



'Resilience' looks at impacts of adverse childhood experiences

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PORTSMOUTH -- Jamie Redford's documentary, "Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope," was shown to a full house at the Music Hall Loft this past Thursday.

The film focuses on ACEs, adverse childhood experiences, which have been shown to have an exceedingly high correlation to the incidence of addiction as well as suicide, heart disease, domestic violence, incarceration and other societal challenges. The showing was sponsored by Pinetree Institute of Eliot, Maine, which serves Southern Maine and the New Hampshire Seacoast.

Pinetree Institute presented the film as a lead-in to a May 3 conference on resilience at the Portsmouth Harbor Events Center, featuring Robert Anda and Laura Porter, leading figures in ACEs research and trauma informed care. This will be their only New England appearance. Seating is limited.

Following Thursday's showing a panel of experts talked about their experiences in leveraging ACEs awareness and answered questions. The panel included Somersworth High School Principal John Shea; Mark Lefevre of the NH Works for Recovery program, and Jennifer Stout, substance misuse therapist and director of The Doorway, a new hub for recovery out of Wentworth-Douglass Hospital in Dover.

ACEs are now understood to be one of the most powerful determinants of health and experts say early intervention and prevention, even in pre-school and kindergarten, can have a profound impact on future health and behaviors. Approaching problems in a constructive, understanding way, called trauma-informed care, rather than traditional punitive methods has a substantial positive impact on future levels of addiction, crime, violence and other societal ills.

“The work that has been done on the impact of adverse childhood influences over the past 20 years has demonstrated without a shadow of a doubt that identifying problems early, treating children in a respectful, positive way to help them through difficulties as opposed to being punitive, has a profound impact on their future behavior,” said Larry McCullough, executive director of Pinetree Institute.

Pinetree Institute’s mission is to promote sustainable health and life-satisfaction in individuals, families and communities. It offers educational workshops and retreats at its learning center and through community-based collaboration. For more information, including details on the May 3 conference, visit www.pinetreeinstitute.org.