

GROWING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

9th Annual Gathering of Collaboratives and Tribal Nations Addressing ACEs
Cultivating Solidarity and Connection

Tuesday, June 23rd, 2026

This event supports tribal community members and partners and Children’s Mental Health and Family Services Collaboratives as they work to reduce ACEs, strengthen core protective systems, and create Self-Healing Communities across Minnesota. This year’s Gathering explores how each of us can cultivate solidarity and connection in our communities. Collaboration and mutual support are vital during times of uncertainty and resource scarcity like we are experiencing today. The event will lift up stories of hope from initiatives that are working together to meet the needs and preserve the safety and wellbeing of families in our communities.

Attendees will walk away with action steps to take personally and professionally that promote solidarity and connection with children, youth, and families. Anyone who wants to address the root causes of childhood adversity is encouraged to attend. This can include Collaborative Coordinators and partners, Native/Indigenous Community members and partners, Minnesota ACE Interface Trainers/Presenters, and other community partners, caregivers, and providers. **Attendees will be eligible for up to 4 no-cost Social Work CEUs and Develop Learning Hours for attending this event. Participants must attend full event to be eligible.**





SCHEDULE

9:00-9:20 A.M. WELCOME

9:30-10:45 A.M. BREAKOUT 1

- Building Inclusive Spaces: Advocacy and Case Management Skills for Working with Indigenous Survivors of Violence
- From Culture to Community Response
- How Minnesota's Resource Hubs Are Meeting Emerging Community Needs in 2026

11:00 A.M.-12:15 P.M. BREAKOUT 2

- We Know about ACEs, Now What? The Other Side of the ACEs Pyramid
- Holistic Pathways to Family Well-Being: Integrated Approaches to Housing, Justice, Education, and Health
- Messaging with Your Minnesota Student Survey Data

12:15-1:00 P.M. LUNCH BREAK

1:00-2:10 P.M. KEYNOTE SPEAKER

- Dr. Roy Wade (Assistant Professor of Pediatrics in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in the Division of General Pediatrics at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia) - From Adversity to Action: Community-Driven Strategies to Address ACEs and Build Lasting Resilience

2:10-2:20 P.M. CALL TO ACTION

- Karina Forrest Perkins - President and Chief Executive Officer of Volunteers of America Minnesota and Wisconsin

2:20-2:30 P.M. FAMILYWISE CLOSING, PARTICIPANT SLIDESHOW, & EVENT SURVEY



SESSIONS

9:00 AM – 9:20 AM: GATHERING WELCOME

FAMILYWISE SERVICES AND PEACEMAKER RESOURCES STAFF

Join us for the opening session where we will welcome attendees, introduce the vision and themes for this event, share the event acknowledgments and group agreements, provide an overview of [More Resilient Minnesota](#) and the [Tribal N.E.A.R. Science and Community Wisdom Project](#), and orient attendees to the upcoming sessions, webpage, and join links for the event.

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM: BREAKOUT SESSION 1

OPTION 1: BUILDING INCLUSIVE SPACES: ADVOCACY AND CASE MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR WORKING WITH INDIGENOUS SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE

ANNE LAFRINIER-RITCHIE, SOMEPLACE SAFE OF WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA

This presentation will cover key points in serving Indigenous youth and families, including historical perspectives and an overview of historical and intergenerational trauma. The presenter will share tips, tools, and curriculum examples to improve case management and increase positive outcomes for Indigenous youth who have experienced trauma.

OPTION 2: FROM CULTURE TO COMMUNITY RESPONSE

XAVIER VAZQUEZ, CENTRO TYRONE GUZMAN

As communities face increasing instability, nonprofits are being challenged to move beyond traditional service models and become adaptive, relationship-centered organizations that can respond in real time to emerging community needs. This session will explore how Centro Tyrone Guzman transformed organizational culture to strengthen responsiveness, trust, and community impact during one of the most challenging periods facing Minnesota's Latine community.

Participants will learn how culturally rooted practices, trauma-informed leadership, intergenerational approaches, and community trust allowed Centro to rapidly shift operations, support families holistically, and maintain deep community connection during moments of crisis and uncertainty. The session will also explore internal organizational changes, staff wellness, leadership strategies, and lessons learned while navigating rapid adaptation in real time.

OPTION 3: HOW MINNESOTA’S RESOURCE HUBS ARE MEETING EMERGING COMMUNITY NEEDS IN 2026

WILLIAM CASTELLANOS, RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS OFFICE

MARIA D. HERNANDEZ, RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS OFFICE

JENNIFER PAGE, UNITED WAY 2-1-1

QUIN SCHULTZ, 988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

Community needs across Minnesota have been evolving rapidly, and resource centers are often the first to see shifting needs take shape. This breakout session brings together frontline perspectives from three critical resource hubs to explore the trends shaping service delivery across Minnesota in 2026.

Representatives from United Way 211, 988, and the State of Minnesota’s Immigrant and Refugee Resettlement Program Office will share what they are seeing on the ground—from rising mental health concerns and economic instability to the complex challenges facing newcomer populations.

Participants will gain insight into how these organizations are adapting in real time, strengthening partnerships, and expanding access to culturally responsive and trauma-informed services. The session will also highlight key resources available statewide and offer practical guidance on how professionals can better connect individuals and families to support systems. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of emerging community needs and actionable strategies to enhance their own work in supporting diverse populations across Minnesota.

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM: BREAKOUT SESSION 2

OPTION 1: WE KNOW ABOUT ACES, NOW WHAT? THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ACES PYRAMID

DR. MAEGAN RIDES AT THE DOOR, NATIONAL NATIVE CHILDREN’S TRAUMA CENTER

Many people have now learned about the landmark Adverse Childhood Experiences study and its results demonstrating the link between ACES and poorer health and mental health outcomes. After hearing about this information people often wonder, now what do we need to do to address ACEs on a community wide level? A public health framework to conceptualize next steps will provide a comprehensive community driven approach to advance healing.

- Objective 1: Broaden existing trauma lenses to include cultural considerations of trauma and impacts of trauma
- Objective 2: Increase a broader understanding of how we mitigate the impacts of trauma on a community wide level
- Objective 3: Learn about the trauma foci areas that we can universalize to all children and families we connect with

OPTION 2: HOLISTIC PATHWAYS TO FAMILY WELL-BEING: INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO HOUSING, JUSTICE, AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

JOSH HAGEN, CARLTON HOMELESS YOUTH PROGRAM
JACKIE PEREZ, NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CLINIC
JEANINE WILEY, LAKES AREA RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM

This breakout session explores holistic, downstream strategies designed to support children and families through community-centered approaches. Participants will learn from organizations that are addressing the interconnected challenges families face, with a focus on stable housing, restorative justice practices, behavioral health, and traditional health promotion methods.

OPTION 3: MESSAGING WITH YOUR MINNESOTA STUDENT SURVEY DATA

MELISSA ADOLFSON, WILDER RESEARCH
JACQUIE FREUND, EPICOG, LLC

Don't let your MSS data sit on a virtual shelf gathering e-dust. Use it! In this session we'll talk through practical strategies for sharing your data far and wide. Examples we'll dive into include: fun ways to share data points when tabling at events, pairing a data point with a resource and action step, and using Canva to create simple and eye-catching infographics. Our goal is to build your capacity to use your data and help promote the MSS. Come prepared to share an example of how you've gotten your MSS data out into the community.

1:00 PM – 2:15 PM: KEYNOTE SESSION

FROM ADVERSITY TO ACTION: COMMUNITY-DRIVEN STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS ACES AND BUILD LASTING RESILIENCE

DR. ROY WADE, DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE IN THE DIVISION OF GENERAL PEDIATRICS AT THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are not only individual challenges—they are deeply rooted in community conditions, systems, and historical inequities. This session will explore the broader community impact of ACEs, including their effects on health outcomes, educational attainment, economic stability, and intergenerational well-being. Participants will examine how communities can move beyond awareness toward collective action by implementing trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and equity-centered approaches. Drawing from real-world examples, this session will highlight strategies that strengthen protective factors at the community level, such as social connectedness, safe and stable environments, and access to supportive services.

Attendees will leave with practical frameworks and actionable tools to:

- Mobilize cross-sector partnerships
- Embed resilience-building practices into community systems
- Leverage local assets and cultural strengths
- Advocate for policies that reduce adversity and promote healing

This session is designed for leaders, practitioners, and community members committed to transforming systems and advancing resilience where it matters most—at the community level.

2:10 PM – 2:20 PM: CLOSING CALL TO ACTION

KARINA FORREST PERKINS, VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA MINNESOTA AND WISCONSIN

2:20 PM – 2:30 PM: CLOSING

Join us for the closing session where we will share the FamilyWise Family Wellbeing Index, share a participant photo slideshow and survey, create a word cloud, and offer closing words.



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Wilder Research
Research Scientist

MELISSA ADOLFSON



Melissa Adolfsen, Research Scientist with Wilder Research, has almost 20 years of research and evaluation experience. She is experienced in evaluating community- and state-level initiatives focused on supporting youth, families, and communities in their efforts to reduce and prevent substance misuse, suicide, and adverse childhood experiences, and to improve behavioral health systems. Melissa is especially passionate about community-based participatory research and evaluation. She holds a master's degree in population health sciences from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

 www.wilder.org

Resettlement Programs Office
Minnesota Department of Human Services
*Community Outreach &
Engagement Supervisor*

WILLIAM CASTELLANOS



William is the supervisor of the Resettlement Programs Office (RPO)'s Community Outreach and Engagement Team (COE) at the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). He has more than 30 years of experience leading, designing, managing, implementing, and evaluating community engagement and community-based strategic initiatives, projects, and programs to increase access to services, promote equity and inclusion, as well as leading innovative interventions to enhance the well-being of immigrant and minority communities in Minnesota.

 www.mn.gov/dhs/resettlement/

The COE Team is expanding its outreach activities and engaging refugees, asylees, and New Americans in meaningful conversations across the state, it has become a powerful team that understands our immigrant communities' diverse and unique experiences; it is developing and implementing innovative solutions to improve the lives of all the people living in Minnesota, and significantly contributing to achieving the RPO vision of "Refugees and immigrants establish wellbeing, thrive within communities free from disparities, and contribute to a vibrant Minnesota" through the implementation of the Helpline, participating in community events and celebrations, updating the RPO webpage, facilitating the Welcoming Minnesota Forum, and developing culturally and linguistically appropriate messages about the RPO services and resources available across the state.

KARINA FORREST PERKINS



Karina Forrest Perkins is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Volunteers of America Minnesota and Wisconsin. She brings more than 25 years of experience leading transformational change across behavioral health, integrated care, and nonprofit systems. As a nationally recognized voice in trauma-informed, whole-person care, Karina has held Chief Executive Officer roles with NAMI Oklahoma, Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota, Wayside Recovery Center, People's Center Clinics and Services, and Heartspring. She has also served as a senior advisor to three Oklahoma governors and one Minnesota governor. Her work has earned both national and international recognition for its emphasis on dignity, healing, and systems-level change.

 www.voamnwi.org/

JACQUELYN FREUND

Epicog, LLC
Senior Research Scientist



Jacquelyn Freund has a decade of experience as a subcontractor with the Minnesota Department of Human Services, using epidemiologic data to further substance use prevention and mental health promotion. She maintains the website, Substance Use in Minnesota (sumn.org), and helps communities acquire, analyze, and interpret data relevant to their behavioral health goals. She loves working with the Minnesota Student Survey and enjoys helping communities implement data-driven strategies to improve the lives of children in her home state. Jacquelyn earned her master's degree in Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development, specializing in community dynamics related to protected areas, from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy and biology from Macalester College.

 www.sumn.org

JOSHUA HAGEN

Carlton County
Community & Family Initiatives Department
Family & Community Liaison



Josh has been working for Carlton County for 21 years. Initially, he was hired to be the Cloquet Truancy Officer, the program grew to be countywide, partnering with all local school districts. He then was privileged to work with the Carlton County Restorative Justice Team as a Coordinator. That leads him to his current position as the Family and Community Liaison working with the unhoused youth within our community. The program is a partnership between the United Way of Carlton and Pine Counties and Carlton County to collaborate to assist unhoused youth within our area.

 www.carltoncountymn.gov/298/Community-Family-Initiatives-Department

MARIA D. HERNANDEZ



 www.mn.gov/dhs/resettlement/

As the Refugee and Immigrant Call Center / Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, Maria provides business area planning across the Resettlement Programs Office and contributes to developing services and support for new arrivals placed in Minnesota through various resettlement pathways. Her highest priorities are developing and implementing a statewide call center, library of resources, and a helpline, as well as coordinating programs and community outreach and engagement initiatives for refugees, immigrants, and New Americans across the state. She works closely with partners, Refugee Resettlement Network Service Providers (RNS), work groups, community-based organizations, city, county, and state agencies to refer and coordinate available services and resources in Minnesota. Maria also works with multidisciplinary teams to gather input needed to manage operational changes and needed initiatives. She continually develops and improves work processes and supports services to enhance our customers' satisfaction.

Maria reaches out to all the communities we serve. Her work has significantly increased the trust among community members and the government, allowing us to provide better services that respond to the needs of individuals, families, and communities we serve, as well as the trust of our partners through case studies that provide opportunities to improve together.

Someplace Safe of
West Central Minnesota
Safe Harbor Navigator

ANNE LAFRINIER-RICHIE




 www.someplacesafe.info/

Anne LaFrinier-Ritchie, White Earth descendant, works as a Safe Harbor Regional Navigator for Someplace Safe in West Central Minnesota. Anne has worked in the anti-trafficking field in direct services and training and technical assistance since 2016, with previous experience in advocacy and tribal child welfare. Anne consults on a national level on serving Indigenous survivors and serves on local and national domestic violence and tribal boards, Shared Hope JuST Response Council and Minnesota's MMIR Office Advisory committee.

JENNIFER PAGE*Assistant Contact Center Manager*

Jennifer has been with United Way 2-1-1 for 13 years and currently serves as the Interim Contact Center Manager. She supports the day-to-day operations of the Contact Center, including supervising and coaching staff, supporting training, and helping ensure things run smoothly both internally and with external partners. United Way 2-1-1 is a free, confidential resource available 24 hours a day that helps people navigate community services and supports across Minnesota. Through phone and text, trained specialists provide information and referrals to housing, food assistance, healthcare, and other nonprofit and government programs.


 www.211unitedway.org/

JACKIE PEREZ

Native American Community Clinic
Traditional Spiritual Care Provider and Doula



Traditional Spiritual Care Provider and Doula offering holistic support in behavioral health through spiritual care, prayer, and culturally rooted healing practices. Guided by lived experience and ancestral teachings, I am passionate about integrating traditional healing, wellness, and advocacy to support individuals, families, and communities. My work centers on preserving ancestral practices while fostering safe, empowering spaces for healing, connection, and community care.

 www.nacc-healthcare.org/

**DR. MAEGAN RIDES
AT THE DOOR**

National Native Children's Trauma Center
Director




An enrolled member of the Assiniboine-Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation and a descendant of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, Dr. Maegan Rides At The Door, LCPC has served as the NNCTC's Director since 2015. Maegan utilizes her knowledge in trauma responsive care to provide training and technical assistance with a wide variety of systems of care including but not limited to schools, child welfare, juvenile justice, and healthcare. She has been central to the design and implementation of trauma-responsive systems of care with Native Nations, private, federal, and state partners; the implementation of cross-system youth suicide prevention programming; and the expansion of child advocacy centers' capacity to meet the needs of tribal communities.

 www.nnctc.org/

QUIN SHULTZ



Quin Schultz is the Training Manager at GTCUW 988, where he leads efforts to strengthen onboarding, skill development, and performance of the counselors who answer 988 calls. Before joining Greater Twin Cities United Way, he spent several years as an instructor and policy creator for the Mental Health Department at Abbott Northwestern Hospital and Allina Health, as well as the lead instructor and trainer for the Barbara Schneider Foundation, a local nonprofit dedicated to providing Crisis Intervention Trainings for law enforcement and correctional staff, including those in Minneapolis and Hennepin County, to promote safer outcomes for individuals experiencing mental health crises.

 www.gtcuw.org/get-assistance/988-suicide-crisis-lifeline/

Centro Tyrone Guzman
Executive Director

XAVIER VAZQUEZ



Xavier Vazquez is the Executive Director of Centro Tyrone Guzman, Minnesota's oldest Latine-serving nonprofit organization. Under his leadership, Centro has expanded its culturally specific, intergenerational programming while strengthening community trust, organizational responsiveness, and trauma-informed practices. Xavier has led large-scale operational and cultural shifts focused on meeting families where they are, particularly during periods of community crisis and instability. His work centers on culturally grounded leadership, adaptive organizational strategy, Montessori-informed approaches across the lifespan, and building systems rooted in dignity, belonging, and healing.

 www.centromn.org/

Lakes Area Restorative Justice Program
Program Manager

JEANINE WILEY



Jeanine is a Parent First to an adult daughter who is currently serving in the United States Marines. Over the years, Jeanine has served the community in various ways, through working with children from Head Start ages to teens and young adults. She spent years working with the Crisis Line overnight, serving at her church, working for the school district and with children and in the private sector. In her personal time, she is a board member of a nonprofit organization which focuses on supporting marginalized communities. It is with this passion for people that Jeanine is helping to grow and revolutionize LARJP. She likes the color green and fluffy things.

 www.larjp.org/

Department of Pediatrics at the
University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in the
Division of General Pediatrics at the Children's
Hospital of Philadelphia
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

DR. ROY WADE



 www.research.chop.edu/

Roy Wade is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in the Division of General Pediatrics at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Dr. Wade's research focuses on decreasing disparities in health caused by exposure to childhood trauma. Prior to attending medical school, Dr. Wade earned a PhD in Microbiology from the Georgia Institute of Technology, using classical genetics approaches to examine the respiratory chain physiology of environmental bacteria. Dr. Wade earned a medical degree from the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth in 2007 and completed pediatric residency at the University of Virginia in 2010. Dr. Wade's career aspirations were further informed by his experience as a Minority Health Policy Fellow at Harvard Medical School where he also earned an MPH in Health Policy and Management from the Harvard School of Public Health in 2011. Dr. Wade completed the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholar's program at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, earning a Master of Science in Health Policy in 2013. Securing a Stoneleigh Foundation early career development award, Dr. Wade's initial work has focused on developing more sensitive childhood adversity measures and promoting the adoption of trauma-informed approaches among health and social service organizations. In conducting this work, Dr. Wade has authored several papers including a qualitative study of adverse childhood experiences amongst urban youth published in Pediatrics in which he found that urban economically distressed youth endorsed a broader set of childhood stressors than those included in the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study and in many cases used contextually specific language to describe these experiences. In a separate study examining data from a survey of adverse childhood experiences and health outcomes amongst Philadelphia adults published in the journal Child Abuse & Neglect, Dr. Wade found that many of the broader experiences endorsed by young people in his prior qualitative studies were strongly associated with poor health outcomes and certain populations, particularly impoverished adults with significant childhood adversity were at increased risk for poor health outcomes such as substance abuse problems and mental disorders. This work received local and national media coverage including stories on National Public Radio and in the Philadelphia Inquirer. Dr. Wade's research interests also include examining the mechanisms through which significant childhood adversity translate into poor health throughout the life course and negatively impact offspring. Through his work, Dr. Wade plans to translate research on the science of childhood adversity and toxic stress into effective strategies to improve community level systems of care in economically distressed communities.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sponsoring Projects



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. FamilyWise Services, with funding from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, supports this initiative to grow resilient communities across Minnesota. [Learn more](#)



The Tribal N.E.A.R. Science and Community Wisdom Project is a grassroots movement designed to build awareness and understanding regarding the root causes of the contemporary issues our tribal communities face today, and to honor and uplift stories of indigenous resilience. This project is coordinated by FamilyWise Services and Peacemaker Resources, and is made possible with funding from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. [Learn more](#)

Funders



Funding for this project is provided by **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota**, as part of its commitment to investing in community-led solutions, so everyone has the opportunity to achieve their healthiest life. [Learn more](#)



Minnesota Department of Human Services provides funding to support implementation of More Resilient Minnesota. This supports a grant with FamilyWise Services to partner alongside Children’s Mental Health and Family Services Collaboratives on their journey to fulfill the phases toward building Self-Healing Communities. [Learn more](#)

Both funders contributed support for **FamilyWise Services** and **Peacemaker Resources** to facilitate and coordinate the *9th Annual Gathering of Collaboratives and Tribal Nations Addressing ACEs*.





RESOURCES

WATCH + LISTEN

[Practicing Resilience in Community Playlist](#)

[National Native Children's Trauma Center - Trauma & Resilience Webinars](#)

[Native American Community Clinic YouTube Channel](#)

[Remembering Resilient Podcast Series](#)

[Un mensaje de Centro Tyrone Guzman en medio de la Operación Metro Surge](#)

[Kids in Hiding: How ICE tore Minnesota Families Apart](#)

[988 Lifeline - Stories of Hope & Recovery](#)

[Children's Mental Health & Family Services Collaboratives \(DHS\)](#)

ENGAGE

[FamilyWise Services](#)

[80X3 Resilient from the Start](#)

[Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota](#)

[MN ACEs Action - A Trauma Informed Network](#)

[More Resilient Minnesota](#)

[PACEs Connection](#)

[Peacemaker Resources](#)

[Tribal N.E.A.R. Science & Community Wisdom Project](#)

LEARN

[Centro Tyrone Guzman](#)

[Immigration & the Challenge to Belong \(Call to Mind\)](#)

[Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute](#)

[Lakes Area Restorative Justice Project](#)

[National Native Children's Trauma Center](#)

[SUN Bucks](#)

[Keeping Families Connected Minnesota](#)

[Someplace Safe - Crime Victim Advocates Serving West Central Minnesota](#)

[Call to Mind](#)

[Native American Community Clinic](#)

[MN Department of Human Services - Resettlement Programs](#)

[United Way Carlton & Pine County Area Homeless Youth Program](#)

[988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#)

[MN Department of Human Services - Refugee & Immigrant Helpline](#)

[mnFoodHelper](#)

[MN Department of Human Services - Refugee Resettlement: Partners](#)

[United Way 211](#)

[MN Department of Health - Additional Support for Families](#)

[The Strain of Stress \(Call to Mind\)](#)

[Philadelphia ACE Project & Survey](#)

[MN Department of Human Services - Resettlement Programs Office Library of Resources](#)