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July 16, 2015

Parsons Child and Family Center, an affiliate agency of Northern Rivers Family Services, is pleased to commit to joining with our Capital Region colleagues in support of the University's application for funding through the (MARC) initiative.

As a member of the HEARTS Initiative, we are eager to contribute to an effective ACE resilience movement in our Region. The established HEARTS network is evidence of our continued pursuit for a shared understanding of ACEs and their impact on those we serve and those who do the serving. As providers, we build resilience through our programs while seeking to develop greater community resilience to ACEs.

The Sidney Albert Training and Research Institute (SATRI) at Parsons currently collaborates with interested county commissioners, directors, and school superintendents to bring an enhanced model of the Mental Health First Aid USA program to the community. This 8-hour course introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health concerns, builds understanding of their impact, and overviews common treatments through role playing and simulations.

As a key next step contributing to the ACE resilience movement, Parsons will add an ACE-informed component to its Mental Health First Aid training program. The goal is to increase awareness with our community partners (health, public schools, early childhood networks, media, and police) of the impact of ACEs. Knowing this training can reach over 100 people, we expect to engage many more community members in designing ways to prevent ACEs and the lasting harmful effects they can have.

Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments for all children and families can prevent child maltreatment. And, increasing factors that protect children can reduce ACEs and their consequences. Building community resilience to ACEs means influencing individual behaviors, family and neighbor relationships, community involvement, and societal culture. As a recognized leader in our sector with carefully developed ACE-informed programs, we have broad dissemination and influence with our ACE resilience knowledge. By explicitly infusing ACE resilience content into the Mental Health First Aid Training, we will employ a type of prevention strategy focused on supporting the necessary attitude change and societal norms to create safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children.

Sincerely,



Audrey LaFrenier, LCSW  
Chief Operating Officer