use for the proposed scope of work. For each subcontractor listed, indicate:

- 1.) What products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor and;
- 2.) What percentage of the overall scope of work that subcontractor will perform.

Also, list non-funded key partners critical to project.

All events will be provided by RFR staff and our contracted Resiliency Educators (RE's). Many of our RE's reside in Buncombe County and/or work in Buncombe County behavioral health agencies, healthcare organizations, schools, early childcare centers, and community nonprofits. All certified RE's participate in our rigorous apprenticeship program and receive ongoing technical assistance and professional development support from RFR throughout their certification period. This helps ensure that they are aware of the latest research and best practices related to our curriculum and can deliver our training with a trauma-informed, resiliency-focused, and culturally sensitive approach.

RHA partners will include but will not be limited to:

Mary Benson House, Mobile Crisis Management, Peer Living Room staff, Comprehensive Care Center, Re-Entry Program, Family Treatment Court, Buncombe County Sobriety Court, Individual and Outpatient Support Services.

Capacity*

Describe the background, experience, and capabilities of your organization or department as it relates to capacity for delivering the proposed project and managing federal funds.

RFR has a demonstrated ability to execute successful large-scale training projects. During the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years, RFR partnered with over 25 NC public school districts to provide training for staff, families through the NC Department of Public Instruction. In 2019-2020, these trainings were scheduled originally as in-person events to be delivered across the state; the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 necessitated a transition to virtual programming. In collaboration with our partnering school districts, RFR completed this conversion quickly and met the projected goals of this initiative, including the delivery of 48 Reconnect trainings to 1,948 participants, among other offerings.

Similarly in 2020, the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) provided funding to RFR to aid in disaster relief efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other natural disasters across the state. Through our partnership with NC DHHS, we delivered 14 Reconnect trainings to a total of 489 NC residents.

In Fall 2020, RFR also partnered with the NC Partnership for Children (NCPC) to deliver, along with other offerings, 46 Reconnect trainings and Coaching Sessions. At least 850 parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators from 60 North Carolina counties were directly impacted by this project.

Budget*

Provide a detailed project budget including all proposed project revenues and expenditures, including explanations and methodology. For all revenue sources, list the funder and denote whether funds are confirmed or pending. For project expenses, denote all capital vs. operating costs, and reflect which specific expenses are proposed to be funded with one-time Buncombe County Recovery Funds.

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

RecoveryFundsBudget_ResourcesForResilience_20220411.xlsx

Special Considerations*

Provide any other information that might assist the County in its selection.

RFR LOS and Impact Statements.pdf

In 2014, a group of WNC women became trainers in the California-based Community Resiliency Model® (CRM). We were excited to have a simple way to share information about trauma and resilience that normalized the biological processes involved and instilled hope and agency in participants. Neuroscientists had demonstrated how trauma gets stuck in the body, and the ACE study underscored the significant health consequences of childhood trauma – now, though, we could teach both professionals and lay community members about how trauma affects us, how we can reset our nervous systems, and how we can bring resilience and healing to ourselves and others.

As we trained others in this model, we identified two important components that were missing from CRM – namely, how trauma and stress affect our relationships and ability to connect, and how racialized trauma and traumas of oppression are as harmful to wellbeing as the original 10 ACEs.

In late 2017, informed by our collaboration with members of the BIPOC community (our original training team was comprised of white individuals) and our ongoing commitment to social and racial justice, we created a new curriculum, Reconnect for Resilience™, to include these critical constructs and formed the non-profit, Resources for Resilience™ (RFR).

Over the past four years, RFR has offered our programs to communities across North Carolina and has grown to include a racially representative staff, Board of Directors, and team of Resiliency Educators. In addition, we have trainers and staff who have survived the traumas of poverty, homelessness, incarceration, and discrimination, and who are now sharing their lived experience of resiliency with others. These non-traditional leaders are breaking the cycle of adversity and becoming the healers for the next generation. We believe that this work highlights the many ways in which an investment in equity is an investment in a future that is far brighter and more just than our past.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- RFR_IRS501c3 - Compressed.pdf
- RecoveryFundsBudget_ResourcesForResilience_20220411.xlsx
- RFR LOS and Impact Statements.pdf

IRS Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

P.O. Box 2508
Cincinnati OH 45201

In reply refer to: 024816484
Mar. 26, 2018 LTR 4168C 0
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BODC: TE

RESOURCES FOR RESILIENCE
% STEPHANIE CITRON
53 ARLINGTON ST
ASHEVILLE NC 28801

14531

Employer ID Number: 82-0751905
Form 990 required: Yes

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your request dated Mar. 15, 2018, regarding your tax-exempt status.

We issued you a determination letter in March 2017, recognizing you as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3).

Our records also indicate you're not a private foundation as defined under IRC Section 509Ca) because you're described in IRC Section 509(a)(2).

Donors can deduct contributions they make to you as provided in IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts under IRC Sections 2055, 2106, and 2522.

In the heading of this letter, we indicated whether you must file an annual information return. If a return is required, you must file Form 990, 990-EZ, 990-N, or 990-PF by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. IRC Section 6033(j) provides that, if you don't file a required annual information return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked on the filing due date of the third required return or notice.

For tax forms, instructions, and publications, visit www.irs.gov or call 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

If you have questions, call 1-877-829-5500 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., local time, Monday through Friday (Alaska and Hawaii follow Pacific Time).

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Proposed Project Budget

Organization Name:	Resources for Resilience
Project Name:	Reconnect for Resilience in Buncombe County
Amount Requested:	

Proposed Project Revenue Funder	Amount	Confirmed or Pending?	Notes
Proposed Buncombe COVID Recovery Funds	\$ 128,600.00	Pending	
In-kind Contribution from Resources for Resilience	\$ 12,000.00	Confirmed	
Total	\$ 140,600.00		

Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Recovery Funds	Other Funds	Total	Capital or Operating Expense?	Notes
Reconnect for Resilience Trainings					
Trainer Fees	\$ 59,200.00	\$-	\$ 59,200.00	Operating	
Materials	\$ 6,400.00	\$-	\$ 6,400.00	Operating	Participant training and resource packets
Direct Administrative Fees	\$ 36,640.00	\$-	\$ 36,640.00	Operating	
Overhead (10%)	\$ 11,360.00	\$-	\$ 11,360.00	Operating	
<i>Reconnect for Resilience Trainings Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ 113,600.00</i>	<i>\$-</i>	<i>\$ 113,600.00</i>		
Reconnect for Resilience Implementation Coaching					
Trainer Fees	\$ 4,600.00	\$ -	\$ 4,600.00	Operating	
Materials	\$ 1,400.00	\$ -	\$ 1,400.00	Operating	Participant training and resource packets
Direct Administrative Fees	\$ 7,500.00	\$ -	\$ 7,500.00	Operating	
Overhead (10%)	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	Operating	
<i>Implementation Coaching Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ 15,000.00</i>	<i>\$ -</i>	<i>\$ 15,000.00</i>		
Resources for Resilience Resilient Connections Practice Groups					
Trainer Fees	\$ -	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 4,800.00	Operating	
Direct Administrative Fees	\$ -	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	Operating	
Overhead (10%)	\$ -	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	Operating	
<i>Resilient Connections Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ -</i>	<i>\$ 12,000.00</i>	<i>\$ 12,000.00</i>		
Total			\$ 140,600.00		



April 8, 2022

Dear Buncombe County Covid Relief Grant Selection Committee:

RHA Health Services is pleased to partner with Resources for Resilience™ (RFR) in their application for the Covid Relief Grant. This partnership will support Services for Disproportionately Impacted Communities by addressing workforce resiliency within RHA, as well as the social, emotional, and mental health needs of RHA clients and family members, as we navigate the multiple and layered challenges exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

RFR's work is specifically focused on public health promotion through training and community education in response to the public health crisis of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and more recently the dual pandemics of Covid-19 and racialized trauma. RFR's trauma-informed and resiliency-focused programs offer practical tools to build up and support everyone's resilience. The stress of economic hardship, homelessness, childcare, ongoing changes in children's and adults' structures and schedules, academic performance, stress and anxiety about contracting the virus, and grief over the loss of loved ones, are just a few ways that Covid-19 has impacted our community against a backdrop of already disproportionately high rates of mental health and substance use struggles.

By supporting the RHA community to recognize symptoms, expand coping skills, and foster environments and interactions that build resilience, RFR's programming not only improves understanding of the impact of significant stress and trauma, but also directly helps individuals and systems develop healthier responses to stress and trauma. The Reconnect for Resilience™ curriculum simultaneously supports clients and staff and provides organizations with concrete, neuroscience-based tools and concepts, to help navigate stress and change in a healthy and connected way.

We are eager to work with RFR in implementing a training program designed to have a direct, positive impact on the lives of our staff, clients, residents, and family members.

Beginning year one of the grant cycle and continuing for the remaining three years, RHA will commit to offering Reconnect for Resilience™ training to our staff on a quarterly rotation. This will be 4 Reconnects per year for all RHA staff as we continue to focus on workplace resilience. And for the duration of the grant cycle, through December 2026, we will commit to sending participants to the implementation package cohorts in order to support the sustainability efforts and wellness of our staff while supporting those we serve.

RHA believes this initiative will not only support and serve our staff, clients and community during the grant cycle, but will also serve to embed these powerful, transformative resiliency tools in our community for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Krista Engels", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Krista Engels, LCSWA
RHA Regional Operations Director

“ Working from home through most of 2020 with two kids under foot was challenging to say the least. But, because of the information I learned from RFR about how the brain and body work when we experience stress and trauma, I was able to keep myself and my family connected and resilient through it all. We took regular breaks throughout the day to use the resilience tools, either together or independently. The tools were easy enough to teach to my 13-year-old, as well as my 3-year-old. Unfortunately, I closed out the year by being diagnosed with COVID-19. I am certain that if I had not known about and been able to use the resilience tools, my experience would have been much more detrimental to my mental wellness. I believe the Reconnect training is as critical as CPR and First Aid training – I know that it was my CPR and First Aid throughout my battle with Covid!

Covid Survivor and Parent, Buncombe County

In my earliest memories of interacting with the world outside of my residential community, I remember feeling different and out of place. I did not know why I was being treated with anger and ugliness everywhere. The places I thought would be safe were not, and I lived in continual fear of everything and everybody. This is how I grew up; all through school, being guarded in every interaction, in every so-called friendship and every work environment. I learned how to survive through trial and error. It was only in my late 50s – with the introduction to CRM and then, again, through my participation in a Reconnect training – that I was able to make sense of why my mind, body, and spirit never felt connected, even to me. ”

The best experiential experience I have ever had was that introduction to my body through the Reconnect training. As a Resiliency Educator, I am now learning myself and understanding the world in which I live. Each day is another opportunity for me to become the Woman of Color that I am made to be and share that with those around me with confidence. Resources for Resilience™, Reconnect, and the resiliency tools held space for me at age 60+ to do and be what I was striving for all those years ago. This is not perfect, but it is darn close if one has the desire to do the work that it takes to really look in the mirror with the intent of “being your best self.”

Every person of color deserves, and should have the right, to learn who they are and see through their own eyes the individual they were created to be. Reconnect provides the opportunity to open the door on self-learning. Benefit to the BIPOC individual – life changing; benefit to BIPOC community – life changing; benefit to our world – changing lives one individual at a time.

Mary Lloyd, Black/African American Woman and RFR Family Engagement Specialist, Caldwell County

“ The Reconnect training is important for BIPOC because it helps us understand the impact of the trauma and toxic stress that we hold in our bodies and nervous systems on a daily basis, especially when it comes to racialized trauma and oppression. The training also gives language to what we are experiencing and tools that help us manage our stress responses as we navigate through a white supremacist system that wasn't designed for BIPOC to succeed on any level. Consequently, the impact of COVID-19 and civil unrest in the last year and a half has wreaked havoc on the BIPOC nervous system. With no end to structural racism in sight, the Reconnect curriculum teaches us how to turn off the stress response to aid in the prevention of ACE-related illnesses. Moreover, with inequities from housing to health care, the twin pandemics have exasperated the symptoms of mental and physical health of the BIPOC population.

MC Ellis, Black/African American Woman and RFR Implementation Specialist, Buncombe County

Meridian Behavioral Health Services offers RFRs Reconnect for Resilience™ (Reconnect) training to every staff member, regardless of their role in our agency. The Reconnect training serves as the foundation for being a trauma-informed organization and provides staff with knowledge and tools they can utilize with service recipients, co-workers, and themselves. Monthly refreshers are offered to practice tools, team and leadership meetings incorporate language and skills from the training, and when client and/or staff incidents or structural changes occur, these reviews, debriefings, and announcements are intentionally laced with RFR skills, tools, and perspectives. Staff repeatedly give the feedback that Reconnect helps them feel more connected, cared-for by the organization, and better-equipped to provide services and take care of themselves.



As Meridian has learned more about ACEs, the science of resilience, and the impact of secondary trauma – all of which are present in our world and our work – we feel it is our responsibility to help address the daily impact stress and trauma have on both our clients and our workforce. We believe RFR has contributed to the quality of work we do, reduced burnout, and increased retention. Public mental health organizations have so much to hold in the ever-changing climate of the health system, often resulting in staff feeling overwhelmed and burned out. At the same time, organizations are working hard to bring trauma-informed modalities to the clients they serve. The Reconnect for Resilience™ curriculum simultaneously supports clients and staff and provides organizations with concrete skills and concepts, based on science, to help navigate stress and change in a healthy and connected way. Behavioral health staff are passionate and motivated to support their clients in taking good care of themselves and moving through life’s challenges with resilience; however, they often do so at the expense of themselves and their own wellbeing. RFR skills offer behavioral health staff resiliency tools they can use in any moment of uncertainty, change, and difficulty.

Katie Goetz, LCMHCS, LCAS, CCS, Clinical Director, Meridian Behavioral Health Services

“ Unanimously it was stated that this was the best training our team has received in the last 18 months. All levels found real value from the class – from our Intake team, Peer Support Specialists, Case Managers, Regional Coordinators, and Assistant Directors. Everyone felt energized and took an internal pulse on both their own resiliency and how to apply this with the Veterans that we serve. Your entire team is awesome, and hope we can do another training class sometime in the fall in either Charlotte or Wilmington. So grateful for your expertise, professionalism, and patience.

Brandon Wilson, Managing Director Veterans of the Carolinas

The resourcing tools, especially the rapid reset tools, are critically needed right now as individuals heal from our own traumatic experiences and our world responds to dramatic changes. Because the instructions are clear and the processes relatively simple (though take some practice), I have been able to begin using them right away in my work and my personal relationships.



Reconnect for Resilience™ Participant, Caldwell County

“ I want to express that, in 24 years in education, I believe this training has been one of, if not the most, impactful professional development experiences I have ever seen. Not only on a personal level, but district-wide, the participants that have received the training have shared what a support it has been. We are witnessing staff identify how much the strategies have helped them to [not only] regulate their own stress and anxiety, but also offer this to students.

Karen Harrington, Student Services Director, Pitt County

RFR is an incredible organization. I thought the [Reconnect for Resilience™] training was outstanding. It was very powerful for me. It is one of the few, and maybe the only, trainings I've gone to where I learned skills, had a chance to practice them in the breakout groups, and then I used them the very next day with two different clients – with success. The [Covid-19] pandemic has exacerbated my clients concerns/issues... and they got a lot out of the tools as well. Thank you and congratulations for having such a remarkable program!



Blair Fielding, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Buncombe County

“ Trainers' expertise, ability to model, genuine belief in the material – and their authenticity, vulnerability, support. They MADE it what it was. I have taken other resiliency trainings that ignore the impact of generational trauma and systemic discrimination/oppression as a stressor. I REALLY appreciated this integration as we are nationally talking about these issues.

Reconnect for Resilience™ Participant, Evergreen Charter School, Buncombe County

As a member of the leadership team at a large, high-quality early learning center, I rely heavily on many tools and concepts I learned from facilitating the Reconnect training – most importantly, the knowledge of mirror neurons and co-regulation. The team I supervise works closely with teachers, families, and children who have experienced toxic stress. It is necessary for me to use tools to stay calm in order to support the work. I often feel like the co-regulator for Verner Center for Early Learning!



Laura Martin, Director of Child Development, Verner Center for Early Learning, Buncombe County

“ Hearing others describe what is hard for them right now and watching them learn to reset by sharing their joys made me feel normal and helped me stay the course.

Grandparent, Buncombe County

The resiliency tools and the WEMAP process are excellent! I have already used them with my own children and am SO excited to continue to use them and become more comfortable with them moving forward. Also, our trainers were SO GOOD. They presented the information clearly and provided patient guidance while practicing. I've really learned a lot and appreciate this amazing toolkit of connection!



Reconnect for Resilience™ Participant, NC Partnership for Children Grant

“ Taking a sip and noticing the temperature of the water brings me right back into the room! When I remember to use the Rapid Reset tools, I can meet the babies' needs throughout the day.

Infant Room Teacher, Verner Center for Early Learning, Buncombe County

Co-regulation works! Now that I know how important it is for me to stay regulated, I can remind my co-teacher to use a Rapid Reset tools, too!



Toddler Room Teacher, Verner Center for Early Learning, Buncombe County

“ This training has completely shifted my approach to parenting and being present with my children. We all still have bad days but, when we do, we have more tools in our toolbox to connect with each other and move on. My kids frequently ask me to use tools with them or remind me to use the tools for myself when I’m getting irritated. Reconnect for Resilience has been a true blessing for myself and my family. Thank you so much.

Parent, Buncombe County

Reconnect for Resilience™ is the most comprehensive and helpful training I have ever attended. They synthesize a lot of information into an easy-to-understand format that makes an immediate and profound impact on our lives and the lives of people around us. I feel healthier and happier since attending this training and am energized to spread the tools to others. Resources for Resilience™ is exactly what every school needs to improve its climate, culture, and student outcomes.



School Social Worker, Caldwell County

“ It’s the most empowering workshop that I’ve had in my 24 years of teaching.

Educator, Moore County