



Creating conditions for positive change that advance resiliency, and improve the mental well-being of all Islanders, in order to prevent future incidences of chronic mental health issues, and addiction, from occurring.

<https://allianceformentalwellbeing.com>

Science of Resilience

The science of resilience refers to a body of knowledge that explores the impact of how early experiences shape our brain architecture and wire our neural pathways; ultimately affecting one's health outcomes over a lifetime. This body of knowledge foundationally includes the [Harvard Center on the Developing Child Working Papers](#), but also findings by other research entities around the world, including [Fellitti and Anda's landmark Adverse Childhood Experience Study \(1998\)](#) and more recently the works of Dr. Michael Ungar ([Dalhousie University – Resilience Research Centre](#)) which address the connection between the experiences we have in our lives and our lifelong health outcomes. The [Social determinants of health and health inequalities](#) help to inform work in this area.

The science of resilience has been tested and practiced across many disciplines and sectors. Its application has been demonstrated to improve effectiveness, reduce system costs, and take a more humane approach to policies, practices, and service delivery. The science of resilience takes a population health approach to improving outcomes across many well-being issue areas such as mental health, addictions, domestic violence, and suicide. It does not negate other initiatives to reduce marginalization but rather makes space for all of these (i.e., diversity and inclusion, reconciliation etc.) because trauma and the impact of trauma exists within all these groups.

Resilience is not a fixed character trait you are born with; rather it is a capacity that can be strengthened at any point in life by providing supportive relationships, building core life skills and buffering sources of toxic stress in individuals, families, workplaces and communities.

We recognize that we are not the only entity working in the realm of resilience and want to build continuously on emerging resources from evidence-based organizations. The [Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction](#) (CCSA) is collaborating with the [Alberta Family Wellness Initiative](#) (AFWI), the developer of the [Brain Story](#). Their goal is “to expand the reach, accessibility and understanding of Brain Story science to raise awareness of substance use as a public health issue, reduce stigma, and change policy and practice accordingly.”



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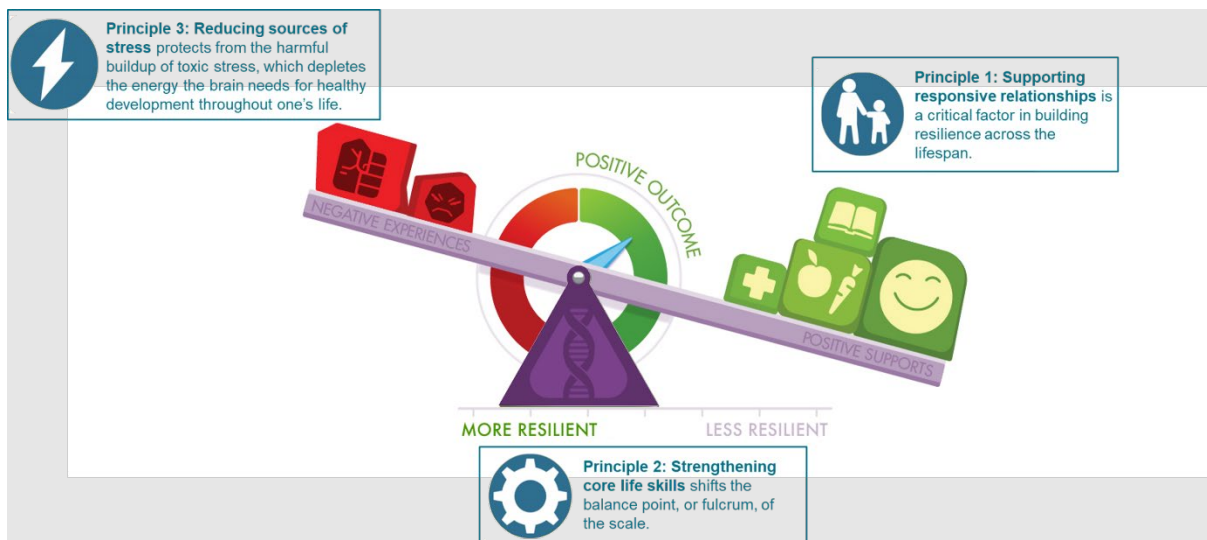
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Resource Listings

The PEI Alliance For Mental Well-Being has collected resources from leading experts on the science of resilience, The Brain Story and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). There are resources that relate to each of these areas listed below in multiple formats (print, videos, podcasts etc.). These will help foster understanding and application of the science of resilience in our island communities.

The Science of Resilience

The [Resilience Scale](#) metaphor is a tool developed by the [Alberta Family Wellness Initiative](#) to explain why some people seem more resilient than others and to help visualize how to improve resilience: the ability to respond positively in the face of adversity. It demonstrates how negative experiences and adversity can be counterbalanced by positive experiences and supports across the lifespan. Individuals' resilience can be built by increasing their core skills and abilities, thereby shifting the fulcrum (the tipping point) of the scale toward more positive outcomes.



Source: www.AlbertaFamilyWellness.org

[Brains: Journey of Resilience](#) (8 min video):

Discover the science of resilience and learn about the resilience scale in this engaging and information-packed video.



[Center on the Developing Child - Harvard University](#) (website)

This team’s goal is to drive “science-based innovation in policy and practice”. Within their own resource library explore guides related to resilience, toxic stress, brain architecture, responsive relationships, and much more

[InBrief: The Science of Resilience](#) - Centre on the Developing Child, Harvard University (3 min video)

One way to understand the development of resilience is to picture a balance scale or seesaw. Protective experiences and adaptive skills on one side counterbalance significant adversity on the other. Watch this video to visualize the science of resilience and see how genes and experience interact to produce positive outcomes for children.

[Dr. Nicole Sherran: Virtual Coaching on the Science of Resilience](#) (70 min video)

Watch Dr. Nicole Sherran take a deep dive into the Science of Resilience through this recorded virtual coaching session related to the PEI Alliance for Mental Well-Being's *Focusing Action for Positive Change Grant Program*.

[Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction](#) (website)

The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) is a non-government organization that is a national leader on “substance use and advancing solutions to address alcohol and other drug related harms.” They have partnered with Alberta Family Wellness Initiative and their goal is to “expand the reach, accessibility and understanding of Brain Story science to raise awareness of substance use as a public health issue, reduce stigma, and change policy and practice accordingly.”



The Brain Story and applications:

Brain Story Certification (20-30 hour course)

The University of Oxford, in partnership with the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative, is working to share knowledge about the science of brain development for families and professionals from across sectors. This information is intended to help the participant to understand how our earliest experiences can affect our long-term mental and physical health.

A free, in-depth course for anyone who wants to learn more about the science of brain development.

- Videos of more than 30 [leading experts](#) in neurobiology and mental health
- Certification in Brain Story science
- [19 modules](#) self-paced
- Available in [French and English](#)

Brain Story Certification is a course endorsed by the Palix Foundation's [Curriculum Committee](#). For a comprehensive description of the course contents, download the [course outline](#).

Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (website)

Explore AFWI's website to learn more about research into "the science of brain development to support positive lifelong health outcomes for everyone." Here you can learn more about The Brain Story and its tools and guides.

Impacts and Lessons from the Brain Builders Lab: Practical Advice on How to Spread and Embed Brain Story Science in Communities (30 min read)

This summary includes an introduction to Brain Story science and Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction's [Brain Builders Lab](#) on Adverse Childhood Experiences. It illustrates the top 10 lessons learned about implementing and evaluating Brain Builder projects. The summary is the first of a series, the rest of which illustrate each of these lessons through case studies.



Brain Builders: How a child's brain develops through early experiences (4 min video)

This 'Brain Builders' video explains how experiences in the first years of our lives affect how our brains form. Science tells us that the stress of abuse or neglect can damage the basic structures of a child's developing brain. Without the right help, it can put them at risk of a lifetime of health problems, developmental issues and addiction. It's up to us to make sure that children overcome these stresses and have the nurturing experiences they need for positive development.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and their impact:

Community Resilience Coalition ACE's & Resilience Trainings: (3 hours each course)

The Community Resilience Coalition of Guelph and Wellington, ON offers multiple training opportunities for community leaders and human service providers to better understand adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), their effects, and actions they can take to prevent and reduce the effects of ACEs and promote resilience.

ACEs & Resilience Core Training is a five-module series that provides foundational knowledge for human service providers (including but not limited to, Primary Care Providers, Registered Nurses, Registered Practical Nurses, Social Workers, Outreach Workers and Pharmacists) to take action in their communities.

Promoting Resilience: A Science-Informed Approach to Decision-Making describes key information about ACEs and resilience that can be used by community leaders and decision-makers (e.g., boards of directors, elected officials, spiritual leaders) to inform strategic and fiscal decision-making to promote positive outcomes for children, youth, and their families.

Reducing Stress & Promoting Resilience in Young Children explores the role that early learning and care staff have in helping to reduce the impact of stress and promote resilience in young children.

Promoting Mentally Healthy Schools and Resilience: Strategies for Educators equips educators with information and strategies to support mentally healthy schools and promote resilience among students.



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[How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime | Nadine Burke Harris](#) (15 min video)

Childhood trauma isn't something you just get over as you grow up. Pediatrician Nadine Burke Harris explains that the repeated stress of abuse, neglect and parents struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues has real, tangible effects on the development of the brain. This unfolds across a lifetime, to the point where those who've experienced high levels of trauma are at triple the risk for heart disease and lung cancer.

If you have any questions or comments, email us at info@AllianceForMentalWellBeing.com or visit www.AllianceForMentalWellBeing.com