

A Year of Transitions... and Traditions





MENTAL
HEALTH



LITERACY



CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT

2021 was quite a year for the Cobb Collaborative. A year of new partnerships, new team members and new traditions as we continue to focus and strengthen our work in our three main initiatives: mental health, reading proficiency and civic engagement. But it was our foundation as the center of cross-sector collaboration in Cobb County that allowed us to bring new opportunities of engagement to our traditional organizational model – our strategy teams, our members, our Board and ultimately, our community members.



We invite you to celebrate 2021 with us in these pages and then to join us in 2022 as we continue to work together to improve outcomes for children and families in our community.

Irene M. Barton
Executive Director

SPONSORS

First Citizens Bank
Next Stage Advisors
The Insurance Connection

PARTNERS/FUNDERS

CareSource Foundation
Cobb & Douglas Public Health
Cobb Community Foundation
Cobb EMC Community
Foundation
East Cobb Civitan Foundation
Georgia Department of Early
Care & Learning
Greystone PowerUp
Foundation
Resilient Georgia
United Way of Greater Atlanta
WalMart Stores

458

people
attended
strategy team
meetings

49

people
attended
networking
Coffees

172

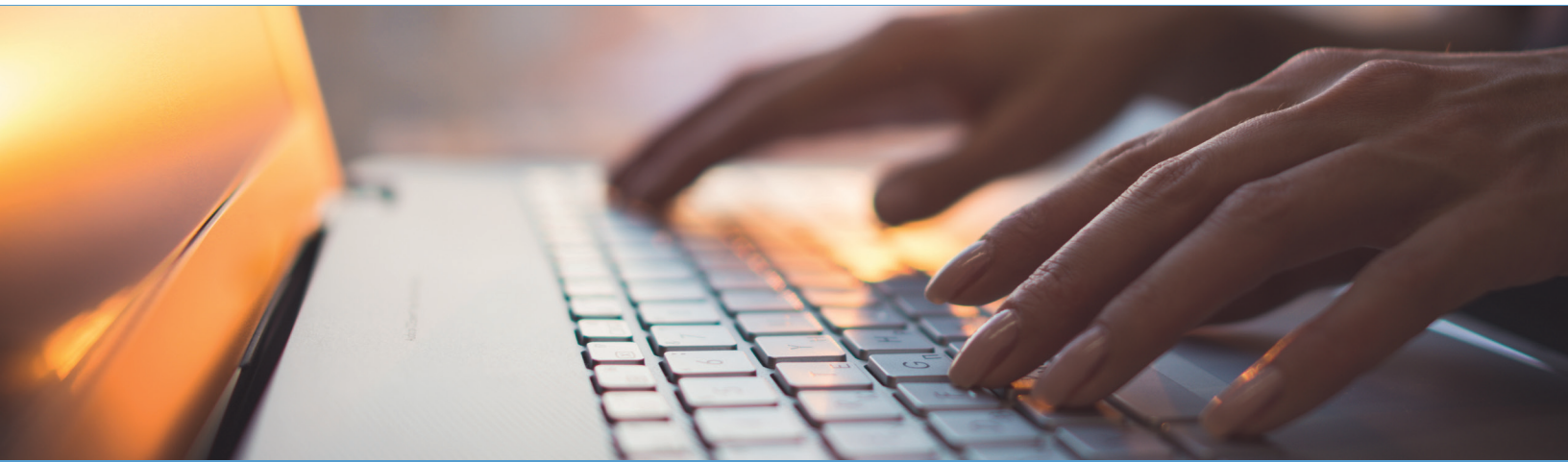
people
attended
quarterly
general
membership
meetings

184

people
attended
trainings in
nonprofit best
practices and
community
engagement

1

new
full-time
Program
Director



We were selected as a member of the Financial Information Network. As a member of Candid.org's nationwide network of libraries, community foundations, and other nonprofit agencies, the Cobb Collaborative is able to provide visitors with free public access to Candid's products, services and resources. Nonprofit professionals and other grantseekers are able to access the Foundation Directory Online Professional database, Grants to Individuals and other resources to further their missions.

Our Mission:

Engaging, Educating and Empowering the community to improve the well-being of children and families.

Our Vision:

Cobb County partners working together to create opportunities for all people to thrive.



IMPROVING LITERACY IN COBB COUNTY



Little Free Library "21 in 2021 Campaign"

Driven by the motivation of increasing access to books to improve reading achievement, the Collaborative set a goal of installing 21 Little Free Libraries across Cobb County in 2021. The goal was achieved and was a quintessential collaborative effort, with support from partners including Cobb County School District, Marietta City Schools, United Way of Greater Atlanta Northwest Region, American Opportunity Foundation, Scout troops, businesses, civic associations and Greystone Power Operation Roundup. Additionally, countless supporters donated new and gently used books to help fill and maintain the Little Free Libraries.



Literacy and Justice For All

We were named part of a collaborative initiative working to create a language-centered ecosystem and learning environment within the City of Marietta and Marietta City Schools for children from birth to grade 3. The goal of the "Literacy and Justice for All" grant is to use a community-wide commitment to the science of reading to empower every child in Marietta to be a proficient reader by the end of third grade.

The Cobb Collaborative leads a broad-based communications strategy to engage community stakeholders. Additionally, we engage "Literacy Ambassador" volunteers from each Marietta City Schools elementary campus. Ambassadors share their unique perspective as parents, family members and caregivers of current students with other families and are a "trusted voice" to their peers. Ambassadors are champions for their school, Marietta City Schools and the Literacy & Justice For All initiative. They are an integral piece of the process of bringing educators and community leaders together to tackle the issue of literacy and helping every child be on a path of reading proficiency and ultimately – leading a life of self-determination.

BIRTH - 5 SPOTLIGHT

During November our youngest learners are exploring these two questions: "When does my bedtime start?" "Why does my mommy read to me?"

K - 3 SPOTLIGHT

As part of the Literacy and Justice for All grant, some HCS educators are providing their professional learning partners. This is a great model for the work that is being done across the district.

AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT

EMMY STATION

Emmy Station is a Marietta teacher and graduate from Marietta City Schools who has been named as a 2021 Literacy Ambassador. She is currently a 2nd grade teacher at Marietta City Schools.

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Pop-In at the Marietta Museum of History Books

The Marietta Museum of History will be holding its monthly Pop-In event on Saturday, November 20th from 10:00am-2:00pm. This is a fantastic opportunity for the community to visit the museum and see the exhibits.

WELLNESS TIP

EXERCISE YOUR MIND

Your mind is the center to your body and your soul. It requires proper maintenance. Your brain is a powerful thing. Your mind is not only used for concentration, but also for decision-making and problem-solving.

The Basics

In the spring of 2021, the Cobb Collaborative was selected as one of only 10 sites across Georgia to bring The Basics collective impact model to our community. This nationally recognized literacy improvement strategy is grounded in five evidence-based parenting and caregiver principles that support social, emotional and cognitive development of children from ages birth to three. The principles combine scientific rigor with a broad coverage of key domains of early-childhood development and are simple enough to commit to memory for efficient program implementation:



Maximize Love, Manage Stress

Talk, Sing and Point

Count, Group and Compare

Explore through Movement and Play

Read and Discuss Stories

Incredibly, the human brain doubles in size in the first year. It keeps growing to about 80% of adult size by age 3 and 90% by age 5. That's why the earliest years are critical to developing strong readers and engaged students and why we work so diligently to engage parents and caregivers as their child's first teacher.



We distributed 4,880 books through our LFLs,
pop up book give aways & community tabletop events.



MENTAL
HEALTH

Mental Health

As the effects of the pandemic continue to impact our community and its members in many ways, the work of our mental health initiative MIND YOUR MIND, became even more important. We became a regional coalition partner with Resilient Georgia, which works to align public and private efforts and resources across the state to support resiliency for all persons aged 0-26 and their families.



The purpose of Mind Your Mind is to **raise awareness, promote resiliency and reduce stigma.**

We launched a social media campaign supporting suicide prevention and a social media campaign to raise awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma.

We partnered with Cobb County Commissioner Jerica Richardson to host a Mental Health Townhall focused on Youth in September and we received a proclamation from the Board of Commissioners recognizing September as Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month.



Unprecedented social media reach. Mental Health Posts - All Inclusive

- FB Reach: **26,811**
- Instagram Reach: **11,887**
- Organic LinkedIn Impressions: **2,829**
- Twitter Impressions: **5,536**





OCTOBER 2021 EDITION

Welcome to the October Edition of Mind Your Mind News

The Cobb Collaborative welcomes you to the October edition of Mind Your Mind (MYM) News. Our [Mind Your Mind Mental Health Campaign](#) works to raise awareness, promote resiliency, and reduce stigma surrounding the topic of mental health.

This space educates our community about trauma and its effects and impacts, and provides information on prevention and resiliency at the individual and community level. Be on the lookout for our quarterly MYM Magazine, which will be available on our website at the end of each quarter.

View resources and more information by visiting our [website](#).

MENTAL HEALTH HAPPENINGS

October is National Bullying Prevention Month



National Bullying Prevention Month is a campaign founded in 2006 by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. Research has shown that students who are bullied are more likely to experience low self-esteem and isolation, perform poorly in school, have a negative view of school, experience physical symptoms (such as headaches, stomachaches, or problems sleeping) and experience mental health issues (such as depression, suicidal thoughts, and anxiety). While this is significant, the affects of bullying don't stop there. Bullying also negatively impacts witnesses of bullying and those bullying others. Witnesses are more likely to use tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs, have increased mental health problems, and miss or skip school. Youth who bully others are at increased risk for substance use, academic problems, and experiencing violence later in adolescence and adulthood. Youth who bully others while also being bullied themselves suffer the most serious consequences and are at greater risk for mental health and behavioral problems. With the Collaborative's role in creating a trauma-informed community, the clear link between bullying and mental health problems, and the long-term impact trauma has on our minds and bodies, addressing this national campaign is imperative. National Bullying Prevention Month is now a nationwide call to action around educating communities as to their roles in bullying prevention. Addressing and preventing bullying is something that everyone can do, every day.

Sources:
Center for Disease Control, [Bullying Surveillance Among Youths](#)
[StopBullying.gov](#)

SIX FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

BULLYING DIRECTLY AFFECTS STUDENTS' ABILITY TO LEARN

According to the Center for Disease Control, students who are bullied are more likely to experience low self-esteem and isolation, perform poorly in school, have few friends in school, have a negative view of school, experience physical symptoms, and experience mental health issues.

BYSTANDERS CAN BE POWERFUL ALLIES

More than half of bullying situations stop when a peer intervenes on behalf of the student being bullied. With that statistic, students have a unique power to prevent bullying.

BULLYING IS NOT A RITE OF PASSAGE BUT A SERIOUS THREAT TO STUDENT SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

Some say bullying makes children tougher and is not a serious problem, but the reality is that students who are bullied are more likely to report increased negative effects to their emotional and physical health.

ANYONE CAN BULLY AND ANYONE CAN BE BULLIED

Students can have multiple roles; they can be the ones subjected to bullying and the one who bullies. Strategies that focus on holding students accountable for their behavior, but also empower them to change that behavior, are more effective than punitive punishments and peer mediation in bullying situations.

BULLYING ISN'T ABOUT RESOLVING CONFLICT; BULLYING IS ABOUT CONTROL

In conflict, children self-monitor their behavior and generally stop when they realize they are hurting someone. When bullying, children continue their behavior when they realize it is hurting someone and are satisfied by a feeling of power and control.

EFFECTIVE BULLYING PREVENTION EFFORTS INVOLVE STUDENTS, PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Involving community members such as law enforcement officials, faith organizations, community action groups, and others allow school officials and parents to address the bigger issue of disrespect, bias, and violence that can contribute to bullying issues in schools. A community-wide effort shows students that adults care what happens to them and that they are not alone.

MINDFUL SELF-COMPASSION

We encourage journaling to promote resiliency. Read what our community partners say about this:

Here's what Cobb County Community Services Board said:
Journaling is a way for our individuals to get out the thoughts that tend to 'clog' their minds, so they will always have what they were thinking but make room for other things such as new coping skills which allow them to move forward with their recovery.

Here's what a local educator said: *I received copies of the Unwind Your Mind – Journaling Journey. These journals are great tools that will supplement my group lessons this year and next school year.*



MIND YOUR MIND EVENTS



COBB COLLABORATIVE
Educating. Engaging. Empowering.

Tuesday, September 14, 6 pm - 8 pm

Youth Mental Health Town Hall

Sewell Mill Library and Cultural Arts Center

The Event

District 2 Commissioner Jerica Richardson and Cobb Collaborative will be hosting a tabling and speaker panel event on youth mental health. The tabling event, beginning at 6 p.m., will include organizations from around Cobb that deal with mental health and that can provide resources. The speaker panel will be at 7 p.m. at the amphitheater behind the library. Come to listen to our panelists to have your questions answered and to have an educational and enjoyable evening.

Panelists

- Dr. Julie Lance, School Social Worker for Cobb County School District
- Belisa Urbina, Founder and Executive Director of Ser Familia
- Granville Freeman, Prevention/Intervention strategist, Marietta City Schools

Register

Register to attend with this link:

<https://staff315236.typeform.com/to/pLzNaxwg>




MIND YOUR MIND SPEAKS

Listen on **Apple Podcasts**

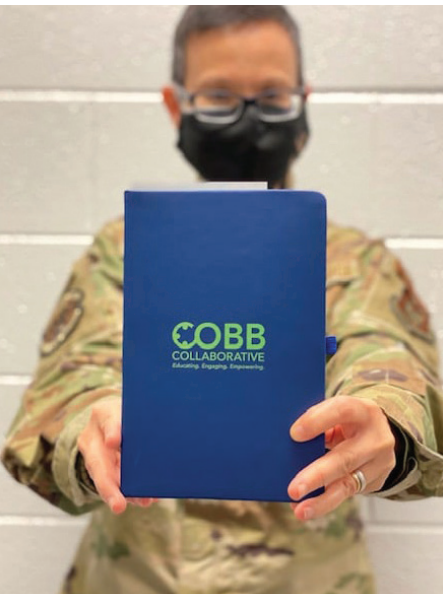
cobbcollaborative.org/podcast



CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT

Civic Engagement

- The Cobb Collaborative leveraged our work from the 2020 Census “Get Out the Count” work. We partnered with the local chapter of the League of Women Voters to conduct 7 voter registration and education drives.
- We recruited high school and college interns to conduct campus-centered campaigns to register new voters.
- An information packet that focused on voter education for returning citizens was developed.
- The Cobb Collaborative was a first-time exhibitor at the Cobb NAACP as well as the City of Kennesaw’s Juneteenth festivals.
- Cobb Collaborative Executive Director Irene Barton served as a poll worker during the November 2021 municipal election.



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