



Building Community Resilience: Dallas, Texas

March 2018

"The BCR process has enriched and deepened our understanding of the adversities facing Dallas' children in their homes and in their neighborhoods. The City of Dallas is committed to engaging with community partners to coordinate and align our programs to bolster services to residents all across the city. Guided by the BCR process, we have developed this shared understanding with our partners, and are beginning to collaborate on strategies to strengthen the resilience of our residents and our community overall." – Theresa O'Donnell, Chief Resilience Officer, City of Dallas

Dallas' Core BCR Team

In Dallas, the Building Community Resilience process serves as a central strategy and organizing platform to address health disparities and community equity for the city's *Resilient Dallas* initiative, which is part of the 100 Resilient Cities Initiative funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. In the spring of 2017, the City of Dallas' Office of Resilience adopted the BCR process, tools, and resources to organize and drive the health aspect of its overall resilience work aimed at addressing health and economic disparities across Dallas, especially in South Dallas. (Read the [100 Resilient Cities blog describing how the City of Dallas is partnering with BCR](#) to solve public health challenges.) Resilient Dallas' vision is to build a resilient, equitable 21st century Dallas. The city aims to do so by working in four areas: economic equity, healthy communities, community infrastructure, and urban mobility.

BCR Dallas is co-led by the city's Office of Resilience and a local community-based organization, Community Council, forming a unique public-private partnership to implement BCR efforts. For more than 77 years, the Community Council has identified, assessed, mobilized and implemented services to meet social issues. The Community Council convenes partners to significantly impact service delivery and is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in North Texas so each individual is able to achieve his or her full potential. Children's Health, the seventh largest pediatric care provider in the country, and ChildCareGroup, the region's largest provider of early childhood education programs, are key partners on the Dallas core BCR team and are actively implementing programs to address the Pair of ACEs in the region.

Community Context

As income inequality has become more pronounced throughout the United States, Dallas has experienced exponential growth in areas of concentrated poverty. Coupled with longstanding disparities in health,

infrastructure and access, Dallas' economic resilience is facing significant challenges: a decreasing number of affordable

What is Building Community Resilience?

Building Community Resilience (BCR) is a national learning collaborative and network that seeks to improve the health and life outcomes of children, families, and communities. Teams in five cities across the country are using the BCR process and tools to help their communities not only 'bounce back' in the face of adversity, but bounce *forward*. Over the past three years, BCR teams have helped build and strengthen the buffers that can prevent negative outcomes associated with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), particularly in the context of adverse community environments (ACEs)—the "[Pair of ACEs](#)."

Teams use the BCR process and tools, including the Coalition Building and Communications Guide and the Partner Build Grow Action Guide to identify community strengths, to work in partnership *with* community not *on* community, and to develop a shared understanding of adversities and goals. Using the BCR process, teams work to align large systems with one another—such as health care, city government, and education—and also with community-based partners, including parenting support services and grassroots health advocacy. Teams also develop strategies – from implementing trauma-informed practices to data sharing and advocating for policy change – that bolster strengths, fill gaps, and ultimately build child, family, and community resilience. The home of the national BCR collaborative is the Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness at the George Washington University's Milken Institute School of Public Health. The national BCR team at GW provides technical assistance, including strategic planning, facilitation of cross-sector information sharing, support for data and measurement, development of policy strategies, convening, and communications support.



housing units and concentration of low-wage jobs in areas that are not easily accessible via public transit from low-income communities; additionally, some of Dallas' poorest neighborhoods are separated from economic and educational opportunities by highways and other barriers. At the same time, Dallas has many strengths upon which to draw, including a network of nonprofit organizations working to address the Pair of ACEs in impacted communities. At the government level, the City of Dallas has task forces convening around challenges – including poverty, unemployment, homelessness, and teen pregnancy – with charters to develop solutions and improve outcomes alongside community partners.

Leadership Transition and Evolving Goals

Children's Health initially led the BCR efforts in Dallas, but the backbone organization role transitioned to the City of Dallas and Community Council in 2017. The Dallas team's focus is to go beyond hospital walls and reach children and families in the community. "Providers are good at treating children but not the family," said one team member. As another team member from Children's Health remarked, they're not just preparing a clinical response, but expanding programs to community spaces where children spend most of their time, such as early childhood education centers.

Equity is the overarching goal for the Dallas BCR effort as outlined in the city's resilience strategy. Transitioning leadership of BCR's Dallas team to the city allows the Dallas BCR efforts to become even more expansive by including city agencies. "Being equitable means thinking about who's around the table. Equity is also around the policy work," noted a team member. Using the BCR process, the City of Dallas is now engaging all aspects of the community, including stakeholders traditionally not invited to the table, and shaping the larger policy environment. "From the Mayor's office to the neighborhood crime watch captain to our Resilience partners, we strive to achieve common goals: better opportunities and outcomes for all residents and their families," says Theresa O'Donnell, the city's Chief Resilience Officer.

One of BCR's most important contributions to Dallas is that it has given its partners across a range of sectors "the language to understand what's happening," says a team member. This common language "resonates in every meeting. It helps partners understand more deeply the impact of [adverse community] environments and how to build buffers in the community."

As a team member describes, "BCR is more than just programs. It's about true systems change...how to invest long term in community." Essential to true systems change and long-term investment in the community is "grasping the intersection between BCR and 100 Resilient Cities," says a Dallas BCR team member. In doing so, the Dallas team can effectively leverage supportive resources provided by BCR and 100RC, and identify strategies that will optimize the city government's impact for building resilience.

Dallas BCR Community Embedded Initiatives

In its work to address health disparities, community equity, and the Pair of ACEs, the Dallas BCR team has focused on several initiatives, including those highlighted below.

Family University

Family University, the first initiative launched by the Dallas BCR collaborative, is an initiative of ChildCareGroup. Within the framework of ChildCareGroup's two-generation program model, Family University brings together parents of children in ChildCareGroup in the Early Head Start program, to learn about resources and opportunities for parenting support and how to access other programs. Presentations by Children's Health and other community experts also help participating families build a supportive community that is sustained beyond the duration of the program.

Integrated Behavioral Health

Children's Health's Integrated Behavioral Health program embeds behavioral health clinicians as full members of their pediatric medical teams. By being part of the child's medical home, they are able to intervene as soon as ACEs are identified, making behavioral healthcare a part of everyday medical care. They function as behavioral health service providers as well as care managers for all behavioral health issues in support of the medical providers in treating the whole child and family.

New Programs: School-based Tele-Behavioral Health and CHIP Enrollment

In June 2017, the Dallas BCR team added two additional Children's Health programs to its portfolio. One program is the expansion of the Integrated Behavioral Health Program into area high schools that takes advantage of technology to connect with adolescents in need of services. The school counselor refers the student to Children's Health for a brief assessment, including an ACEs screening. If counseling sessions are recommended, appointments occur virtually with the student at school and the provider or caregiver connected from elsewhere. The second program focuses on Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) enrollment, which provides health insurance for low-income children in Texas. The CHIP enrollment program coordinates data sharing and service provision using the [Pieces Iris](#) system, allowing medical care, behavioral health, and social service providers to work together to provide holistic care for children and their families.

Partnering with the Public Health Sector

As part of the [national BCR collaborative's partnership with the National Association of City and County Health Officials \(NACCHO\)](#), the Dallas BCR effort is strengthening ties with local public health agencies. A key activity of this national partnership is using the Mobilizing Action through Planning and Partnership (MAPP) strategic planning process facilitated by NACCHO. BCR is leveraging the new national partnership and the MAPP process to establish and deepen links between local health departments, community, and the systems that serve community health. The Dallas BCR team has also begun exploring partnership opportunities with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Region 6 office, located in Dallas.

BCR Collaborative Learning and Technical Assistance

BCR helps the Dallas team succeed by providing collaborative learning opportunities and direct technical assistance. The Dallas BCR team participates in monthly BCR Learning Sessions, in which they learn from guest presenters and engage in discussions to further apply the information to their local context. The Dallas BCR team periodically leads the Learning Session, reporting on their local progress and sharing the lessons they've learned. The Dallas BCR team also attends the semiannual BCR in-person meetings to learn from other BCR teams. At the 2017 Spring BCR In-Person meeting in Cincinnati, Shaneika Frazier of ChildCareGroup was inspired: "As a community partner, this is my first time experiencing the BCR culture. And I will say it has reignited the passion and commitment this partnership has brought for the families that we serve."

To facilitate partnership and communication among local partners, BCR has set up an online platform for Dallas team members to communicate and share information across organizations. BCR's Data Dashboard helps the Dallas team track their organizational and programmatic practices critical for cross-sector collaborations over time and across the region to build community resilience.

BCR also provides policy support, helping the Dallas team identify and align policy opportunities on the national, state, and local levels. Some notable policy supports provided to date by BCR include facilitating a Dallas Mayor's conference call on collaboration in February, 2017; providing BCR process information to be included in the city's resilience plan; actively working with the Chief Resilience Officer to build BCR into City of Dallas' agenda; and in August, 2017 Cheryl McCarver presented the BCR process, resources, and examples to help Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Office of Regional Operations (ORO) in Dallas and their partners create public-private partnerships, thus helping align federal and local efforts to build a resilient Dallas.

Next Steps

In 2018, the Dallas team will continue its work using BCR communications tools and data analysis to establish shared understanding with a focus across the city government. They will engage in the BCR asset mapping process to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities to build resilience. In early 2017, Dallas installed new leadership in many key positions in the city government, including the City Manager. The Dallas BCR team is actively engaging new city leaders to develop strategies and embed BCR in the city's agenda.

The Dallas team will also leverage BCR's national connections to boost its local resilience work. Through the national BCR collaborative, partnership opportunities are being discussed with the American Psychological Association's (APA) Adult

and Children Together (ACT) Raising Safe Kids Program to enrich the Dallas Family University curriculum with a focus on positive discipline, as requested by parents. Through the national BCR collaborative connections, key Dallas BCR partners have been invited to take part in the KaBOOM Play Everywhere Challenge to create more spaces for children to play and be physically active in Dallas.

Finally, the Dallas BCR team is exploring regional partnership opportunities with organizations in other TX cities, including Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. The Dallas BCR team and organizations in nearby cities are exploring the possibility of developing a regional approach to building resilient communities in Texas.

National & State Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences, Among Children 0-17 Years Old*

	Dallas County	Texas	National
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)			
<i>Child had 1+ Adverse Childhood Experiences</i>	53.0%	49.7%	46.3%
<i>Child had 2+ Adverse Childhood Experiences</i>	26.5%	23.9%	21.7%
Nine Individual ACEs			
<i>Somewhat often/very often hard to get by on income</i>	31.5%	28.4%	25.5%
<i>Parent/guardian divorced or separated</i>	30.0%	27.2%	25.0%
<i>Lived with anyone with an alcohol or drug problem</i>	10.8%	11.0%	9.0%
<i>Parent/guardian served time in jail</i>	9.8%	9.2%	8.2%
<i>Lived with anyone mentally ill, suicidal, or depressed</i>	6.6%	6.9%	7.8%
<i>Saw or heard violence in the home</i>	8.4%	7.4%	5.7%
<i>Victim of violence or witnessed neighborhood violence</i>	4.4%	4.0%	3.9%
<i>Often treated or judged unfairly due to race/ethnicity</i>	7.3%	4.7%	3.7%
<i>Parent/guardian died</i>	3.8%	3.7%	3.3%
Household Food Insecurity			
<i>Family sometimes or often could not afford enough to eat</i>	9.0%	8.6%	6.9%
<i>Family could afford to eat, but “not the kinds of food we should”</i>	28.4%	30.7%	27.0%

* 2016 National Survey of Children’s Health

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