



*Collaboratively Honoring & Healing Communities*

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE INITIATIVES SUMMARY REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025

### OVERVIEW

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More Resilient Minnesota seeks to improve the health and resilience of current and future generations. Resilience includes individuals' inherent strengths and nurtured capacities as well as the resources and supports of their families, communities, and cultures. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) has contracted with FamilyWise Services to support Children's Mental Health and Family Services Collaboratives throughout each phase:

- **PHASE 1:** Collaboratives offer ACE Interface *Understanding ACEs: Building Self-Healing Communities* presentations to raise awareness of neurobiology, epigenetics, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and resilience.
- **PHASE 2:** Collaborative partners, community members, and/or caregivers are trained to deliver *Understanding ACEs: Building Self-Healing Communities* presentations.
- **PHASE 3:** Collaboratives gather community wisdom through group Community Resilience Conversations and/or one-on-one *100 Cups of Coffee* Interviews.
- **PHASE 4:** Collaboratives use insights from Phase 3, the Minnesota Student Survey, and other local data sources to create and implement Community Resilience Plans aimed at reducing the impact of ACEs and enhancing community resilience.

## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE INITIATIVES

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Collaboratives in Phase 4 of More Resilient Minnesota were invited to submit project proposals for micro grant funding to implement initiatives aligned with their Community Resilience Plans. For the fiscal year 2025, three Collaboratives were awarded microgrants up to \$5,000 to launch their short-term Community Resilience projects running from August 2024 to June 2025. Given the condensed timeline and modest funding amount, each Collaborative prioritized strategies that were both feasible and likely to generate meaningful, measurable outcomes:

### **ANOKA COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILY COUNCIL**

Anoka expanded trauma-informed awareness in faith, cultural, and child care communities through accessible training and trust-based outreach.

### **BELTRAMI AREA SERVICE COLLABORATIVE**

Beltrami supported teacher well-being with a daily calendar tool designed to foster classroom connection, positivity, and emotional presence.

### **WINONA COUNTY COLLABORATIVE**

Winona provided trauma-informed resources for caregivers and professionals, with a focus on accessibility, cultural responsiveness, and lasting impact.

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Even in a short timeframe, these initiatives made measurable progress—building partnerships, amplifying community voices, and launching foundational supports. While strategies varied by community, all three emphasized practical, trauma-informed approaches that fostered connection, learning, and systems change. The next section outlines each Collaborative’s unique approach, goals, partnerships, and key insights.

## ANOKA COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILY COUNCIL (ACCFC)

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### Project Purpose & Community Need

Anoka County sought to expand trauma-informed awareness in faith, cultural, and child care communities through accessible training and leadership support. Many partners had limited exposure to ACEs or questioned its relevance, prompting a trust-based, culturally responsive approach.

### Strategy & Implementation

Two trainings were offered: Penn State University's 2-hour online ACEs course and a 3-hour in-person workshop, *How Early Experiences Shape Our Lives: A Guide to Creating Compassionate Communities*, led by Peacemaker Resources. Outreach extended to 25 organizations, including childcare providers and culturally specific groups. Training formats were adapted based on feedback, and interpreter support was provided.

### Partnerships & Participation

Faith Lutheran hosted the workshop and Peacemaker Resources brought expertise in trauma and historical context. In total, 19 individuals completed the online course and 37 attended in person, with participants representing child care (44%), schools (30%), faith (17%), and government (6%).

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## IMPACT & INSIGHTS

Evaluations showed strong outcomes: 64% reported increased knowledge, and 56% noted greater confidence in trauma support. In-person engagement was highest, with 97% (36 of 37) completing feedback, compared to just 7 of 19 for the online course—making in-person sessions more effective for capturing insights and learning needs.

Early outreach faced barriers like holiday timing and limited cold responses, but trust-building through referrals and relationships proved key. As trust grew, so did participation. Participants consistently praised presenters and expressed strong interest in deeper, action-oriented follow-up opportunities.

### [Presentation: ACCFC Community Resilience Initiative](#)

# BELTRAMI AREA SERVICE COLLABORATIVE (BASC)

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## **Project Purpose & Community Need**

Beltrami sought to support teacher well-being and classroom connection through a simple, trauma-sensitive tool. With growing burnout, large class sizes, and limited emotional support, educators needed accessible strategies to foster student relationships and strengthen classroom climate without adding stress.

## **Strategy & Implementation**

BASC created a tear-off Resilience Calendar that featured daily quotes, jokes, and small tasks to promote positivity and connection. A total of 100 calendars were distributed to 98 educators across ECFE, JW Smith, and Gene Dillon Elementary. Teachers also received explanatory handouts and 25 students participated in pre/post reflection activities to assess emotional shifts.

## **Partnerships & Participation**

BASC partnered closely with school staff, including principals who endorsed the tool and classroom champions who helped model its use. Though the teacher survey had a low response rate (14 out of 98), 85.7% of respondents reported using the calendar and 86% noted a positive impact on students. Student feedback also showed a 52.2% increase in classroom positivity by year-end.

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## **IMPACT & INSIGHTS**

Despite initial content creation delays and printing setbacks, the calendar became a steady, motivational presence in many classrooms. Teachers used it to create a calm space before tests, build connection through shared laughter, and anchor students in routine. One teacher noted a student took pride in flipping the daily page, creating a moment of ownership. Another used a quote to lead a group reflection. These small, consistent practices proved powerful in boosting morale, deepening classroom relationships, and reinforcing a trauma-informed environment. A follow-up evaluation is planned in 2026 to expand insights and guide future use.

## **[Presentation: BASC Community Resilience Initiative](#)**

# WINONA COUNTY COLLABORATIVE

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## **Project Purpose & Community Need**

Resilient Winona County aimed to equip parents and professionals with trauma-informed tools to support emotional regulation, connection, and caregiving resilience. The project addressed gaps in support for parents of older children and time-limited professionals, especially in underrepresented and bilingual communities.

## **Strategy & Implementation**

The team delivered five interventions: two short, on-demand video series for professionals (368 views) and three in-person gatherings for parents (50 attendees). In-person events included meals, child watch, interpretation, and were hosted in familiar community spaces to encourage participation.

## **Partnerships & Participation**

Partners included Project FINE, Kids First, and St. Charles Elementary, who helped expand access and trust. In total, 418 people were reached. Among in-person attendees, 40% were BIPOC or Latine, and 26 children received on-site care so caregivers could engage fully.

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## **IMPACT & INSIGHTS**

In-person gatherings fostered deep connection, especially for parents often left out of traditional supports. Participants shared takeaways like “I’m more self-aware and present” and called activities “game changers.” Despite a low response rate (3%, n=12), 100% reported gains in mental health knowledge, self-regulation, and confidence in responding to behaviors.

The team noted that one-time trainings raise awareness, but lasting change needs continued support. Moving forward, Winona plans to embed trauma-informed learning communities within trusted organizations to deepen impact and build resilience.

## **[Presentation: Winona Community Resilience Initiative](#)**

# LESSONS LEARNED

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## TRUST-BASED ENGAGEMENT BUILDS BRIDGES

Each Collaborative found that consistent engagement and trusted messengers were essential for reaching communities, welcoming participants, and sustaining interest:

- **Anoka:** In-person meetings and consultations proved far more effective than cold outreach, especially with faith-based and child care leaders.
- **Beltrami:** Calendar uptake was strongest when introduced through principals and existing educator networks.
- **Winona:** Collaboration with organizations like Project FINE helped bridge language and cultural gaps to engage refugee and immigrant families.

➤ **Lesson Learned:** *Programs gain traction when people feel known and invited—not just informed.*

## ACCESSIBLE TOOLS DRIVE CONSISTENT USE

Simple, flexible tools led to higher participation and greater emotional connection:

- **Anoka:** Handouts and printed resources provided tangible entry points into trauma-informed content, especially for new learners.
- **Beltrami:** The daily tear-off calendar became a lightweight, recurring prompt for connection and reflection.
- **Winona:** Short video mini-series accommodated busy professionals and parents, dramatically increasing reach, with over 368 total views.

➤ **Lesson Learned:** *Tools that are practical, emotionally resonant, and easy to use are more likely to be adopted and continued.*

## CULTURE-INFORMED DESIGN MATTERS

Each Collaborative encountered cultural or linguistic challenges that reshaped implementation:

- **Anoka:** Some cultural groups questioned the relevance of trauma concepts, requiring careful explanation and trust-building.
  - **Beltrami:** The universal format—jokes, quotes, and affirmations—helped the calendar resonate across diverse classroom settings.
  - **Winona:** Interpreter setup during bilingual sessions revealed areas for improvement in language access and facilitation.
- **Lesson Learned:** *Cultural responsiveness requires ongoing adaptation—not a one-size-fits-all approach.*

## MEANINGFUL DATA REQUIRES STRATEGIC TIMING

Good participation didn't always translate into meaningful input and feedback data.

- **Anoka:** Evaluations conducted during in-person workshops yielded higher response rates than post-event outreach.
  - **Beltrami:** Year-end survey distribution led to low teacher participation, limiting insight into impact.
  - **Winona:** Few virtual participants completed surveys, despite strong interest in the content.
- **Lesson Learned:** *Evaluation efforts are most effective when built into the experience—rather than added afterward.*

To view video presentations, please see [FY2025 Community Resilience Initiative Micro Grants](#) [0:13:24 – 0:45:23]