

2018 - 2019  
REPORT



*KITSAP*  
**Strong**  
Helping all people flourish



Dear friends,

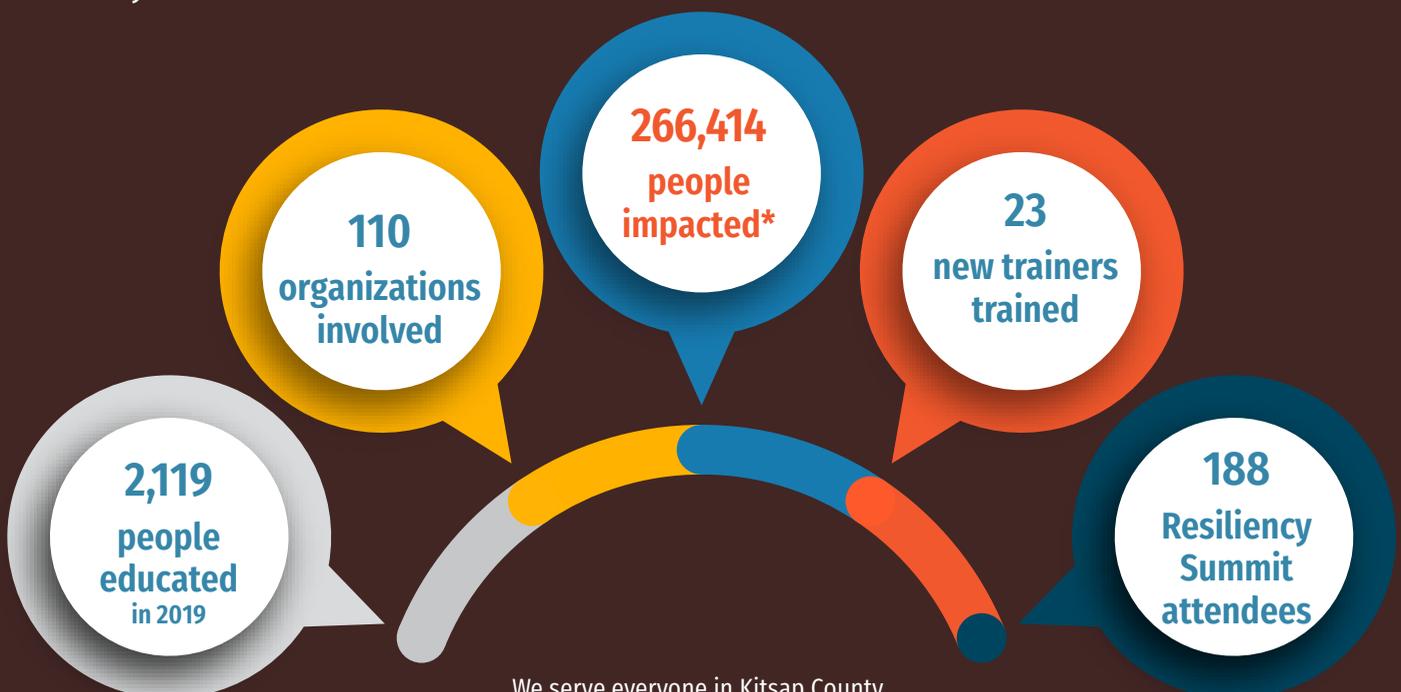
In 2015, I joined the newly created Kitsap Strong organization to improve the health and well-being of all children, families, and adults in Kitsap County. But the roots of Kitsap Strong run deep in our community and we are building upon decades of excellent work focused on improving health & safety outcomes for children and families.

In this report you will see that it truly takes the entire community, coming together, to make this happen. Kitsap Strong refers to the over 110 participating organizations, schools, and community leaders working together to help each member of our community flourish. Every human in our community can be a leader in this movement. We value diversity of thought and encourage relationships across difference, because we believe that to create a more equitable and inclusive community we need all voices. We believe the wisdom exists within our community to build equity and resilience for all to flourish.

Kitsap Strong's Collective Impact Initiative is in the early years of development. We have successfully assembled some key groups, developed action plans and strategies, and are responding to the emerging challenges and opportunities. We seek to follow the energy in our community as we continue to build a movement that prevents adversity and supports the flourishing of each person. Please join us!

With excitement for what lies ahead....

Cheers,  
Kody



We serve everyone in Kitsap County.

# Kitsap Strong

is a coalition of more than 110 organizations that are working together to improve the quality of life in Kitsap County.

## Our shared agenda:

Kitsap Strong is a movement, a group of community leaders working to prevent and overcome childhood trauma by building a culture of empathy, equity, and connection.

## Our funders help make the difference

Kitsap Community Foundation  
The Suquamish Tribe  
United Way of Kitsap County  
Kitsap Public Health District  
Olympic College  
CHI Franciscan  
Philanthropy Northwest



## Kitsap Strong Leadership Committee

Calvary Chapel Silverdale | Harrison Health Partners | Kitsap Community Foundation  
Kitsap Community Resources | Kitsap County | Kitsap County Dept. of Human Services | Kitsap County Prosecutor's Office  
Kitsap Mental Health Services | Kitsap Public Health District | Kitsap Rescue Mission | Marvin Williams Center | Navy Fleet & Family Support Program | OESD 114 | Olympic College | Peninsula Com. Health Services | Port Gamble S'Klallam Re-Entry Program | Suquamish Foundation  
The Suquamish Tribe United Way of Kitsap County | WSU ExtensionXParenting | YMCA

## Backbone Staff

Kody Russell, Executive Director  
Alyson Rotter, Graduate Strong Network  
Jess Sappington & Karen Boysen-Knapp, H.E.A.L. Network  
Cristina Roark, Innovation (TIC) Network  
Marlaina Simmons, NEAR Education Network

## Contact Us

Kitsap Strong  
345 6th St, Suite 300  
Bremerton, WA 98337  
info@kitsapstrong.org  
www.kitsapstrong.org



## What is Kitsap Strong?

A movement of more than 110 organizations that have come together to work on preventing childhood trauma and helping people – children and adults – who’ve experienced it. Through a collective effort called Kitsap Strong, these groups are working together to find creative ways to shift community dynamics in order to foster hope and self-healing.

Kitsap Strong also works to share new brain science with our community. Over the past five years, we’ve shared this information with over 7,600 people directly, and we estimate that well over 370,000 others have interacted with organizations and community groups that are studying this science with Kitsap Strong and making changes to their services. Dozens of organizations have made dramatic changes in the way they interact with their clients because of a new understanding of how trauma impacts the brain and what we all need to feel safe, connected, seen, and heard.

Kitsap Strong helps people prevent and overcome childhood trauma by:



Creating school and life success



Working with organizations to create a culture of empathy and connection



Promoting nutrition and physical health



Sharing new science about our brains and our bodies



Neighbors supporting one another



## Our approach

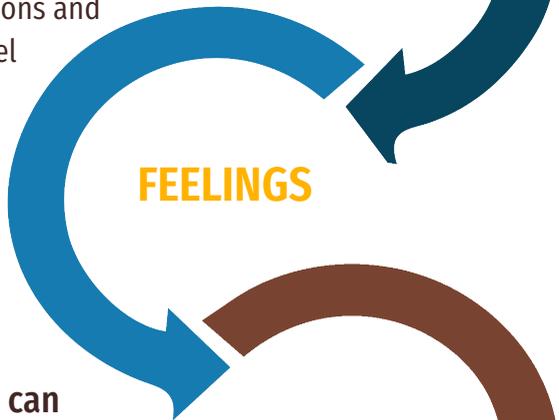
### We believe that if we can...

Change how organizations and people think



### Then we can

Change how organizations and people feel



### Then we can

Change how organizations and people "do what they do"



### Then we can

Help all individuals in our community thrive

**OUTCOMES**

## Preventing childhood trauma

The path to preventing childhood trauma begins with education. As stated by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, "ACEs and their associated harms are preventable," and that prevention begins with education.

**7,618 People Educated**



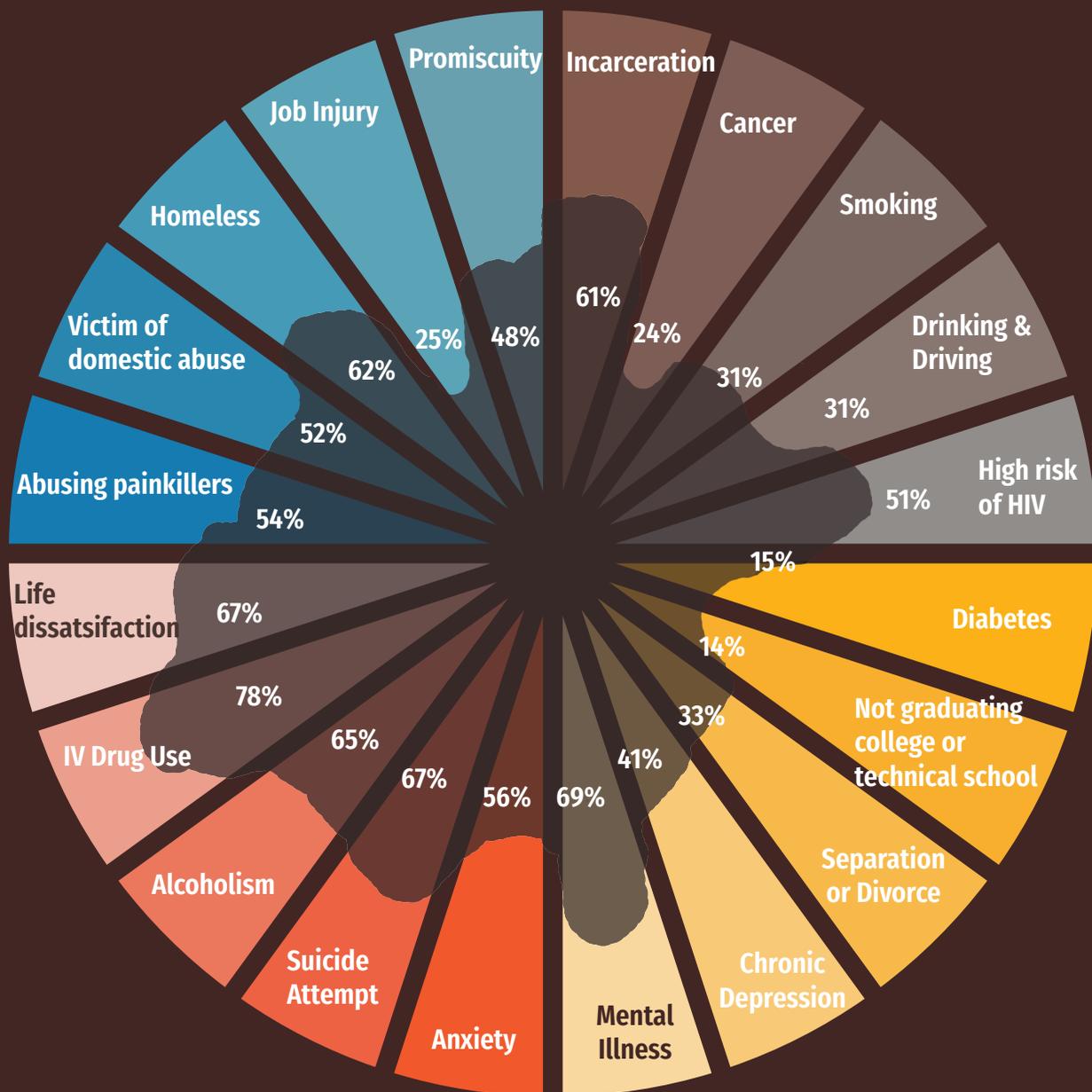
Since 2015, Kitsap Strong has been conducting Collaborative Learning Academies, year-long, in-depth work groups for organizations and school teams that want to help their work places become trauma-informed.

To date, 67 organization teams and 17 school teams have taken part, meeting monthly for a deep dive into the science of trauma and hope.

# Childhood Trauma: the root cause of most of society's problems

Childhood trauma is the root cause of most of the serious problems that people in our area face. Everything from chronic health problems to high divorce rates, drug abuse, depression, and homelessness have been linked to traumas in childhood—and the more traumas a person has had, the higher his or her risk for major challenges in adulthood.

**Through prevention of ACEs in children & building resiliency with adults we could eliminate:**



**37% of Kitsap residents report having 3 or more ACEs.**

Based on 2011 BRFSS data.

# Resilience: building hope

By building relationships, cultivating well being, and developing adaptive coping skills, we can transform a potentially toxic event into a tolerable one.

The latest brain science offers hope for people who've experienced childhood trauma. It turns out that connections with other people, self-regulation techniques, and good food and exercise can counteract the damaging affects of childhood trauma, both in children and adults.

Recent science has shown that making one important shift in the way we interact with people can result in huge differences with people who've suffered childhood trauma. The key is to put yourself into that person's shoes and try to see things through their eyes. Rather than ask "what's wrong with you," a more effective approach is to ask "what happened to you?" This important paradigm shift can make a tremendous difference to a person who's suffered childhood trauma.

A young girl with long, light brown hair is standing in a field of yellow daisies. She is wearing a pink sleeveless dress with a colorful floral pattern. She is looking down at something she is holding in her hands. The background is a lush green field with some white flowers and branches of a tree in the foreground.

“Resilience is everything.  
When we teach people to  
build resilience, we inspire  
hope and then we can  
change the world.”

– Robin Little Wing Sigo  
Treasurer,  
Suquamish Tribal Council  
Director, Suquamish  
Foundation

# The Ripple Effects of Kitsap Strong

Collective impact is fundamentally about collaboration and “doing together.” By taking the time to learn together, we alter the way we think about and solve community challenges. The impact of the Kitsap Strong Network Partners is felt through the changes that ripple through our community and our systems as result of this collaborative work.



In progress: If a law enforcement officer or Fire/EMS encounters a child during a call, that child’s name and three words, HANDLE WITH CARE, are forwarded to the school district before school the next day. The school implements individual, class and whole school trauma-sensitive curricula so that these children are, in fact, handled with care.



More Kitsap school districts have adopted official Social Emotional Learning plans.



The Washington State Healthy Youth Survey now includes questions about hope, which is the best predictor of future health outcomes.



Kitsap County Therapeutic Courts now focus on measuring and building hope with participants in the Adult Drug Court Program.



All employee contracts for Kitsap County now require that staff be trained in trauma informed care.



Thanks to partner advocacy, Washington State has new discipline rules that encourage schools to minimize suspensions and expulsions, end the practice of suspending students for absences or tardiness, prohibit expulsions for students grades K-4, and offer educational services to students who are suspended or expelled.



The Suquamish Tribe's Wellness Department is now trained in trauma informed care and reaches out to and trains tribal courts and police.



Kitsap County now has a Behavioral Health Court, a voluntary program that uses a non-adversarial approach to make treatment plans, identify resources, and help reduce recidivism. The court works with corrections, mental health and substance abuse treatment providers, probation services, law enforcement, and other community partners.



Peninsula Community Health Services now offers 4 school-based health clinics and 2 mobile health units that focus on behavioral health, providing care for substance use disorders, physical, & mental health.



Childhood trauma and resilience is now a topic of conversation among Bremerton Naval Shipyards workers.



18 organizations have trained more than 30 staff members to act as FASFA navigators, ready to help high school students with the process of applying for financial aid.



Numerous partners have adopted a focus on preventing childhood trauma, building resiliency and hope, and becoming trauma informed in their strategic plans, including Peninsula Community Health Services, Housing Kitsap, Kitsap Public Health District, Kitsap Community Resources, and Kitsap County Housing & Homeless Services.



# Empowering school & life success through equitable opportunities

**30%**

Percentage of our communities' students who earn a post-secondary credential

**70%**

Our goal by 2030.

\*Data Source: Washington State Education and Research Data Center (ERDC).

Many of the experiences and learning opportunities that shape a child's life occur outside of the classroom in our communities. Science tells us that children develop the individual capabilities they need to overcome challenges through growth-promoting experiences and connections with caring and competent adults. Graduate Strong is a community response designed to help students develop the capabilities, connections, and credentials they need to flourish.

As a community, we are focused on three major impact opportunities: capabilities, connections, and credentials.

## Capabilities

### Building Individual Capabilities through Powerful Connections

Students can't learn — teachers can't teach — when they don't feel safe, seen, and heard. Our emphasis is on helping school leaders understand the science of trauma and resilience and how we can build the individual capabilities that help each student and staff flourish. Leadership teams from 17 schools representing all 6 of our communities' school districts have taken part in our Collaborative Learning Academy (CLA) focused on trauma-sensitive school environments and social & emotional learning.

As a part of a CLA cohort, each school team spends more than a year learning about the science of trauma and resilience, sharing ideas for helping students and staff develop self-regulation skills, and begin implementing strategies for transforming the culture of their schools to better support each student and staff.

## Credentials

### Credential Oriented Community

For many students, the cost of post-secondary education is a significant barrier. Yet, in Washington State, 46% of students don't even complete the FAFSA or WASFA, the first step in receiving federal and/or state financial aid, effectively leaving \$50 million in educational aid on the table.

Financial Aid Navigators: A workgroup of Graduate Strong has trained 34 Navigators from 18 organizations and resources who are ready to help any student who wants assistance with applying for financial aid. With this robust community support, we hope that every student who qualifies for state and federal aid will apply for it.



## Connections

**Nurturing the gifts that make each child exceptional**

Children and youth need a community of caring adults to help them recognize their potential, identify their excellence, and envision their future. Through the CLA and Mentoring workgroup, we work with formal and informal mentors, teachers, and other caring adults to build their skills and capacity so they can help children recognize their potential and identify their excellence.

We connect educators to regulation-building skills and materials and provide equipment to schools that want to build resiliency skills in their students.

The “Welcome to the Real World” pilot program for middle and high school students lets students participate in a simulation event that empowers them to choose a career, manage their own “money,” and interact with community volunteers, building financial and life skills.

## Focus Areas

Building school and community capacity in the Kitsap region by focusing on strengths-based approaches:

Discipline Policies and Restorative Practices

Trauma Sensitive Schools

Attendance

Mentorship: Building Hope & Resilience

College Persistence

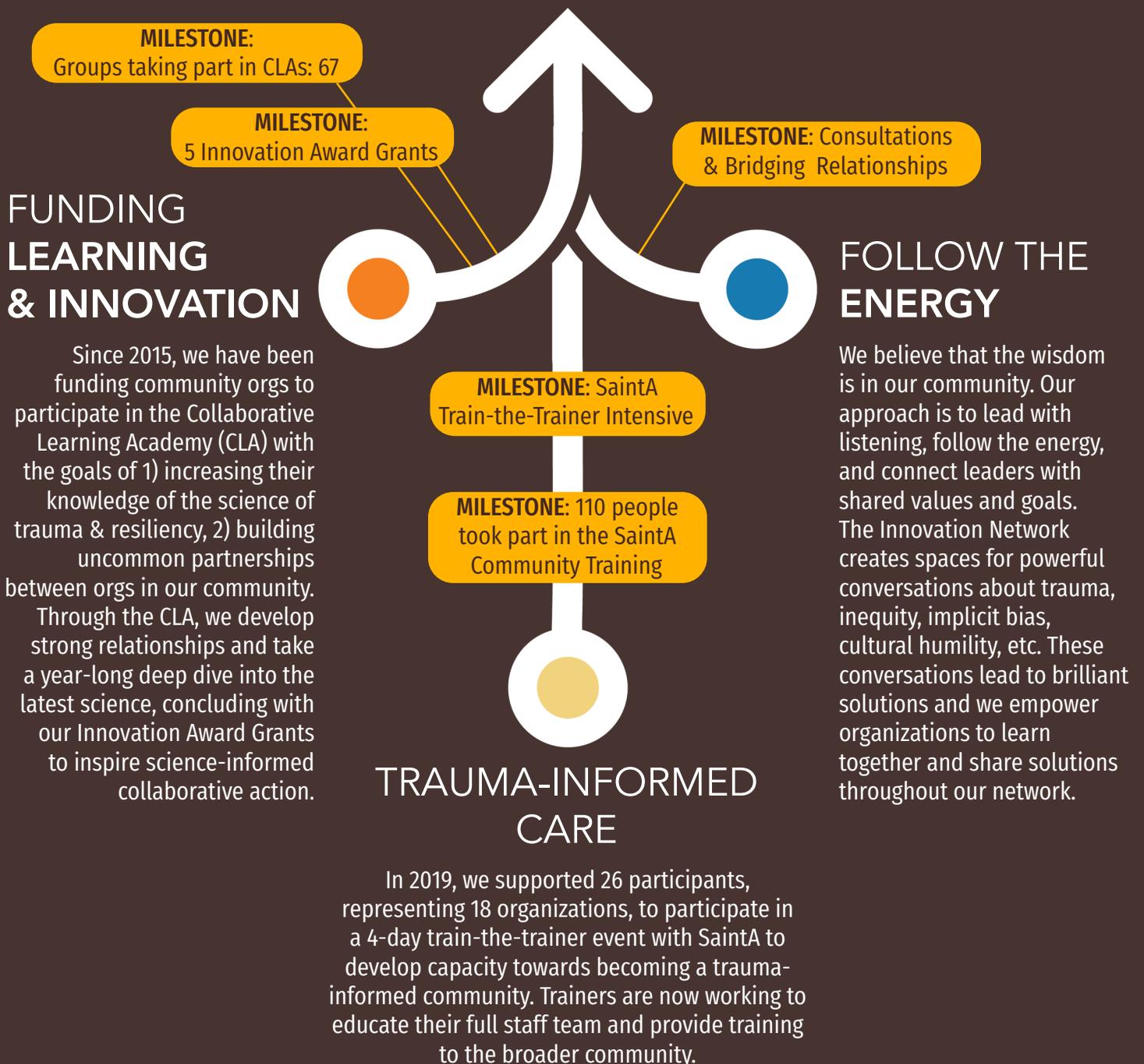
Credentials:  
Technical, 2-year, and 4-year Enrollment

Future Bound Action:  
College Bound Sign-Ups, Internships, Dual Credit Enrollment, and Financial Aid Completion



# Building a culture of empathy, equity and connection

Our goal is to create “brave spaces” for leaders of organizations to incorporate the science of trauma and resilience into their work and evaluate their services through the perspective of the clients they serve. We hope to inspire organizations to build a culture of empathy, equity, and connection for clients and staff, resulting in better outcomes and more effective services.



Organizations supported through this network are collaborating to build a trauma-informed community, focused on the core values of helping everyone feel safe, connected, and valued.

When organizations understand the effects of childhood trauma and change their methods to focus on these core values, they're able to improve outcomes in behavioral health, chronic disease management, pediatrics and primary care, criminal and juvenile justice, education, housing, welfare services, youth services, and child welfare.



**“Kitsap Strong’s approach is not only impacting individual lives, it is impacting the larger system.” – Sandra Allen, Client Services at Fishline**



**2018-2019 CLA Cohort**



# Promoting nutrition & physical health

## HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING (HEAL) NETWORK

We know that an individual's health is deeply connected to the community in which they live, work and play. To reduce obesity and its resulting impacts, we focus on policies, systems and environmental change strategies. By working together we can create change to support a healthier lifestyle for all.



In 2017, 40.2% of Kitsap adults were at a healthy weight (BMI=18.5-24.9)

Kitsap County Core Public Health Indicators, 12/2018



In 2018, 20% of Kitsap youth (grade 8) report eating 5 or more fruits/vegetables daily.

Washington State Healthy Youth Survey 2018

### KEY MEASURES

- ▶ Reduction in the prevalence of overweight and obesity among residents
- ▶ Increase in the percentage of residents who engage in regular physical activity.
- ▶ Increase in the percent of citizens who practice healthy eating habits

### STRATEGIES

- 🍏 Improve access to markets that sell or provide high quality fruits and vegetables in underserved communities.
- 🍏 Improve access to safe and affordable places for physical activity.
- 🍏 Provide opportunities to build skills and knowledge regarding healthy foods and beverages.
- 🍏 Establish policies & programs that increase physical activity.





## STRATEGY FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE



# Thriving Neighborhoods

## NEIGHBORS SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER

Day by day, we strive to improve how we listen to each voice in our community and create pathways for those voices to have influence on community resources.

We believe every member of our community can be a leader, so Kitsap Strong works to bring NEAR sciences to as many people as possible, empowering them to take hope-filled action in their lives.

Our Thriving Neighborhoods Network is still in its infancy. We are actively working to gather “natural leaders” to develop community goals and take collective action. Neighbors need to be able to identify the issues they want to tackle and receive support as they move forward. We’re very excited to be on the brink of putting this community-based and community-driven program into action.

### Partner Spotlight

For the past four years, Calvary Chapel Silverdale has partnered with Housing Kitsap through the Love The Neighborhood initiative to run an after-school homework club where children and caring adults work together on homework and a whole lot more.

Not only have the students’ grades improved, but both the children and the adults have enjoyed the supportive relationships they’ve built.

“As I began to get to know the kids and a few parents I’ve been enriched by sharing a bit of my life experience and seeing life and love through their eyes.” — Andrea Christianson, volunteer

# Kitsap Strong includes...



Big Brothers Big Sisters

