

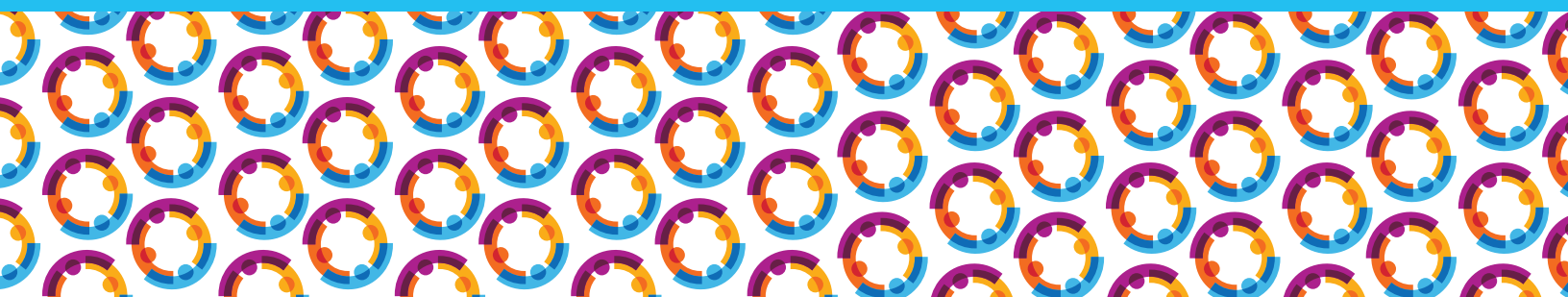
STRONG

Accountable Care Community

2022 Annual Report to the Region



Striving Toward Resilience and Opportunity for the Next Generation





2022 Annual Report to the Region



The STRONG ACC would like to extend special thanks and appreciation to Dr. Karen Schetzina for her leadership during her 2020-2022 term as chair. As a token of appreciation, the Leadership Council presented a plaque to Dr. Schetzina on February 9, 2023.



Dr. Karen Schetzina



From the chair

Welcome to our 2022 Annual Report to the Region! Please enjoy reading about our work and accomplishments. On behalf of the STRONG ACC Leadership Council, I am proud to announce that the state of the STRONG ACC is strong (forgive the pun) and growing.

As of the end of 2022, approximately 360 partner organizations signed on to be part of our regional resilience-building work. Our partners come from a wide variety of sectors and are committed to working together to build equitable pathways for the next generation to thrive and reach their full potential. Our motto says it all: Together we are STRONG!

As COVID-19 presented new challenges and exacerbated existing disparities, in late 2021 we decided it was time to refresh our strategic agenda. Over the course of many months and with input from hundreds of partners, our Leadership Council developed and adopted a new mission statement and six new goals covering our prenatal to early post-secondary continuum of care, education and experiences. In addition, during our 2022 Regional Symposium, the partners in attendance worked on what became our new vision statement. Each of these foundational statements are featured in this 2022 Annual Report to the Region.

I want to thank you, our valued partners, for your continued support and engagement with each other through the STRONG ACC. I want to express appreciation for our dedicated staff who keep us organized and moving forward, ever mindful of the five pillars of successful Collective Impact work. I want to commend my fellow Leadership Council members for their continued excellence in setting direction and policy, for championing the STRONG ACC to others in the region and for being the collegial and cohesive group they are! I was honored to be elected to serve as chair of this body starting in 2023 and will do my best to lead and facilitate this amazing group of leaders.

Finally, I want to extend my deep appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Karen Schetzina for her service as 2020-2022 Leadership Council Chair. From all of us, we thank you, Karen!

Sincerely,
Dr. Dennis Carter
Leadership Council Chair



Leadership Council

The STRONG ACC is governed by a Leadership Council of 24 members, 12 Virginians and 12 Tennesseans. This governing body sets our purpose and direction. Representatives of our backbone partners, Ballad Health and United Way of Southwest Virginia, are also active on the Leadership Council.

Patrick Brunty

Russell County Department of Social Services

Claudia Byrd

Speedway Children's Charities

Dennis Carter, EdD. - Chair

Smyth County Public Schools

Andi Clements, PhD

Uplift Appalachia

Nancy Dishner, EdD

Niswonger Foundation

Jennifer Ellison

Cocke County Cradle to Career Coalition

Rebekah English

Northeast Tennessee Regional Health Office

Margaret Feierabend

Appalachian Promise Alliance

Lori Hamilton

Food City

Kristie Hammonds - Vice Chair

Frontier Health

Donna Henry, PhD

University of Virginia's College at Wise

Marty Holliday

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board

Paula Masters, DrPH

Ballad Health

Dan Minahan

Crutchfield Corporation

Linda Nelms, PhD

Walters State Community College

Erika Phillips

Hawkins County School System

Sandy Ratliff

Virginia Community Capital

Beth Rhinehart

Bristol Chamber of Commerce

Karen Schetzina, MD

ETSU Academic Pediatrics

Kiran Singh Sirah

International Storytelling Center

Chase Stewart

Communities in Schools of the Appalachian Highlands

Travis Staton

United Way of Southwest Virginia

Teresa Tyson, DNP

The Health Wagon

Kathy Waugh

YWCA of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia

Kris Westover, EdD

Mountain Empire Community College

Tammy Wilson

TN Voices







From the director

We are pleased to share the 2022 Annual Report to the Region in the hope that it informs and inspires you to continue working together through the STRONG ACC.

We accomplished a lot in 2022 and much of what was done is going to propel the work forward. The refreshing of our regional agenda (i.e., mission, vision and regional goals) was a significant inflection point for the STRONG ACC that positions us to move ahead with greater clarity, focus and accountability.

In 2023 we will take steps to update our structure in keeping with the Collective Impact dictum that “form follows function.” We will continue to strengthen and hone our ability to communicate the STRONG ACC story and agenda in a way that unites and inspires partners to work together. We will work to help partners align with (or identify opportunities to align with) one or more strategies in pursuit of our regional goals, collaborate with other partners where it makes sense, and share accountability for results and outcomes. In doing all of this, we will continue to learn and master the art of Collective Impact.

In closing, I want to take a moment to thank our backbone partners, Ballad Health and United Way of Southwest Virginia, who have been with us since our founding in 2018. We are especially grateful to Ballad Health for serving as our primary fiscal agent and providing resources to cover personnel costs; HR; technology; population health data; and marketing and communications. I also want to express my personal thanks to our dynamic duo of Brittany Boles and Heather Logan for their amazing work every day and the collaborative, congenial manner in which they go about it. Onward and upward!

Together we are STRONG,
Mark Cruise
Director, STRONG ACC



What is the STRONG ACC?

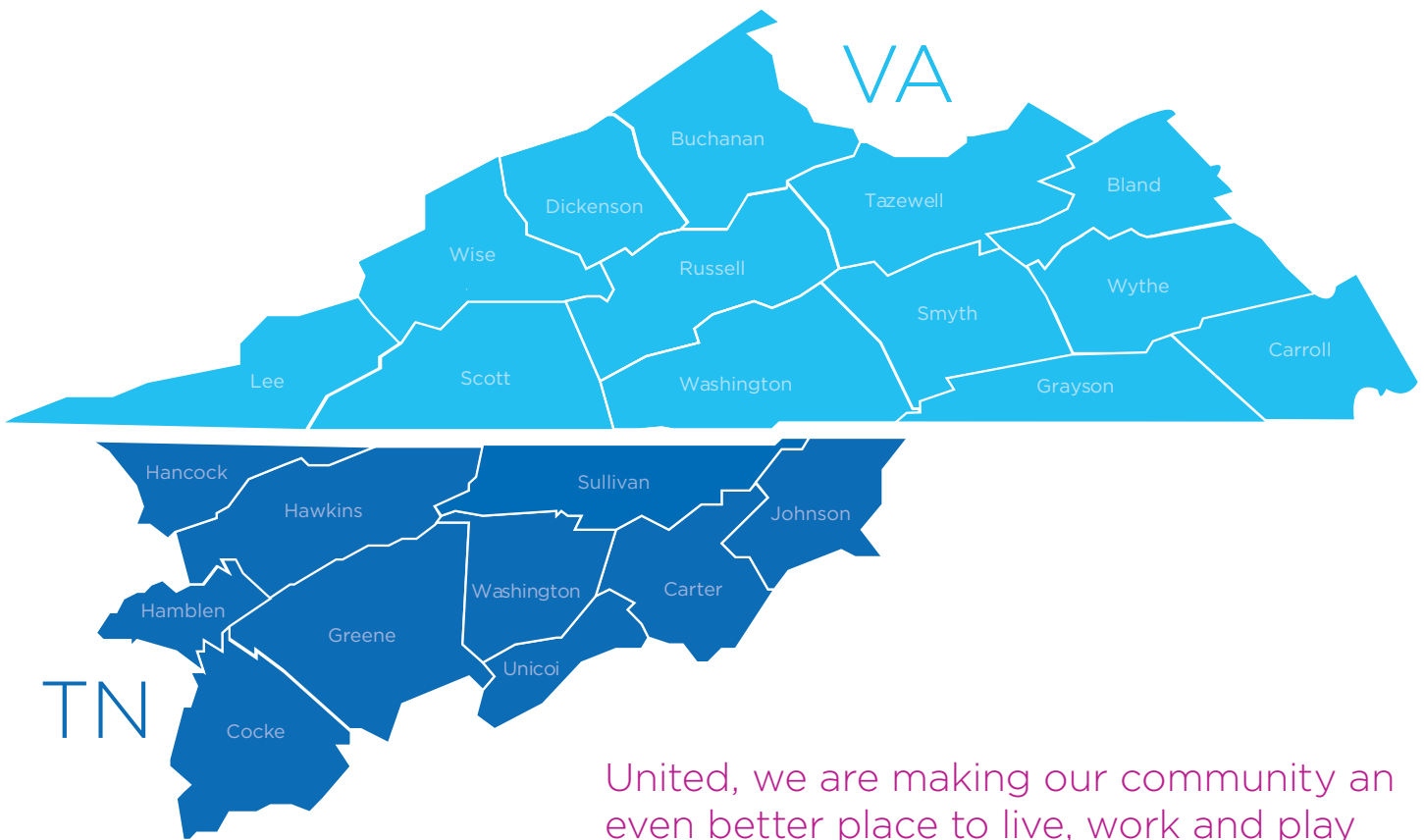
The STRONG Accountable Care Community is an independent, multi-sector collective impact coalition serving the 23-county region of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. We focus on enhancing supportive systems, programs, policies and environments that nurture children, teens and families to ensure they reach their full potential. People in STRONG ACC partner organizations are your friends and neighbors.

Our mission

To improve physical, social and economic health in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia, especially for economically disadvantaged children and their families.

Our vision

A region where people and communities are connected, valued and engaged, and everyone is healthy and thriving.



United, we are making our community an even better place to live, work and play – not just today, but for years to come. Together, we are **STRONG**.

Special thanks to Ballard Health for its resources that help provide the infrastructure needed to operate the STRONG ACC’s collective impact work.

**STRONG ACC
Backbone
Partners**



United Way of Southwest Virginia



Our why

It is our belief that to truly bend the curve toward health and wellbeing in our region, we must invest in everything that helps children and young people thrive and achieve their full potential. The acronym STRONG stands for **Striving Toward Resilience and Opportunity for the Next Generation**. Ultimately, we are seeking to raise the Next Generation to be economically independent, because of the preponderance of evidence showing a direct link between income and health, well-being and life expectancy. As a consequence, we are heavily focused on economically disadvantaged children and their families.



Northeast State Community College (2022)



Smyth County Library (2022)



Tennessee High School Culinary Arts (2022)

“The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Never have I understood the power and importance of Aristotle’s definition of synergy more than through the work of the STRONG Accountable Care Community. A region empowered to impact through collaboration. Now, there’s a blueprint for the future!”

Dr. Nancy Dishner
President & CEO
Niswonger Foundation

What is Collective Impact?

There are five common pillars to Collective Impact: a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication and backbone organization. It was decided early on that following the collective impact approach was our best chance to bring about sustainable change and improvement for our 23-county region.



Networking during the 2022 Regional Symposium

We recognize how centering equity transforms Collective Impact. Our Equity Impact Committee, appointed by the Leadership Council in November 2022, will assess needs and develop and recommend goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the STRONG ACC's structure, policies, practices, partnerships, staffing, communications, common agenda, goals and initiatives. They will also oversee the communication and implementation of DEI goals and strategies, and facilitate dialogue and coordination with other DEI activities in the region.



Uplift Appalachia is fortunate to be among the organizations that make up the STRONG ACC. We work to equip and mobilize the faith community to foster health and build a caring workforce that can be helpful to other organizations. Being a part of the STRONG ACC allows us to connect with many organizations, helping all of us to communicate, collaborate and reduce duplication of effort. We are honored to be able to facilitate incorporation of faith-based efforts to address the needs in our region.

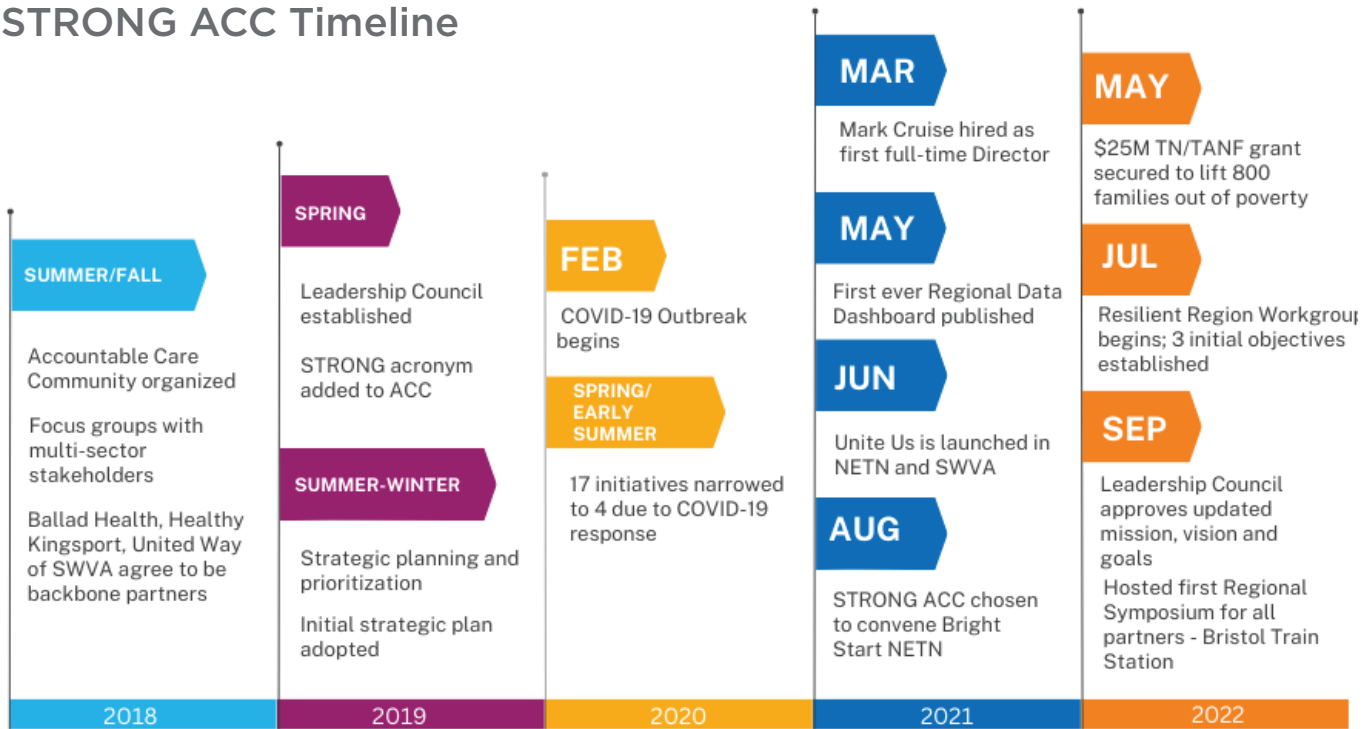
Dr. Andi Clements
Co-Founder and President
Uplift Appalachia

Breakout Session at the 2022 Regional Symposium



How far we've come

STRONG ACC Timeline



“The STRONG ACC’s work has been instrumental in bringing together the business community, chambers of commerce, education, healthcare and others around the common goal to improve the health of our region. Starting early matters and that’s exactly what the STRONG ACC is all about with their early care and education work in the region. I am excited to see the positive impact it will make for our children and families in the years to come.”

Miles Burdine
President & CEO, Kingsport Chamber

Resilient Region Initiative

Vision

A region (SWVA and NETN) in which all communities and major sectors are trained and utilizing trauma-informed, resilience-based practices.

Key strategies

A. Disseminating information

Compile, maintain and publish a regional directory of ACEs/trauma/resilience trainers, networks and resources on the STRONG ACC website, with assistance from Strong BRAIN Institute. Targeted messaging and communications will drive traffic to the site.

Rationale: The 23-county region of SWVA and NETN currently lacks such a centralized repository. The STRONG ACC is uniquely positioned to fill this void.

B. Socializing leaders

Engage and inform chief executives about the operational and bottom-line value of trauma-informed, resilience-based principles/practices in meeting the needs of their organizations and those they serve. Priority sectors include early childhood, public education, higher education, large employers, healthcare, behavioral health, public health, social services and public safety.

Rationale: Changing behavior on the front lines (with patients, clients, employees, students, etc.) starts with leadership education and buy-in. Armed with knowledge, decision-makers and managers can allocate the resources necessary to institute trauma-informed, restorative practices.

C. Equipping communities

Inspire and support communities in building cross-sector, collaborative approaches for preventing and mitigating trauma and building resilience. Maintain and update the Building a Trauma-Informed System of Care toolkit for use. Promote the Trauma-Informed Workplace Recognition certificate with TN employers and something similar for VA employers. Offer resources for expert consultation and assistance as needed.

Rationale: Local, cross-sector, systemic approaches - such as we've seen in Smyth County, Virginia - have unique potential to drive the development of trauma-informed, resilience-based practices. Real progress is possible when respected, trauma-informed leaders have a vision, bring others to the table and model the behavior they want to see unfold in their community.

Resilient Region Workgroup Partners



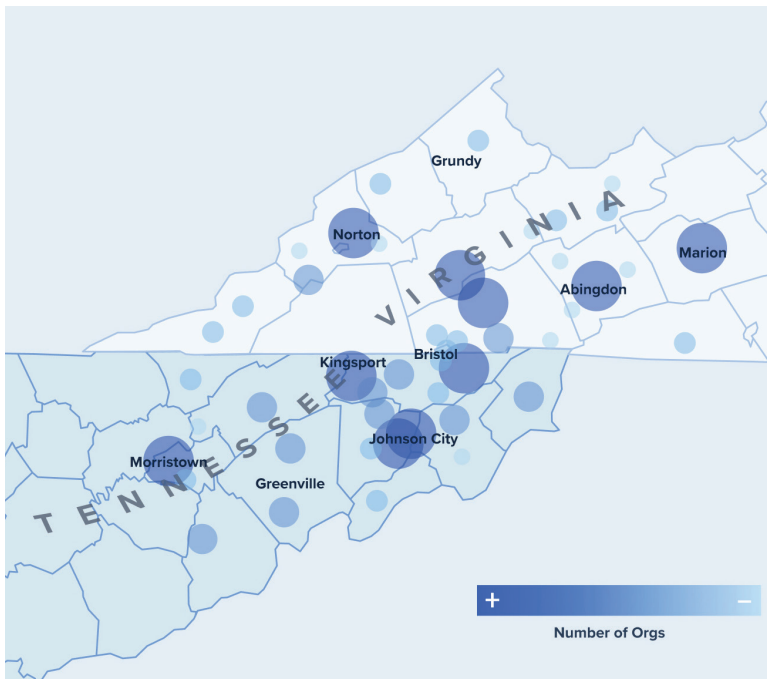
United Way of Southwest Virginia



NETN Trauma Responsive Care Network

Expansion of Unite Us network

2022 was a big year for Unite Us in our region! Unite Us brings sectors together through technology to ensure people's needs are met through a coordinated care network. After launching Unite Us in mid-2021, we've continued to see growth and excitement around the platform. In 2022 alone, 50+ community organizations were added to Unite Us, 1,400 social care referrals were created, and nearly 1,000 clients were served through the coordinated care network. The Unite Us team also attended and/or participated in many collaborative sessions including the STRONG ACC Regional Symposium, community information meetings and our monthly User Group sessions to share network updates, tech tips and best practices. We're excited for all that's to come in 2023!



 50+
community organizations added

 1,400
social care referrals

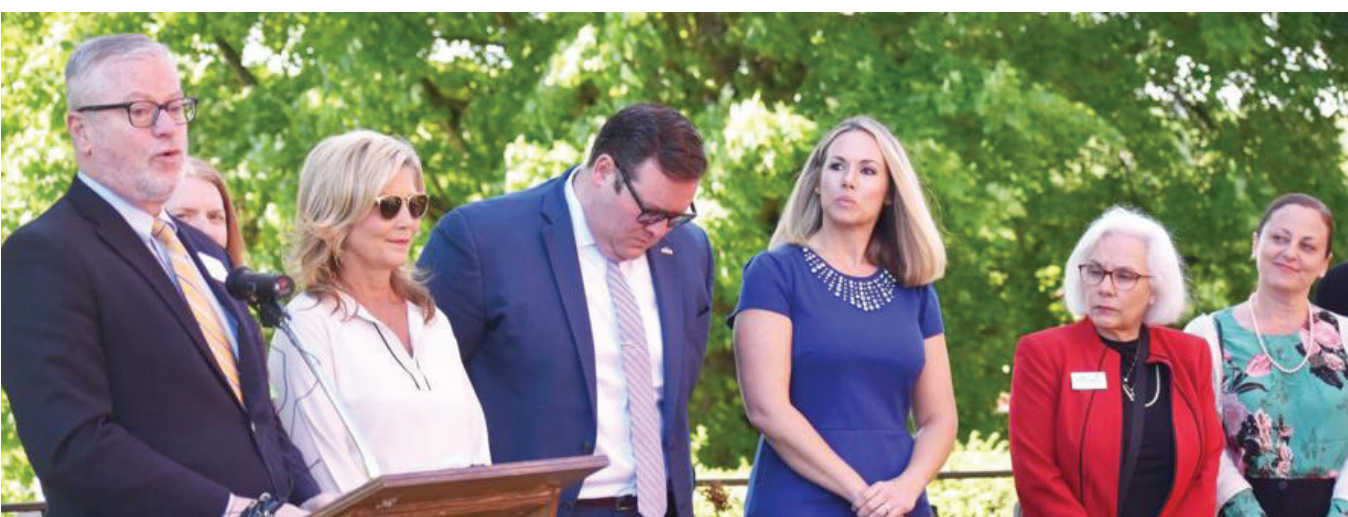
 1,000
clients served

Grant secured for STRONG Families NETN

Families matter, as do resources to help families thrive. One of our proudest accomplishments to date has been in securing one of seven three-year \$25 million Tennessee Opportunity Pilot Initiative grants from the Tennessee Department of Human Services. DHS was looking for collaborative partnerships to develop and test new and innovative strategies to help build family capacity and stability while reducing government dependency. Because of the STRONG ACC's success in uniting partners from multiple sectors around a common agenda, the Northeast region was well positioned to compete for one of these grants. And we were grateful to be awarded one in May 2022.

With the help of this grant, for which First Tennessee Development District is serving as the fiscal agent, the STRONG ACC will implement a pilot program called STRONG Families NETN that will comprise these program components:

- Family partner services
- Financial support
- Behavioral health services
- Specialized training



“The STRONG ACC has been invaluable in connecting our smaller communities across the region to resources and partnerships that we would not have known were available. We are thankful for the collaboration and support that Johnson County has received from the STRONG ACC. It has been amazing to watch this group of diverse organizations grow and thrive and work together to create a better region for the next generation.”

Trish Burchette,
Executive Director
A.C.T.I.O.N. Coalition

Bright Start NETN strategic plan

In December 2022, the Bright Start NETN strategic plan was finalized after nearly two years of planning and analysis by a dedicated group of local educators, early childhood professionals, community leaders and other stakeholders who make up the Bright Start NETN Partnership. Through multiple town hall meetings and other stakeholder engagement activities, the Bright Start NETN Steering Committee incorporated input from hundreds of teachers; family and child development experts; healthcare leaders and clinicians; and other community leaders and clinicians and other community leaders to prioritize eight strategies tailored to address the challenges and hone the strengths that are unique to early childhood growth and development in Northeast Tennessee.



Kingsport Child Development Center (2022)

☞ To have the most meaningful impact, a plan of action needs to be in motion before a child walks through the door of their kindergarten classroom, and our Bright Start Northeast Tennessee plan aims to do just that. We're excited to work with the STRONG ACC and numerous partner organizations to implement the plan.

Kathy Waugh
CEO of YWCA of NETN & SWVA
Co-Chair of Bright Start NETN
Steering Committee









Currently, only about twenty five percent of economically disadvantaged children in Northeast Tennessee are on-track in reading and math by third grade. The Bright Start NETN's three-year plan seeks to increase that percentage to forty percent by 2025.

STRONG ACC 2.0

In November 2021 the STRONG ACC Leadership Council, in light of COVID-19’s impact and other factors, embarked on a process to update the STRONG ACC’s regional agenda to better reflect our prenatal to postsecondary, trauma-informed approach to ensuring success for the Next Generation.

Thanks to input from hundreds of partner organizations, dozens of subject matter experts, and countless hours of committee and workgroup meetings, updated mission and vision statements and new goals (noted below) were adopted in September 2022!

| Great Beginnings | Thriving at 5 | Early Grade Success | Supported and Connected Youth | Workforce Ready/ College Bound Graduates | Economically Independent Young Adults |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Infants are born at a healthy birth weight; unexposed to substances; reside in safe, stable, nurturing environments; and have at least one parent/ caregiver equipped to be their first teacher. | 5-year-olds are physically, socially and emotionally healthy, and ready to learn. | By the end of 3rd grade, students are demonstrating reading and math skills. | Middle and high school students are fully supported in their development; trained in life skills and essential skills; and exposed to a wide range of potential careers. | High school graduates are ready for college or postsecondary training, or are ready to excel in the workforce. | 25-year-olds are earning good wages and benefits, and are actively involved in their community. |

New steering committees

Beginning in 2023, the Regional “Ready from the Start” Steering Committee (early care and education; goals 1-3) and Regional “Pathways to Success” Steering Committee (youth success/workforce development; goals 4-6) will be established to begin strategy development work.

Membership on these committees will be comprised of respected leaders from across multiple sectors who can drive change in their own organizations as well as influence others in doing the same.

Steering committees will have support from the backbone staff and will have the ability to establish workgroups and/or action teams.



2022 Regional Symposium

On September 28, 200 attendees from STRONG ACC partner organizations gathered at the Bristol Train Station for the first in-person partners meeting in almost three years! The jam-packed day included networking, breakout sessions and panels, all with the goal of advancing our regional work and striving toward resilience and opportunity for the next generation.

One of the breakout sessions was a fun, hands-on tabletop experience - The Brain Architecture Game. Through this experience, participants built an understanding of the powerful role of experiences in early brain development and how various organizations, sectors and people can help develop a strong structure for young children's brains.

A few of the region's leaders shared our strengths and how to continue striving toward our fullest potential. Each organization was challenged to be innovative in creating solutions to the challenges we face and collaborate with other organizations through our collective impact work.



2022 Regional Symposium Together we are STRONG!



2022 Resilience Awards

At the Regional Symposium, the STRONG ACC presented the 2022 Resilience Awards to three partner organizations and three individuals whose stories, actions and outcomes exemplify what it means to be resilient.

Congratulations 2022 Organizational Award Winners



Carter County Drug Prevention

Congratulations 2022 Individual Award Winners



Nicole Cullop, Girls Inc. of Bristol



Greater Kingsport Family YMCA



Glenda Bolinsky, Inman Village Community Nourishment Project



YWCA of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia



Martha Dixon, Upper East Tennessee Human Development Agency

Backbone staff (2022)

The STRONG ACC backbone team is committed to creating and sustaining systemic change to improve the physical, social and economic health of the region. A robust backbone team is a critical condition of the collective impact approach.



Mark Cruise, MDiv
Director



Brittany Boles, MPH
Community
Engagement
Specialist



Heather Logan, MA, Ed.S.
Community
Engagement
Specialist

🗨️ The STRONG Accountable Care Community is a tremendous asset to our region. It provides a collaborative approach to addressing local issues by bringing the experts in various fields together to work on solutions. Their commitment to tackling our region's biggest challenges through open communication and partnership is a great tool in building a strong and healthy community. Wellspring Foundation of Southwest Virginia is pleased to be a partner in the STRONG Accountable Care Community.

Sean McMurray
Executive Director
Wellspring Foundation



STRONG

Accountable Care Community

