



# MRBN

February 2023  
news & updates

[Become a Member](#)

[Event Calendar](#)



**Dr. Wendy Ellis**  
[Center for Community Resilience at George Washington University, School of Public Health](#)



**Risa Wilkerson**  
[Healthy Places by Design](#)



**Phil Bors**  
[Healthy Places by Design](#)

## MRBN 2023 SUMMIT AGENDA

April 12 -13th Samoset Resort, Rockport

**TOGETHER WE CAN THRIVE:**

Creating an equitable shared path forward to promote resilience in Maine communities

### Day 1

Registration and Breakfast  
Welcome and opening remarks  
Keynote Dr. Wendy Ellis, George Washington University, Center for Community Resilience  
Networking/Lunch  
Workshop Dr. Wendy Ellis and Break  
Very Important Partners (VIP) Reception

### Day 2

Registration and Breakfast  
Welcome and opening remarks  
Maine Youth Today Panel Discussion, Youth Mattering Messaging, Maine Youth Thriving, A Guide for Community Action  
Networking/Lunch  
Introductions  
Keynote and Workshop- Risa Wilkerson and Phil Bors, Healthy Places By Design  
Closing

(Please note that the \$40 resort fee on rooms will be waived)

[Summit Registration Here](#)

[Room Reservations Here](#)

**NEW!** Exhibition tables are available with Summit registration. Each table is \$50. Please contact [Deb](#) for more information.

**Our Summit Sponsors MATTER.  
Thank you!**



UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND  
Center for Excellence  
in Public Health



UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND  
Center for Excellence  
in Collaborative Education

COLUMNS &gt; Posted February 24 | Updated February 24

## Commentary: Make sure that young people in your Maine community know they matter

Notice them, show interest in their lives, listen to what they say and prioritize what they have to contribute. Let's all push back against a youth mental health crisis.

BY DELVINA MIREMADI-BALDINO SPECIAL TO THE PRESS HERALD

If we know youth are our future, why are we ignoring their cries for help? According to findings [recently released](#) by the US CDC, in 2021, almost 3 in 5 teenage girls reported feeling persistently sad or hopeless nearly every day for at least two weeks in a row that they stopped regular activities. Nearly 1 in 3 high school girls reported seriously considering suicide, and 18% of girls, reported experiencing sexual violence.

In 2021, before having any data, the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and Children's Hospital Association declared a "[national emergency in children's mental health.](#)" urging policymakers to address the crisis swiftly.

Nevertheless, here we are in 2023, with increases in all facets of adversity, from social media bullying, sexual assault, hopelessness, and suicide attempts. 87% of Americans are concerned about young people's mental health, with 2 in 3 parents saying they are "extremely" or "very" worried, according to a USA Today [report](#). Why does it not feel like more of an alarm?

Some communities are leading the charge by declaring an urgency to cultivate mattering in our youth. In 2019, Kini-Ana Tinkham, Executive Director of the Maine Resilience Building Network (MRBN), was alarmed by data from Maine's Integrated Youth Health Survey, which reported that 57% of high school and 59% of middle school students believed they mattered in their communities. That dropped in 2021 – only 51% of high school and 55% of middle school students feel they matter in their communities. In a collective approach with partners throughout Maine, MRBN launched Cultivating Mattering in Maine's Youth to create a culture where youth feel they matter.

Canadian Psychologist Dr. Gordon Flett states, "Mattering is the sense of being significant and valued by other people... People who believe they matter to others have a key protective resource that can buffer them from life stressors and challenges."

Following MRBN's lead, we must cultivate youth mattering in homes, schools, and communities. With social connectedness recognized by the US CDC as a priority social determinant of health that impacts health and health equity, **Youth Mattering** is the perfect focus for sustainable change.

Maine Youth needs every community, school, business, and family to act, or this mental health crisis will continue to grow. Who are the youth that crosses your path; daily, weekly, monthly? They need you. Your role in addressing this crisis is critical. **Your actions to cultivate youth mattering can have a profound impact, protecting youth from experiencing detrimental health risks into adulthood.**

Youth who feel connected at school and home were as much as 66% less likely to experience health risk behaviors related to sexual health, substance use, violence, and mental health in adulthood. Beyond being protective, mattering promotes health and happiness and boosts motivation and well-being at school. Having at least one accepting adult can [reduce the risk of a suicide attempt](#) among LGBTQ young people by 40%.

Helping youth in your community feel like they matter starts with intentional actions to help them feel that they're a significant part of the world around them. Youth believe they matter when they are seen, heard, and valued and **know that they add value.**

(SEEN) Youth thrive when adults notice and see them and are interested in what's going on in their lives.

(HEARD) Youth thrive when adults care about their voices and value their contributions as uniquely significant.

(VALUED & ADD VALUE) Youth thrive when adults prioritize them as vital contributors to the community.

Our youth continue to call out to us, telling us they think they don't matter in their schools and communities. We must take this seriously. As Gordon Flett highlights, people at risk for depression and suicide tend to ruminate on thoughts like, "nobody would miss me if I were gone" or "no one cares about me." **If we know youth are our future, we cannot ignore their cries for help.**

Dr. Delvina Miremadi-Baldino, Ph.D.  
Resilience Strategy and Impact Director  
Maine Resilience Building Network

**CALL TO ACTION: Contact MRBN to learn how you and your community can move to action to support Maine Youth Thriving.**

