



This proven public health model engages all Vermonters in discussion and action to address the factors that may lead to poor health outcomes and much of the difficulty so many have in succeeding at work and in family life. We are creating an enduring vision of flourishing communities and the actions to achieve them.

There are currently 33 Building Flourishing Communities Facilitators guiding **Building Flourishing Communities Learning Events** in all regions of Vermont to increase awareness about how early, overwhelming and/or threatening experiences can lead to later poor health and well-being. Through this awareness we hope to change the way people think about those who have experienced ACES, reduce the stigma around seeking supportive help and shift the focus away from solutions being only an individual responsibility to a community responsibility.

BFC Facilitators are generating interest and excitement about the potential for change through conversations based in N.E.A.R. research:

- Neuroscience
 – early brain development and adaptations to experience
- Epigenetics how our environment influences gene expression
- ACEs study (Adverse Childhood Experiences) makes the connections to later outcomes clear
- Resilience research shows that even those who have been deeply affected by adversity can become
 more resilient and flourish, and those with resilience withstand life's challenges better

Once we have created broad general knowledge and understanding across the state, the BFC Facilitators will then assist local leaders to determine next steps. Experience shows that when community members have an opportunity to lead, local projects are more likely to focus on narrowing the gaps between those with the greatest challenges and those with more advantages. This approach reduces early, overwhelming events, increases resilience and leads to flourishing.

For a list of BFC Facilitators across Vermont, please see the next page.

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