

November 21, 2017

A child's first five years of life are the most critical period for brain development. Some children experience adversity that impacts healthy brain development. This impact on the brain can lead to changes in physical, emotional, and behavioral health. Research has demonstrated long-term and devastating impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences. But, children are resilient and can thrive despite trauma in their lives if the right supports are in place in their family and their community.

Recognizing childhood trauma has become a necessary component of shaping policy to improve child outcomes. Recognizing that children – and adults – are experiencing trauma, many child-serving systems now aim to become “trauma-informed” and put measures into place to strengthen the resilience of the youth they impact – to help improve outcomes for children from early childhood education to schools to foster care and the juvenile justice system.

Over the last year, policymakers across Virginia have become more aware of trauma informed policy. We are encouraged by the work happening through the Fairfax County Trauma-Informed Community Network and their counterparts in other communities throughout Virginia. We have reached a pivotal moment to build on this momentum.

**Fairfax County is building strong brains by addressing childhood trauma. The undersigned organizations thank the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for their commitment to continuing the work building lasting foundations for county residents through trauma-informed practices and service delivery models.**

**We share this commitment and we look forward to the work together so that local families, and families across the Commonwealth of Virginia, have opportunities to succeed.**

Autumnleaf Group, Inc.  
Campagna Center  
CHADD NoVa/DC  
Cornerstones  
Creative Play School  
Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)  
Falls Church-McLean Children's Center  
Formed Families Forward  
Hopkins House  
Infant Toddler Family Day Care  
Inova Health System  
Inova Kellar Center  
Main Street Child Development Center  
Northern Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children  
Northern Virginia Family Service  
Nurture Child and Family, PLLC  
Pathfinder Coaching and Tutoring, LLC  
Reston Children's Center  
SafeSpot Child Advocacy Center

Second Story (formerly Alternative House)  
Seven Corners Children's Center  
Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) of Northern Virginia  
The Arc of Northern Virginia  
United Community Ministries (UCM)  
Voices for Virginia's Children