

# **OBESITY PREVENTION FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY- BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN THE COMMONWEALTH**



**Required by Item 468 1c Conference Report (Regular Session 2010)**

## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Preface.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Background.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Funding Overview.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Healthy Communities Action Teams grant recipients.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>13</b>

## **PREFACE**

This report contains information concerning the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth's distribution of funds designated to reduce and prevent childhood obesity on a community level as required by HB 30, Conference Report Amendment Item 468 1c (Regular Session 2010). The Virginia Foundation of Healthy Youth is required to report the status of funding provided to community-based organizations for obesity prevention activities pursuant to §32.1-355 of the Code of Virginia.

## **BACKGROUND**

Established in 1999 by the Virginia General Assembly as the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation, the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) is responsible for statewide efforts to reduce and prevent youth tobacco use and childhood obesity. VFHY receives no taxpayer funds; it is funded through Virginia's share of the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA), a legal settlement in a dispute over tobacco-related health-care costs between the state attorneys general of 46 states and the nation's major tobacco manufacturers.

Due to the Foundation's great success at reducing youth tobacco use in the Commonwealth and delivering prevention messaging to young people, the General Assembly gave the Foundation the additional responsibility of obesity prevention and reduction in 2009 and changed the Foundation's name to the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth.

Tobacco use and obesity are the two leading causes of preventable deaths in the United States respectively. One out of three children in the United States is obese or overweight. In Virginia, at least one out of five children is obese or overweight, with the highest rate of prevalence being found in Southwest Virginia, where approximately one out of three children is obese or overweight. More than 60 percent of Virginia adults are obese or overweight. Childhood obesity can lead to serious, lifelong and life-threatening health problems such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Since receiving its expanded mission, VFHY has funded the first two statewide surveys of childhood obesity prevalence in Virginia among children ages 10 to 17 and has co-hosted the first two comprehensive statewide conferences on childhood obesity prevention. VFHY's Weight of the State conferences were chaired by Virginia First Lady Maureen McDonnell and featured expert speakers from Virginia and across the nation, including Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources Dr. Bill Hazel and Dr. Mary Beth Bigley from the U.S. Surgeon General's Office. VFHY has also instituted a series of community-based grants to help strengthen and/or form community coalitions to prevent and reduce childhood obesity. Other efforts include: a youth volunteer campaign to popularize and increase various forms of physical activity among teens in numerous communities statewide; and a pilot program aimed at encouraging physical activity among urban, African-American, high school-age teens in Virginia.

## SUMMARY

During the 2009 General Assembly session, the General Assembly directed the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth Board of Trustees to devote at least \$1 million from VFHY's budget exclusively to childhood obesity prevention efforts on the community level.

The majority of this funding was dedicated to VFHY's Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCAT) program. VFHY awarded more than \$1.25 million in HCAT grants over FY 2011 and 2012 to establish and/or support 22 local community coalitions across Virginia to fight childhood obesity. Funding and training provided by VFHY through the HCAT grants allow community organizations to implement identified promising practices in childhood obesity prevention suggested by the national Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In FY 2011, HCAT grant recipients will receive \$627,638.50. (A list of grant recipients can be found on page 8 of this report.)

HCAT grantees will implement a variety of CDC-suggested strategies for childhood obesity prevention, such as working with or establishing farmers' markets to increase community access to fresh produce; increasing physical activity in children enrolled in after-school programs; creating and maintaining community gardens; and establishing safe neighborhood playgrounds. HCAT grantees, which were selected by an independent grants application review panel, will be required to comply with VFHY evaluation and reporting procedures.

Communities being served by HCAT grantee programs include: Alexandria, Blacksburg, Carroll County, Charlottesville, Danville, Floyd County, Fredericksburg, Galax, Gate City, Giles County, Hampton Roads, Henry County, Jamestown, Lee County, Martinsville, McLean, New River Valley, Norfolk, Northern Neck, Norton, Petersburg, Pittsylvania County, Prince William County, Rappahannock, Richmond, Roanoke, Scott County, Smyth County, Staunton, Suffolk, Tazewell County, Williamsburg, Wise County and Yorktown.

Additionally, VFHY co-hosted its second annual Weight of the State childhood obesity conference in October 2011. Chaired by Virginia First Lady Maureen McDonnell, the conference featured expert speakers from Virginia and across the nation. The goals of the conference were to strengthen and expand local, regional and state capacity to promote access to healthy foods and nutrition, opportunities for physical activity and to reduce obesity. In partnership with the Virginia chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the conference offered Continuing Medical Education credits to participating physicians.

The Weight of the State conference featured six tracks focusing on: Healthy Nutrition and Access to Healthy Foods; Community Collaborations for Healthy Kids; Research to Practice; School and Afterschool; Healthcare; and Physical Activity and Active Transportation. VFHY utilized a Call for Abstracts process to select many of the presenters from across Virginia.

Approximately 42 abstracts were submitted and 20 were selected. Other national, state and local presenters were invited to provide emerging trends on topics such as Food Marketing to Children, the Tipping Point of Childhood Obesity and Fuel Up to Play 60. More than 30 sessions provided emerging practices in childhood obesity prevention and replicable resources for participants to take back to their community.

In spring 2011, VFHY began preparations for its second survey of childhood obesity prevalence in Virginia among children ages 10 to 17. VFHY staff members worked with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) Survey and Evaluation Research Laboratory (SERL) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) in preparation for a late fall implementation of three statewide youth surveys, including the 2011 Virginia Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey (VNPAS) and the 2011 Virginia Youth Survey (VYS). Packages with a letter of support from the Secretaries of HHR and Education, a parent letter and opt-out form, sample surveys and response form were distributed to school superintendents in August and September. The surveys will be administered in randomly selected schools throughout the state that agree to participate.

Data from the 2011 Virginia Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey will be compared to baseline data gathered from the 2009 survey. Among the 2009 survey's findings: The highest childhood obesity rate in the commonwealth is found in Southwest Virginia (28%), followed by Southeast Virginia (24%). Obesity rates are lowest in Northern Virginia (20%) and Central Virginia (17%).

VFHY will also be offering Healthy Youth Day mini-grants to communities all across Virginia to hold events in January 2012 to promote increased physical activity and better nutrition for children. Established by a Virginia General Assembly resolution, Virginia Healthy Youth Day is held every Jan. 20 by the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) and promotes healthy lifestyles for Virginia's children, including eating right, exercising and not using tobacco products. The second annual Virginia Healthy Youth Day in 2011 was a great success: More than 5,600 children participated in 20 locations across Virginia from Northern Virginia to far Southwest Virginia. First Lady of Virginia Maureen McDonnell was the keynote speaker at the flagship event at the State Capitol, which featured American Family Fitness instructors leading more than 400 Chesterfield County schoolchildren in exercises on the Capitol lawn. Mascots from Richmond-area universities and sports teams, including Virginia Commonwealth University and the Richmond Flying Squirrels were also in attendance.

Other major VFHY childhood obesity prevention initiatives include a childhood-obesity prevention campaign called ActOut that will be implemented by teen volunteers in VFHY's Y Street program, which is overseen by VFHY's Marketing department. Believed to be the largest group of its type in the nation, Y Street is an award-winning volunteer teen-led empowerment

movement funded by VFHY. VFHY has trained more than 4,000 high-school students to participate in Y Street. In 2011, Y Street received the national Youth Advocates of the Year group award from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

The objective of Y Street's ActOut Campaign is to increase statewide youth participation in making healthy lifestyle choices through focusing on positive, fun and social aspects of physical activity and good nutrition. The campaign will use survey assessments and grass-roots activism to enhance community awareness toward the importance and benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

VFHY's Marketing department will also continue its Step Royale initiative to encourage physical activity among at-risk, teens active in the hip-hop culture in urban, African-American communities in the Hampton Roads region. Billed as The Ultimate Step-Dancing Competition, Step Royale aims to change social norms and encourage physical fitness and healthy eating, particularly among urban young people who may not be attracted to traditional team sports. Dozens of new step and dance teams have been formed and participated in a Step Royale competition since it began.

The balance of VFHY's dedicated childhood obesity funding will be applied to administrative costs for grants management, trainings related to the VFHY childhood obesity prevention initiatives such as the HCAT grants, the Step Royale program and Y Street's ActOut campaign, evaluation and the statewide youth survey to measure factors related to obesity.

## **FY 2012 CHILDHOOD OBESITY FUNDING OVERVIEW**

<b>HCAT grants</b>	<b>\$567,638.50</b>
<b>Healthy Youth Day and mini-grants</b>	<b>\$14,000.00</b>
<b>Marketing initiatives</b>	<b>\$200,000.00</b>
<b>Youth Nutrition/ Activity Survey</b>	<b>\$100,000.00</b>
<b>Conferences and Trainings</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>
<b>Grants management</b>	<b>\$136,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,042,638.50</b>



## **HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS GRANT RECIPIENTS**

**(TWO-YEAR ALLOCATIONS FOR FY 2011 and 2012)**

<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>PROJECT NAME</b>	<b>REQUESTED AMOUNT</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>
Boys & Girls Club of Central Virginia	In the Club, On the Farm, Behind the Counter	\$59,807	Coalition building to include strategic plan in Richmond area. Multi-faceted program, including a variety of physical activity and nutrition programs, community gardening and a farmers' market project.
Valley Community Services Board	Project G.R.O.W.S. - Growing Responsibly and Organically with Sustainability	\$44,987	Coalition building to include a comprehensive five-year strategic plan. Community gardens and composting project. Roanoke area.
Virginia Organizing - Community Obesity Task Force	Live Fit Charlottesville	\$60,000	Coalition building to include a comprehensive strategic plan. After-school nutrition literacy, food costing, procurement and preparation program. Community-based physical activity program. Charlottesville.
Cora Kelly Parent Teacher Association (Alexandria City Public Schools)	Cora Kelly Science of Physical Education Program (Playground)	\$60,000	Will refurbish playground at Cora Kelly Elementary School in Alexandria. Will create a joint use agreement with community for playground usage afterschool and on weekends.
Rappahannock Area YMCA	Healthy Community Action Team for King George County	\$41,205	Coalition building to include a strategic plan. Refurbish playground at Rappahannock Area YMCA. Conduct afterschool fitness program for at-risk youth. Conduct a media campaign on obesity prevention in King George county.
Youth Apostles Institute - Don Bosco Center	Don Bosco Center Health & Exercise	\$59,996	Will refurbish play space at Georgetown South community. Will form partnerships with prevention groups in Prince William County. Will provide healthy snacks for homework club participants.
Eastern Virginia Medical School, Office of Sponsored Programs (1)	Healthy Hampton Roads Communities in Action	\$60,000	Will develop a model pedestrian-friendly community linking schools, businesses, restaurants, churches, parks and homes with crosswalks, signage and route maps. Policy change and building community participation.

Eastern Virginia Medical School, Office of Sponsored Programs (2)	ACTIVATE EASTERN SHORE: Coalition Team Development and Physical Activity Policy and Media Promotion	\$60,000	Strengthening partnerships through planning, resource development and conduct a SWOT and Gap analysis and involve partners in strategic planning process. Initiate community-wide fitness challenge and media promotion campaign. Develop and initiate work place physical activity policy.
Healthy Hearts Plus II	SURGE! Petersburg Youth Combat Childhood Obesity	\$57,411	Build community action team coalition, strengthening partnerships through strategic plan development. Nutrition and physical activities targeted in low-income neighborhoods in Petersburg. Connecting youth to education and skills building for outreach to other youth and community leaders to expand community reach. Introduce family to benefits of accessing affordable, fresh foods with healthy cooking and eating habits.
Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA	IGNITE	\$54,870	Program providing to youth 5- 12 yrs. with knowledge and skills to make healthy lifestyle decisions. Increase from modest to vigorous activity, nutritional concepts and growing healthy gardens.
Suffolk Partnership for a Healthy Community	Healthy Moves for Suffolk Youth	\$60,000	Engage with private and public schools and the Housing Authority to establish community gardens. Community capacity building through strengthening partnerships and identifying gaps in community resources and change to environmental policy. Will also work with Parks & Recreation Department to increase use of walking and biking trails.
VA Department of Health-Hampton	Peer to Peer Healthy Youth	\$53,652	Encourage healthy lifestyles by providing opportunities for physical activities through youth to peer education. After school programs will tap into the existing systems in the city and low income communities. Strong coalition relationships will be further developed.
Appalachian Community Action Agency	ACTION	\$56,770	Training and education for child care providers, media campaign on nutrition and physical activity, new physical activity programs with local partners, promotion of farmers' markets and use of local produce. Lee, Scott, Wise, Smyth and Tazewell Counties.

Carilion Clinic	PATH (Positive Actions Towards Health)	\$56,973	Development of Community Education and Prevention efforts of PATH obesity treatment program through coalition building activities such as performing a community assessment and the development of a strategic plan. Community-based group activities such as community kitchens are planned for the Roanoke Valley.
Giles County Public Schools	Floyd County Obesity Prevention Project	\$59,841	Coalition building and coordination of existing and planned obesity prevention initiatives in Floyd County. Development of a strategic plan and sustainability plans. Includes plans for school/community gardens and equipment to assist the Floyd Farmers Market in accepting SNAP and WIC cards.
LENOWISCO Health District	LENOWISCO Healthier Children	\$60,000	Coalition development to increase access to and consumption of healthy, safe and affordable foods by residents of Lee, Scott, Wise Counties and the city of Norton. Community-based activities that link procurement of healthy food with improving skills in purchasing and preparing food. Media campaign to raise awareness about the burden of childhood obesity in this area.
MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness	FitFoodFun	\$59,707	Develop community-based group activities aimed at improving skills in purchasing and preparing healthy food; creating after school physical activity programs for middle and high school youth; development of a media campaign to promote physical activity and healthy nutrition. Activities will reach the cities of Danville and Martinsville and Henry and Pittsylvania counties.
TurnKey KB & Associates, LLC	Twin County Healthy CAT	\$60,000	Establishment of a Healthy Community Action Team to serve Carroll and Grayson counties as well as the city of Galax. This team will conduct a community needs and resources assessment and develop a strategic plan. Will also provide afterschool physical activities program for children ages 2-17.

Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy	Galvanizing Communities to Prevent and Reduce Childhood Obesity	\$60,000	Coalition of faith communities in the New River Valley will build their capacity to advance policies that promote youth health/wellness. Coalition will perform a community assessment and will educate congregational members and the community about the issue of childhood obesity through various media campaigns.
Virginia Tech	Maximizing community-academic partnerships to identify sustainable interventions to reduce obesity	\$59,204	Coalition building with Dan River Region Obesity Task Force. Assessment of food outlets in Danville, further development of physical activity and recreation site maps, engage partnering groups into discussions on community garden program.
YMCA at Virginia Tech	The N.E.W. Family	\$50,854	The Waldron Family YMCA in the Shawsville area of Montgomery County plans to recruit low-income families with children at risk of obesity and related health issues to enroll in exercise program. The program will offer weight-loss incentives, nutritional and cooking classes, instructional gardens and includes Y memberships for physical activity.

## CONCLUSION

As per the General Assembly's direction, the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth's Board of Trustees designated \$1 million in dedicated monies for the purpose of funding and assisting obesity prevention activities on the community level in FY 2012.

VFHY allocated the majority of these designated funds to 21 community groups across Virginia through VFHY's Healthy Communities Actions Team (HCAT) grant program, which utilizes evidence-based best practices for childhood obesity prevention established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Institute of Medicine.

Additionally, in October 2011 VFHY hosted the second annual statewide Weight of the State childhood conference, offering the latest information on childhood obesity prevention strategies to health professionals, educators, physicians and other stakeholders. This conference also was a source of Continuing Medical Education credits through a partnership with the Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

VFHY also conducted the second survey of childhood obesity prevalence in Virginia, surveying youth about behaviors related to nutrition and physical activity. And VFHY will hold its third annual Virginia Healthy Youth Day celebration in January 2012. More than 5,600 children across the state celebrated Virginia Healthy Youth Day in 2011.

Other community obesity-prevention efforts included in these designated funds include a continuation of VFHY's Step Royale pilot initiative to prevent teen obesity in urban, African-American communities in Virginia by encouraging physical activity through step dancing. VFHY is also funding a youth volunteer campaign, ActOut, in order to popularize and increase various forms of physical activity among teens in numerous communities statewide.

VFHY remains a good steward of the funds entrusted to it in order to reduce and prevent youth tobacco use and childhood obesity.