

PREVENTING ACES - DATA FOR DECISION MAKING

DFCS Region 7: Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Screven, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington, and Wilkes Counties

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are preventable, traumatic events that occur in childhood, that can lead to negative near- and long-term health outcomes (CDC 2019).

Key Points:

- Trauma-informed practices recognize and respond to the signs, symptoms, and risks of trauma to better support the needs of people who have experienced ACEs. Trauma-informed care is an approach defined by treating the whole person, considering past trauma and resulting behaviors and health outcomes (Resilient GA).
- Trauma-informed supports can mitigate the effects of adversity by fostering inclusion and helping families and children manage stress.
- Promoting positive social norms about parenting and acceptable parenting behaviors or destigmatizing mental health care can reduce the incidence and limit the harmful impact of ACEs.

GA Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan (CANPP)

The data presented align with select strategies from the GA Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan (CANPP). To learn more about the CANPP, visit: <https://abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/canpp/>

The following CANPP strategies were selected to implement in this region by a team of community stakeholders:

1. Promote policies that ensure at-risk families receive evidence-based parenting education.
2. Increase access to evidence-based or research-informed programs for parenting skills and support that help parents/caregivers understand all stages of their child's development.
3. Promote poverty-informed training for local and state policymakers.

How this factsheet can help prevent ACEs

The data presented are measures that influence the occurrence of ACEs. These measures represent potential targets for interventions and are presented to help communities make decisions on the best lines of action.

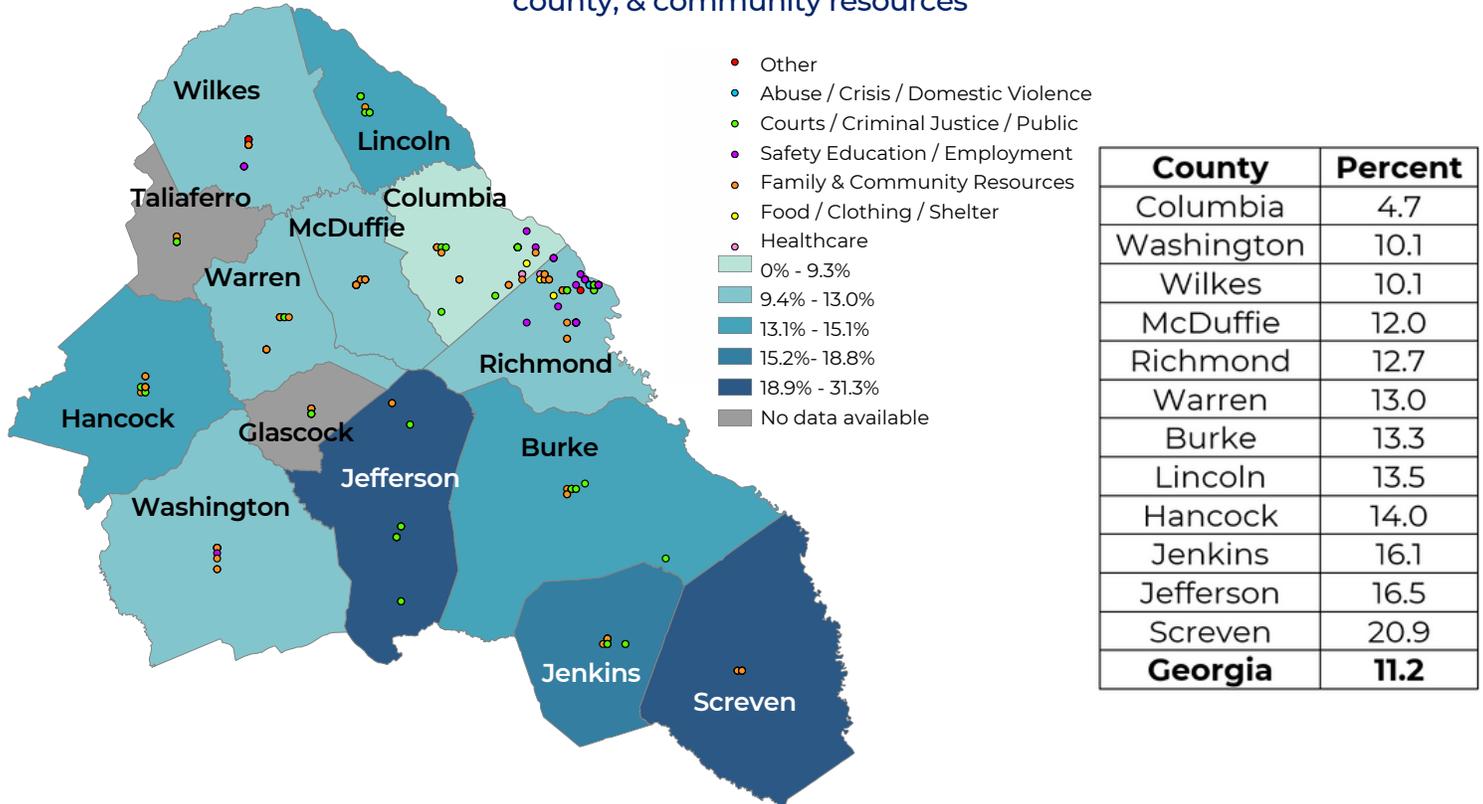


Strategy 1: Promote policies that ensure at-risk families receive evidence-based parenting education.

Children living in families with adults who have low levels of education are more at risk of experiencing ACEs (CDC 2021), while ACEs can also negatively impact education, employment, and earnings potential (CDC 2022). Without strategies in place to prevent ACEs, a cycle of low educational attainment, poverty, and ACEs can emerge. In some counties across this region, women with less than 12 years of education account for more than 15% of the births. Promoting evidence-based parenting education can help prevent harmful multigenerational cycles.

Providing family supports, including parenting education, can prevent the occurrence of ACEs. The dots on the map below show the locations of community resources in the region.

Percent of babies born to women with less than 12 years of education, by county, & community resources



Data Source: Georgia Department of Human Resources, Birth Certificate Records. Obtained from Kids Count Data Center. Community Resources obtained from Prevent Child Abuse Georgia

Strategy 2: Increase access to evidence-based or research-informed programs for parenting skills and support that help parents/caregivers understand all stages of their child's development.

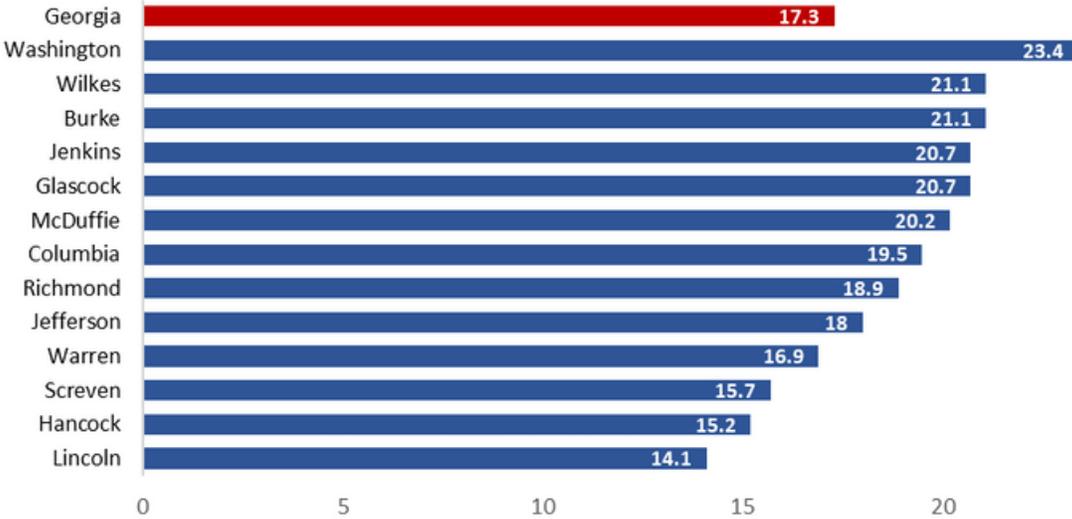
Parenting skills are important to end generational cycles of violence. These skills support the development of healthy family relationships and reduce known risk factors for child abuse and neglect and protect children from engaging in harmful behaviors such as bullying and substance use. PEACH Parenting is a site that parents can use to access information and resources designed to help them become stronger parents. Here, they will learn ways to adapt to stress by responding in healthy ways so that they can provide better care to their children.



Students in this region have self-reported experiencing anxiety, depression, and traumatic events like bullying and fighting. These events can impact the ability to concentrate in school or make meaningful positive relationships. **Bullying, fighting, and substance use** are behaviors that are strongly associated with ACEs. Children in families who create safe, stable, and nurturing relationships, meaning children have a consistent family life where they are safe, taken care of, and supported, are less likely to experience ACEs and more likely to rebound from adversity (CDC 2021). Increasing access to parenting programs can reduce ACEs and associated outcomes like bullying and substance misuse.

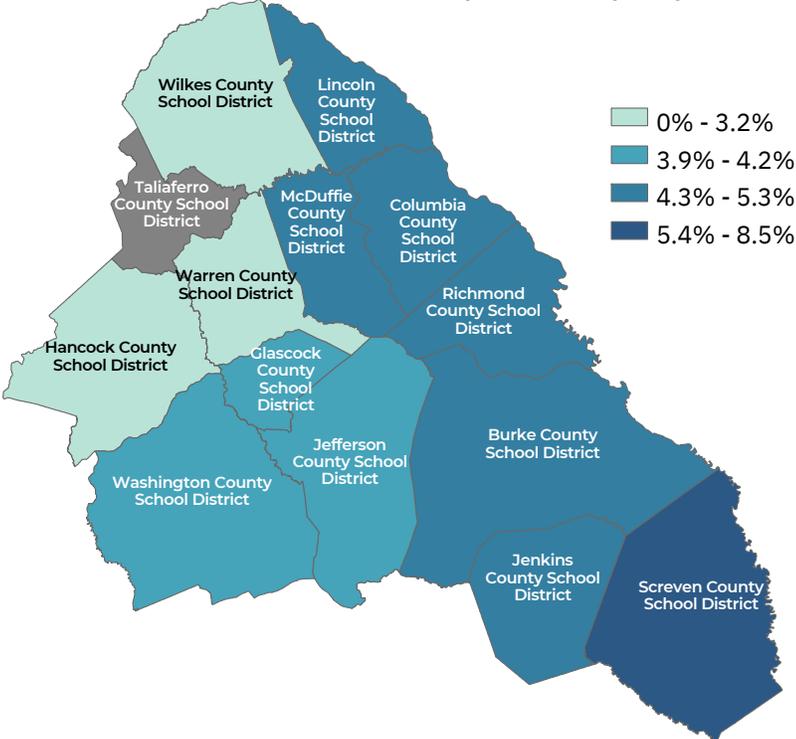
In Region 7, Bullying was common, with more than one in five students reporting having been bullied or threatened at school in many districts. Having had 5 or more alcoholic drinks in a row (within a couple of hours) in the past 30 days was strongly associated with other behaviors involving the use of drugs and alcohol.

Percent of 6th-12th grade students who reported having been bullied or threatened by other students, by school district



Data Source: Georgia Student Health Survey (2020).

Percent of 6th-12th grade students who reported having had 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row in the past 30 days, by school district



School District	Percent
Warren	1.6
Jenkins	7.6
Wilkes	8.2
Columbia	8.6
McDuffie	8.8
Jefferson	11.0
Burke	11.8
Hancock	12.1
Screven	12.6
Washington	15.2
Lincoln	16.0
Glascock	18.0
Richmond	18.8
Taliaferro	28.5
Georgia	10.8

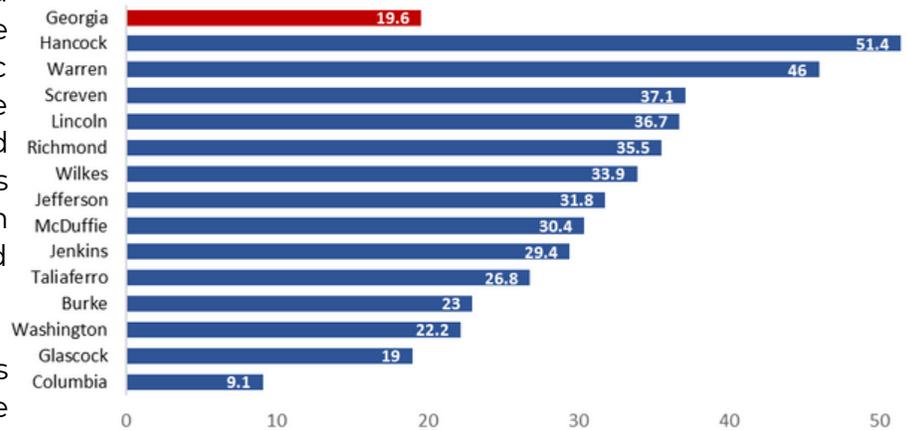
Data Source: Georgia Student Health Survey (2020).

Strategy 3: Promote poverty-informed training for local and state policymakers.

Poverty and economic instability create high stress environments and conditions that put children at risk of experiencing ACEs. ACEs and associated social determinants of health like poverty can cause toxic stress. This toxic stress can negatively impact cognitive processes, and harm the nervous and immune systems (CDC 2022). Policies that promote economic stability, such as tax credits, childcare subsidies, and paid leave, can reduce ACEs (CDC 2019).

Children in poverty varies widely in this region, but most counties exceed the Georgia average. Many counties in the region have over 1 in 3 children living below the poverty level.

Percent of children in families below 100% of the poverty level, by county

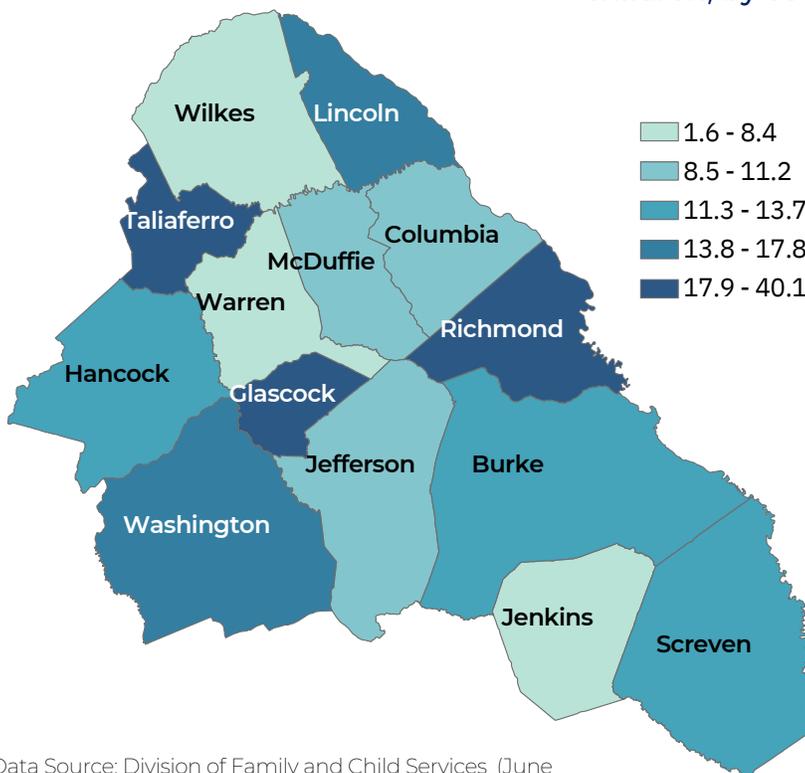


Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2017-2021)

The map below shows the number of children subject of **maltreatment** investigations at the county level from June 2021 through May 2022. While the numbers vary widely in this region from 1.6 to 28.5 per 10,000 children, any level of maltreatment is worrisome. These data help bring attention to the incidence of child abuse and neglect in this region.

Prevent Child Abuse Georgia is an organization that works to increase public awareness of child abuse prevention and recognition of suspected child abuse and neglect cases. Click [here](#) to learn more about their public trainings. Find supportive family resources at [Find Help Georgia](#).

Maltreatment investigations per 10,000 children, by county

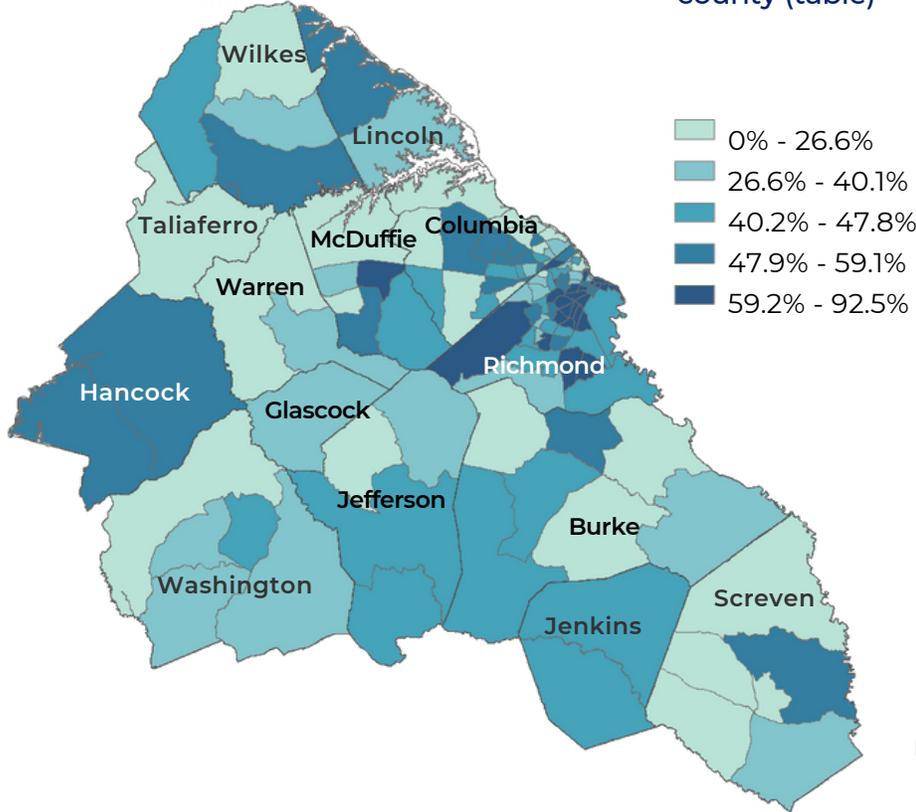


County	Percent
Warren	1.6
Jenkins	7.6
Wilkes	8.2
Columbia	8.6
McDuffie	8.8
Jefferson	11.0
Burke	11.8
Hancock	12.1
Screven	12.6
Washington	15.2
Lincoln	16.0
Glascok	18.0
Richmond	18.8
Taliaferro	28.5
Georgia	10.8

Data Source: Division of Family and Child Services (June 2021 through May 2022). Obtained from Fostering Court Improvement

High housing costs may make it difficult for families to cover costs for things like healthy food or medical care. It also leads to familial stress, mental health issues, and increased risk of disease (Healthy People 2030). Policies and programs that support economic stability by making housing, food, education, or healthcare more affordable or assisting with employment can reduce child abuse and neglect by improving parents' ability to satisfy children's basic needs, provide developmentally appropriate child care, and reduce parental stress and depression (Fortson et al 2016)

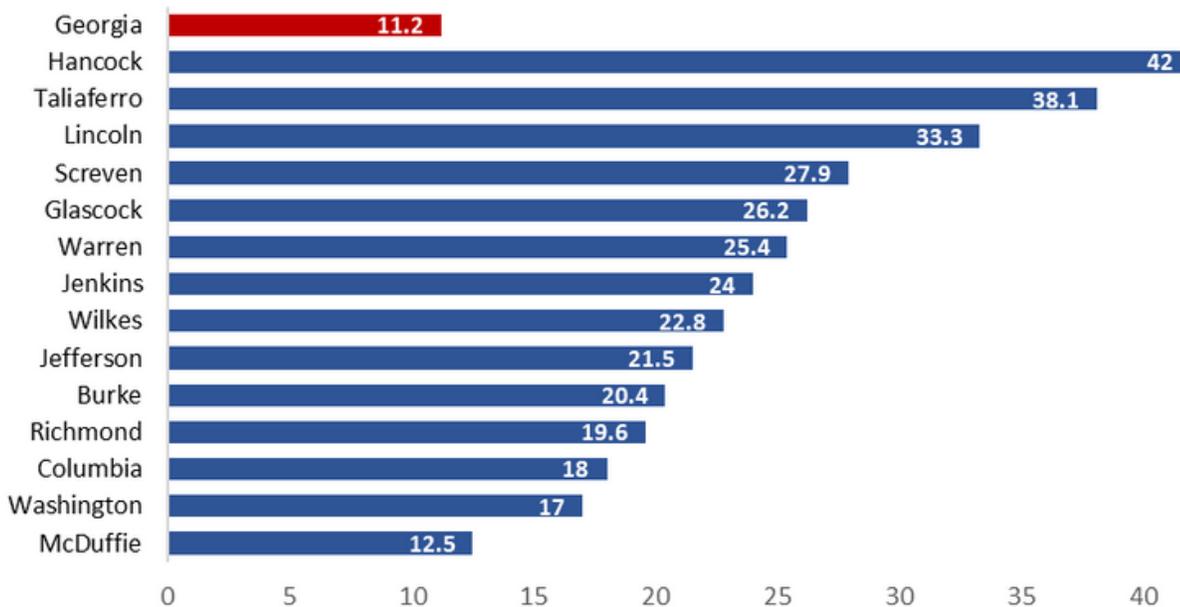
Percent of renter households for whom gross rent (contract rent plus tenant-paid utilities) is 30% or more of household income by census tract (map) & county (table)



County	Percent
Taliaferro	23.8
Screven	24.5
Warren	26.7
Glascok	26.8
Burke	35.1
Washington	37.6
Jefferson	38.5
Columbia	38.7
Wilkes	41.6
Jenkins	41.7
Lincoln	41.9
McDuffie	45.7
Richmond	52.6
Hancock	57.7
Georgia	46.0

Data Source: American Community Survey (2017-2021).

Percent of housing units that are vacant, by county



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2017-2021)

Preventing the Impact of ACEs

The most impactful prevention strategies, such as those found in the CANPP, offer real solutions at the family, society, and community levels. Communities that have affordable housing, opportunities for economic mobility, and low occurrences of violence have the most potential to create healthy and vibrant environments where children can thrive. Policies and programs that promote early education, mental health, and caring relationships can lessen the stressful load some families experience and by doing so, limit exposure to and prevent the negative impact of ACEs.

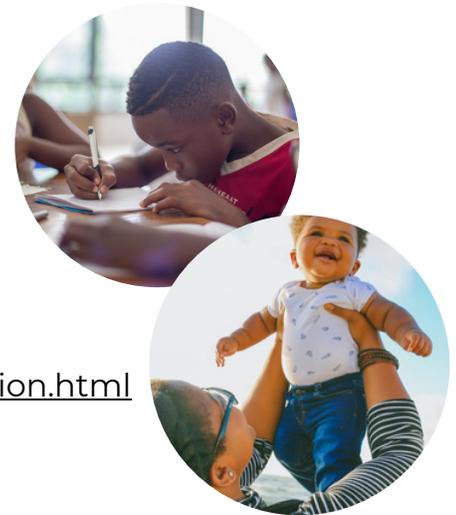
Evidence-based Prevention Programs

Evidence-based programs are scientifically proven to promote health and prevent disease. Listed here are just a few evidence-based programs that lessen the harms of ACEs:

- Augusta Partnership for Children - Healthy Start: <https://augustapartnership.org/>
- Jefferson County Community SHIPS for Youth: <http://jefferson.gafcp.org/parenting-classes/>
- McDuffie Partners for Success: <http://mcduffie.gafcp.org/>
- Still Waters Professional Counseling: <https://stillcorp.com/>
- Wilkes County Community Partnership: <https://wilkesccp.org/>

Helpful Resources

- Find Help GA: <https://findhelpga.org/>
- Belonging for Hope: www.belongingforhope.org
- Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Plan: abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/canpp/
- Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences: www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/preventingace-datatoaction.html
- Prevent Child Abuse Georgia: abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu
- Essentials for Childhood: abuse.publichealth.gsu.edu/essentials/
- Peach Parenting: <https://peachparenting.org/>
- DECAL Developmental Milestones: <https://development.dec.ga.gov/#/>
- Georgia System of Care: <https://gasystemofcare.org/>
- Resilient Georgia: <https://www.resilientga.org/>



Looking for more ACE and ACE-related data like the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), Georgia Student Health Survey (GSHS), and other sources?

Visit our website at iprce.emory.edu/PACE-D2A.html

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Learning card: Trauma Informed. Resilient Georgia. <https://www.resilientga.org/trauma-informed>