

## **2011 Annual Report**

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**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

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## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Maria Graff Decker  
Secretary of Public Safety

Erika C. Fischer  
Director, Governor's Office for  
Substance Abuse Prevention

December 1, 2011

General Assembly of Virginia  
Capitol Square  
Richmond, Virginia

Dear Members of the General Assembly:

The Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention is pleased to provide this report in accordance with §2.2-118, *Code of Virginia*. Consistent with its statutory responsibilities, the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention has provided leadership, opportunity and an environment to further strengthen Virginia's prevention infrastructure and to ensure that prevention efforts are more unified, more collaborative and more evidence-based.

During this year of transition, programs continued without interruption. The main source of federal funds for programming has ended. Current efforts are running on continuation funding and plans are in the works to seek and secure funding for the future. This report details prevention programming, efforts and coordination that have occurred in 2011.

The Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention looks forward to providing continued leadership and collaborative coordination of Virginia's prevention efforts. Thank you for your support of our vision, goals and objectives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erika C. Fischer".

Erika C. Fischer

## Executive Summary

This year, the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP) Annual Report, in collaboration with the GOSAP Collaborative, is pleased to report on its on-going prevention efforts in the Commonwealth. Current prevention achievements include the following:

- Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act grants were awarded to 39 projects that support youth substance abuse and violence prevention efforts in more than 80 Virginia communities.
- Non-competitive awards were made from Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funds to communities and organizations that use evidence-based programs that address the needs of youth.

GOSAP continues to provide leadership, coordination, and the collaborative implementation of Virginia's substance abuse and violence prevention efforts. The GOSAP Office, as well as the GOSAP Collaborative, will continue to promote data-driven prevention planning, evidence-based prevention programming and formal data-driven evaluation.

## Statutory Authority

Pursuant to §2.2-118, Code of Virginia, the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention is required to submit an annual report of its activities to the Governor and the General Assembly.

The statute sets forth the responsibility of the Governor "to administer the substance abuse prevention program within the Commonwealth and to authorize, direct and coordinate activities of agencies of the Commonwealth in such program." The responsibilities of GOSAP are "to assist in the coordination of substance abuse prevention activities of the Commonwealth, review substance abuse prevention expenditures by agencies of the Commonwealth and determine the direction and appropriateness of such expenditures."

The statute further specifies that "the Governor shall cooperate with federal, state and local agencies, private and public agencies, interested organizations and individuals in order to prevent substance abuse within the Commonwealth."

In addition to its responsibilities for developing a more unified and effective approach to prevention at the state level, GOSAP also administers one major grant program: the Governor's Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program. In previous years, GOSAP received \$1,634,981 annually through the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program (SDFSCA). The SDFSCA funds ended in FY09. This office is currently operating on carry-over funds. These federal funds support numerous local prevention initiatives throughout the Commonwealth. These grant programs and the many initiatives they support are described in greater detail in this report.

The GOSAP Collaborative is comprised of prevention managers and staff from 13 state agencies with prevention responsibilities. The Collaborative has been meeting since 2002.



**Report on Activities of the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse  
Prevention**

## GOSAP Organization and Operation

GOSAP is located in the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety, where it operates as a separate entity and provides support for prevention strategies and with emphasizes on substance

abuse and violence prevention within the Commonwealth's overall public safety mission.

GOSAP has two staff members, a Director and a Program Assistant.

## GOSAP Mission

The mission of GOSAP is to support positive youth development by providing strategic statewide leadership, fostering collaboration and sharing of resources at all levels while providing tools and training to practice evidence-based prevention in an effort to reduce the incidence and prevalence of substance abuse and violence and their consequences.

In order to meet this mission, GOSAP does the following:

- Promotes collaboration among state and local agencies, organizations, coalitions and faith communities that address prevention.
- Prioritizes, coordinates and leverages Virginia's prevention resources to improve efficiency.
- Strengthens local and state level capacity through development of sustainable programs and prevention professionals.
- Enhances evidence-based prevention practices in Virginia through data-driven needs assessments, measureable goals and objectives and evaluation for accountability and improvement.



## The GOSAP Collaborative: Virginia's Prevention Leadership

The GOSAP Collaborative serves as the primary vehicle for prevention system planning and collaborative decision making at the state level. Its membership is composed of key leadership representatives from 13 agencies and organizations responsible for prevention throughout the Commonwealth. These agencies include the Departments of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Criminal Justice Services, Education, Fire

Programs, Health, Juvenile Justice, Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Motor Vehicles, Social Services, State Police, the Virginia National Guard and the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth. The GOSAP Collaborative is chaired by GOSAP Director Erika Fischer; the vice-chair is Marty Kilgore, Executive Director of the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth.



**Mission.** The GOSAP Collaborative preserves and enhances Virginia's national leadership in the area of positive youth development by promoting and facilitating wider use of model programs, disseminating best practice solutions and supporting up-to-date training and information opportunities for prevention professionals statewide.

**Goals.** The goals of the GOSAP Collaborative are:

- Broader collaboration within and among every level of youth safety and prevention activity throughout the Commonwealth.
- Sponsor a statewide conference on youth safety, youth substance abuse and youth violence prevention coalitions. The conference incorporates agency and government experts and providers at the local, state, and federal levels in order to leverage professional networking and to enhance learning directly from those who are most successful in the various youth safety and prevention fields.

- Identify youth safety and prevention trends using a forward thinking approach to provide solutions that address gang related activities, juvenile offender and prisoner re-entry and drug abuse.
- Collaborate with community groups and faith-based organizations to further identify and understand local safety and prevention needs and assist with available resources and help provide practical solutions.

With on-going budget cuts within various agencies, the GOSAP Collaborative reconvened in September of 2010 to assess future initiatives, review of a new Executive Order to continue the group, and to host a cross-agency prevention conference in August of 2011.

**Prevention Resources.** The GOSAP Collaborative continues to support community prevention efforts by providing resources on the GOSAP Website, which serves as a prevention information clearinghouse. The Website offers announcements of prevention-related initiatives, news, information on GOSAP, and its programs and services, as well as links to resources and training provided by other prevention-related organizations. The Website also offers downloadable copies of

publications created by the GOSAP Collaborative including the Parent Guide to Preventing Underage Drinking, the Parent Guide to Personal Safety for Youth, Our Common Language: Quick Guide to Prevention Terminology and brochures on inhalant abuse and methamphetamine use. Additionally, GOSAP maintains contact with prevention practitioners and supporters throughout the state by sharing announcements and updates.

**Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities 2010-2011 Programs**

## Background on Awards

The bulk of GOSAP funds is derived from the discretionary funding portion of the federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 2001 (SDFSCA), which is also known as Title IV of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Under NCLB, emphasis is placed upon well-coordinated, SDFSCA-funded program activities between each state's principal education agency and the Office of the Governor. GOSAP has worked in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education to develop the SDFSCA portion of Virginia's consolidated application for funding under NCLB, and implement grant programs under the GOSAP Office.

SDFSCA competitive grants were awarded on an annual basis and ran from July 1 to June 30 (FY) Programs complimented what was being implemented by local educational agencies (LEAs or schools divisions). All programs funded under the GOSAP portion implement evidence-based substance abuse and/or violence prevention programming. Seventeen grant awards totaling \$515,405 that served 3,757 children and youth and 564 adults in 44 communities, concluded on June 30, 2011.

The request for proposals for each award cycle required that the grants for which funding was requested fall into one of the four following categories:

1. Replication of evidence-based programs for youth who were at high-risk for gang involvement;
2. Replication of evidence-based programs.
3. Community prevention needs assessments.
4. Continuation of effective program from previous award cycle.

The grant proposals were reviewed by a group representing several agencies within the GOSAP Collaborative and others with a vested interest in prevention programs. Higher emphasis was placed on successful continuation programs in Category 4, and those for high-risk groups in Category 1. Grantees are provided technical assistance and on-going professional development by Virginia Commonwealth University's Center for School-Community Collaboration at workshops conducted at implementation of the grant, again at six months after implementation and followed by a year-end grant wrap-up.

## 2010 – 2011 Awards and Recipients

The 2010-2011 award cycle programs focused on youth at high-risk for gang involvement.

To maximize the number of community-based organizations capable in applying for these competitive grants, technical assistance was provided to prospective applicants through three regional workshops conducted in Spring of 2010. The workshops focused on requirements of the request for proposals. Additionally, to build the capacity of grass-root organizations, an extended session on basic grant writing and effective grant writing strategies was offered at each of the three sites. Grants were awarded in four categories, with priority given to projects targeting youth at higher risk for gang-involvement and other problem behaviors.

A total of \$515,405 was awarded to 17 grantees. Grantees are provided with an orientation and technical assistance to help them successfully implement their projects through the Center for School-Community Collaboration at Virginia Commonwealth University. A cross-site evaluation designed to assess implementation and collect data on project-specific outcomes is currently being implemented.

A summary of each grant program follows.

## 2010-2011 Awards and Recipients

Recipient	Project Title	Award
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula	<i>Gang Prevention Through Targeted Outreach</i>	\$48,725.00
Bristol Department of Social Services	<i>Bristol Strengthening Families</i>	\$22,760.00
Montgomery County Public Schools	<i>Project SUCCESS</i>	\$48,642.00
St. Joseph's Villa	<i>PeaceBuilders at St. Joseph's Villa</i>	\$20,458.00
Eastern Virginia Medical School	<i>Second Step to Success: Helping Chesapeake Alternative School Students Succeed</i>	\$31,524.00
The Middle Peninsula Northern Neck Community Services Board	<i>Creating Resilient Students in Challenging Times: Through the LifeSkills Training Program</i>	\$50,000.00
Presbyterian Community Center	<i>Roanoke's Project Venture</i>	\$50,000.00
Prince William County Public Schools	<i>Prince William County Public Schools Violence Prevention Program to Reduce Risk for Youth Gang Involvement</i>	\$50,000.00
Bristol Youth Services	<i>Washington County Needs Assessment and Community Plan</i>	\$15,000.00
Hampton-Newport News Community Services Board	<i>City of Hampton's Needs Assessment Project</i>	\$8,006.00
Mary Baldwin College	<i>A Community Needs Assessment in Support of the Implementation of the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention's Comprehensive Gang Model for the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro (SAW) Coalition</i>	\$12,125.00
The Rappahannock Area Office On Youth	<i>Project Towards No Drug Abuse</i>	\$12,476.00
Family Service of Roanoke Valley	<i>Roanoke's Positive Action Project</i>	36,344.00
Highlands Community Services	<i>Washington County/City of Bristol Substance Abuse &amp; Violence Prevention Group</i>	\$10,421.00
New River Valley Community Services	<i>New River Valley Community Services Continuation of Al's Pals in New River Community Action Head Start Classrooms</i>	\$36,589.00
Rockingham Memorial Hospital	<i>The Incredible Years in English and Spanish and All Stars</i>	\$24,925.00
The Up Center	<i>Team Up</i>	\$37,500.00

## Gang Prevention Through Targeted Outreach

The Boys & Girls Clubs of America's *Gang Prevention Through Targeted Outreach* (GPTTO) program is designed to intervene with youth identified as high-risk for becoming involved in gang activity. Youth are provided extra case management services while being involved in main-stream after-school programming at Boys & Girls Clubs. Youth who are engaged in positive out-of-school activities and who have positive adults in their lives are less likely to become involved in gangs or come in contact with criminal justice system, and are less likely to drop out of school.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Virginia Peninsula implemented the GPTTO involving 56 youth ages 6-18 at 13 club units. Program evaluation indicated that:

- None of the youth were involved in gangs
- 30% finished the school year with improved grades, 12% maintained positive grades, and 36% maintain average grades.
- 94% finished the school year with consistent school attendance.
- 95% have not had any new juvenile justice involvement

## Strengthening Families

*Strengthening Families Program* (SFP) is a nationally and internationally recognized evidence-based parenting and family strengthening program for high-risk families which has been found to significantly reduce problem behaviors, delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse in children, and to improve social competencies and school performance.

The Bristol Department of Social Services partnered with Highlands

Community Services to provide SFP to 22 parents and 33 youth within families with youth considered as high-risk. Program evaluation showed:

- 93% of parents and 100% of teens who completed at least 12 of 14 sessions reported improvement in family relations; less arguing; more effective communication; ability to work together to solve problems; and, spending more time together.
- 93% of parents who completed the program reported an increase in the knowledge of effective parenting practices, such as setting limits, using positive rewards, and active listening skills.



## Project SUCCESS

The *Project SUCCESS* program is designed to prevent and reduce substance abuse among students 12 to 18 years of age. The program also focuses on risk factors such as poor academic performance, truancy, discipline problems, negative attitudes toward school, and parental substance abuse.

Montgomery County Public Schools, in collaboration with New River Valley Community Services, implemented the program at Christiansburg High School. All 1,100 students were impacted by school-wide assemblies and informational distributions and posters. In addition, 572 ninth and tenth grade students received a more in-depth educational series of

classroom presentations and discussions. All 2,500 parents were invited to evening programming; 68 participated in internet safety training. Forty students were identified and participated in programming targeting students at risk. Program evaluation indicated that:

- Compared to the previous year without the program, there was a 16% reduction in students school-wide who were absent 30 days or more; 149 to 126.
- For the students identified as at-risk, approximately 42% reported a decrease in their personal alcohol, tobacco and other drug use in the past 30 days, based on their use reported in the pre-survey.

## PeaceBuilders

*PeaceBuilders* is a school-wide violence prevention program that incorporates a strategy to change the school climate implemented by staff and students and is designed to promote pro-social behavior among students and adults. Children learn five simple principles: praise people; give up put-downs; seek wise people; notice and speak up about hurts we caused; and right wrongs.

St. Joseph's Villa, a non-profit, non-sectarian organization in Henrico County, implemented the *PeaceBuilders* programs with the 24 teaching staff and 118 students at the Dooley School and Dooley Elementary. These schools serve elementary, middle, and high school students who are experiencing emotional or behavioral difficulties or are challenged by learning or developmental disabilities. Program results indicated that incidents of physical and verbal aggression did decrease over the course of the school year at the elementary school. However, the fluctuating nature of the high-risk, high-need school populations did not lend themselves to comparisons between baseline numbers

collected from the previous year on indices of aggressive behaviors or attendance.

## Second Step to Success

*Second Step to Success* is a program targeting classroom-based skills intervention for children 4 to 14 years of age. The program is designed to teach socio-emotional skills focused on reducing impulsive and aggressive behavior and increasing social competence.

Eastern Virginia Medical School personnel assisted and trained 21 staff at the Chesapeake Alternative School to implement the *Second Step to Success* middle school curriculum. Those staff implemented the program with 126 students. They also provided parent training and support groups for 15 parents. The program evaluation showed statistically significant changes pre-test to post-test in students' reports of:



- A decrease in the amount of participants who believed that "sometimes you only have two choices – getting hit or hitting the other kids first."
- An increase in the number of youth who could easily understand someone else's point of view; are able to identify and name emotions they feel; and think of more than one way to solve a problem.
- An increase in the number of participants who, when faced with a problem with other people, could easily stop themselves from doing the first thing that popped into their head.



## LifeSkills Training Program

*LifeSkills Training* (LST) is a school-based program that aims to prevent alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use and violence by targeting the major social and psychological factors that promote the initiation of substance use and other risky behaviors. LST is based on both the social influence and competence enhancement models of prevention.

The Middle Peninsula Northern Neck Community Services Board implemented the LST program regionally in eight middle schools with 1,531 7th and 8th grade students in the counties of Essex, Gloucester, Westmoreland, Northumberland and Lancaster. Program evaluation indicated that these students' level of knowledge and skills increased regarding the refusal of drugs and violence.

## Project Venture

*Project Venture* is an outdoor experiential youth development program which aims to develop the social and emotional competence that facilitates youths' resistance to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Based on traditional American Indian values such as family, learning from the natural world, spiritual awareness, service to others, and respect, Project Venture's approach is positive and strengths-based. The program is designed to foster the development of positive self-concept, effective social interaction skills, a community service ethic, an internal locus of control, and improved decision making and problem-solving skills.

The Presbyterian Community Center, together with Family Service of Roanoke Valley implemented *Project Venture* with 41 youth within two after-school programs for middle and high school students in low income areas of the city. At pre-test, before the program began, 100% of students

indicated that their parents would disapprove of substance use and 100% of the youth perceived alcohol use as risky; leaving no room for improvement on these measures. Program evaluation showed:

- Improvement in youth who self-identified as being physically aggressive: 26% reported this behavior at pre-test and only 10.5% reported these same behaviors at post-test.
- Improvement in school achievement: 89% at pre-test expressed interest in simply completing high school and ending their educational pursuits; at post-test 100% expressed interest in obtaining education beyond high school.

## Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and Safe Dates

A school-wide program, *Olweus Bullying Prevention* (OBPP), seeks to reduce the number of students who are bullying and being bullied while also empowering by-standers. With program aspects including community and school activities, as well as classroom meetings and individual interventions, the program seeks to create a positive school environment for everyone while teaching positive social skills.



The *Safe Dates Program* is designed to stop or prevent the initiation of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse on dates or between individuals involved in a dating relationship. The program teaches positive

relationships skills, and how to seek assistance when confronted with such behaviors.

The Prince William County Public Schools project implemented primary and secondary prevention for 1,897 middle school youth. The program specialist supported the OBPP and the *Safe Dates* dating violence prevention education at two middle schools. In addition, 120 faculty and staff at the two schools received training. The students attended classroom meetings focused on increasing connectedness to school, received specific cyber-bullying information and lessons in adolescent dating abuse prevention. Program evaluation showed at both middle schools:

- 71% of students learned more about cyberbullying; 74% reported taking more time to think before responding to electronic messages; 86% know what to do if cyberbullied.
- Students increased their knowledge about healthy dating relationships: pre-test correct answers 74.75%, post-test correct answers 82.7%
- Students perceptions of feeling safe from physical violence increased from the previous year when the programs were not in place: 2009-2010 46.8% felt safe from physical violence; 2010 – 2011 52.0% felt safe from physical violence.

## Community Needs Assessments

Comprehensive, data-driven community prevention needs assessments were completed by Bristol Youth Services for Washington County, the Hampton Newport News Community Services Board for the City of Hampton, and Mary Baldwin College for the



Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro (SAW) Coalition.

## Project Towards No Drug Abuse

The Rappahannock Area Office On Youth implemented the *Project Towards No Drug Abuse* program with 30 youth who were court-involved and identified as having issues with substance abuse. The programs were operated in the City of Fredericksburg, as well as in Caroline County. Post-program evaluation showed that:

- 20% of users showed reduction in 30-day alcohol use.
- 63.3% of users showed reduction in 30-day marijuana use.
- 100% of users showed reduction in 30-day hard drug use.
- 83.3% had a clean urine screen on the last night of the program.
- 62% of participants screened after the program ended tested negative for any and all substances.

## Positive Action

The comprehensive *Positive Action* program is designed to improve academic achievement, school attendance, parent-child bonding and family cohesion, while reducing family conflict. The program seeks to decrease problem behaviors such as substance use, violence, suspension, disruptive behavior, dropping out and early sexual behavior.

Family Service of Roanoke Valley implemented the program with 97 elementary school-aged participants within the City of Roanoke. Youth in afterschool programs in both the Boys & Girls Club, YMCA and West End Center programs received this evidence-based prevention program. As evidenced by self-reported pre-to post-tests, youth who completed 75% of the program reported an increase in self-esteem, as well as increased willingness to

work hard in school. Due to the age of the youth, there was a ceiling effect as 100% of the youth denied ever using alcohol or other substances at pre-test.

## Project Towards No Drug Abuse

The *Project Towards No Drug Abuse* intervention program is aimed at preventing drug use by high school youth by helping students develop self-control and communication skills. The program also seeks to assist youth in acquiring resources that aid in resistance to drug use, improve decision making strategies, and develop the motivation to not use drugs.

Highlands Community Services implemented the *Project Towards No Drug Abuse* program to 30 court-involved high schools students in Washington County and the city of Bristol. The program evaluation showed that for those who completed the program there was a:

- 67% decrease in cigarette use.
- 85% decrease in alcohol use.
- 65% decrease in marijuana use.

## Al's Pals

As a primary prevention program, *Al's Pals* is designed to develop social-emotional skills, such as self-control, problem-solving and healthy decision-making, in children 3 to 8 years of age. Youth who possess good social-emotional and coping skills are less likely to engage in violence or abuse substances as they get older.

New River Valley Community Services implemented the program with 375 pre-school age youth in Head Start pre-schools in the Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, and the City of



Radford. The pre- and post-program evaluations detailed:

- An increase in mean composite scores for social skills: pre- 111.74, post- 119.08.
- For youth at moderate to high-risk for maladaptive social skills, a decrease in percentage of maladaptive social skills: pre- 5%, post- 2%.
- A decrease in mean standard score for problem behaviors: pre- 96.79, post- 92.64.
- A decrease in percent for those designated at moderate to high risk for behavior problems: pre- 5.4%, post- 2.8%.

## Incredible Years

The *Incredible Years* program is a parent-training intervention focused on strengthening parenting competencies and fostering parents' involvement in children's school experiences to promote their academic and social skills and reduce delinquent behaviors.



Rockingham Memorial Hospital implemented the program with 99 parents and 61 youth in the City of Harrisonburg and the Counties of Rockingham and Page. The majority of these parents were court-involved and working to regain custody of their children. Program evaluation showed that 100% of the parents showed improvement in one or more of the following areas:

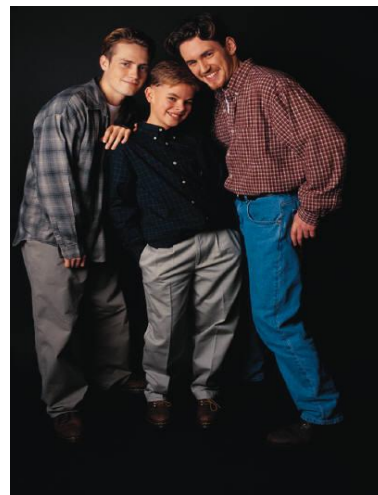
- Setting clear expectations for children's behaviors.
- Monitoring their children's behaviors.
- Reinforcing positive behaviors.
- Developing and using effective communication skills.
- Using basic problem-solving skills for child management.
- Increased parental involvement in children's activities.

### One-to-One Mentoring

*One-to-One Mentoring* is just that; an evidence-based mentoring program matching one youth to a caring, trained adult. Matches meet weekly for at least a year. Mentors are given on-going support, training and supervision by a match support specialist. Mentoring programs address the development of positive social skills, offering opportunities for pro-social

involvement in the community and in school.

The UP Center matched and gave on-going support to 116 mentor-youth pairs in their TEAM UP mentoring program: 38 new matches, 69 on-going matches and 14 matches that closed successfully after one year (5 were re-matched as new matches). Youth in the Cities of Portsmouth, Norfolk, Chesapeake and Virginia Beach, from 6 to 17 years of age, living in single-parent households and who demonstrated one or more risk factors (challenges) identified in the mentor PRO Youth Profile, were paired for one-to-one mentoring. Program evaluations found that 100% of youth who participated for one year and were assessed pre- and post- mentoring demonstrated improvements in at least one of the following areas: academic performance; behavior; and/or, psychological and social functioning.



**2010 – 2011 Non-competitive Awards and Projects**

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## Badges for Baseball Summer Camp

The Badgers for Baseball Summer camp took 51 at-risk youth and 10 chaperones from the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation's (CRSF) partner organizations in Virginia and traveled to Maryland for a five-day, four night, one-of-a-kind, overnight camp experience in August 2011. Youth from Richmond, Newport News, and Fredericksburg participated as part of the on-going *Badges for Baseball* program which pairs law enforcement mentors and kids to participate in mentoring relationships and activities, including the CRSF character education curriculum, *Healthy Choices, Healthy Children*. The selected youth were chosen based on their program participation, commitment to improving their behavior and setting positive goals for the future. The CRSF overnight camp featured daily baseball/softball instructional stations taught by skilled coaches "The Ripken Way," leadership activities, including a ropes course and other traditional camp activities like swimming, hiking, and basketball. In addition, campers witnessed exciting presentations from state, local, and federal law enforcement agencies. The overnight camp was a huge success, and the children were treated to a once in a lifetime experience with caring adults and law enforcement role models.



and law enforcement mentors to interact once a week from November, 2010 – February, 2011 with the goal of building strong mentoring relationships between youth confined to a secure, residential facility and law enforcement mentors from the community to which the youth would return upon completion of their sentence. The mentors worked with the young men by teaching them the 12 lessons from the CRSF *Healthy Choices, Healthy Children* curriculum, and sharing their many talents. Most important, the mentors opened up to the youth about their own personal stories and life choices. On February 15, 2011, a graduation ceremony was held by CRSF and the Office of the VA Secretary of Public Safety. One participant stated, that he “never thought he would pair up with law enforcement to make positive changes in his life.” The program was an enormous success and laid the foundation for future projects serving incarcerated youth.

## Badges for Baseball at Hanover Juvenile Correction Center

At the invitation of the Governor of Virginia and the Secretary of Public Safety, the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation (“CRSF”) launched a first time one-on-one *Badges for Baseball* program at the Hanover, VA Juvenile Correctional Facility. The pilot program was developed to allow 20 youth

## Rachel's Challenge

Rachel's Challenge, a national program based on the life and vision of Rachel Joy Scott, has impacted millions of teenagers across our country and over 20,000 this year in Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Botetourt County and Salem City middle and high schools.



Rachel was the first teenager killed in the 1999 Columbine High School tragedy in Colorado. As a result of this tragedy, her family wanted to continue what Rachel had started, a chain reaction of kindness and compassion, targeted at schools.



#### **Rachel's Challenge Objectives for Schools:**

- Create a safe learning environment for all students by re-establishing civility and delivering proactive antidotes to school violence and bullying.
- Improve academic achievement by engaging students' hearts, heads and hands in the learning process.
- Provide students with social/emotional education that is both colorblind and culturally relevant.
- Train adults to inspire, equip and empower students to affect permanent positive change.

Schools create FOR Clubs (Friends Of Rachel) and plan activities throughout the year to maintain this environment of

kindness and compassion within their schools. Students have been able to open up and share some of their struggles and while being trained to reach out to their peers. Each school creates a FOR Club and may have 75 to 150+ members.

#### **“The Big Lie” Production and Training**

The Office of Attorney General (OAG) produced a Youth Gang and Violence Prevention Video, an anti-gang tool targeted at middle school-aged youth, modeled after the OAG’s award-winning video *The Wrong Family: Virginia Fights Back Against Gangs*. The video was designed to be used by school resource officers and other youth services personnel to initiate dialogue with youth about the dangers of joining gangs with up-to-date, “real life” information that speaks directly to youth.

After careful collaboration with law enforcement and psychologists, ‘The Big Lie’ was completed July of 2011. It exposes the dark reality of gangs preying upon our children through lies and manipulation. The video is a frank and unscripted documentary and presents an extraordinary opportunity for pre- and early teens to learn about the false promises gang members make to lure them into their ranks. The video features gang members, law enforcement, and children who speak directly to the audience about gang recruiting methods, specific ways kids can avoid joining a gang, and most importantly, lifestyle choices to help them stay away from gangs. Educating our youth about the ugly truth behind gangs and ways to stay away from gang life, gives them the tools necessary to make positive choices.



The OAG also provided training to school personnel, school resource officers, juvenile detention personnel, parents and interested community members in prevention, education, identification and intervention as related to gang and violence prevention. We also reproduced the Youth Gang and Violence Prevention Video, 'Big Lie', an anti-gang tool targeted at middle school-aged youth. The video and training are used to teach these groups how to initiate dialogue with youth about the dangers of gangs, drugs and violence. We used the funds to create 10,000 copies of the DVD for distribution and to print gang, violence and drug prevention materials to accompany the trainings for youth.

### Virginia Mentoring Partnership

Virginia Mentoring Partnership (VMP) received two grants between 2010 and 2011. The first grant was used for helping to create a Juvenile Reentry Mentoring Program in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice. VMP created a two template documents, a Program Resource Manual for the coordinator of the program, as well as a Mentor Handbook--both based on the most current research regarding re-entry programs for juveniles and the best practices in the mentoring field. VMP staff worked closely with DJJ staff in the initial planning stages of the program and continued to provide technical assistance to the Mentor Program Coordinator throughout the year, along with

materials and meeting support. VMP also provided the several training sessions to the pilot group of mentors to ensure that program followed best practices at all levels this first year and trained the Mentor Program Coordinator and one other DJJ staff person on how to use our Orientation to Mentoring materials to hold mentor training sessions in the future.

VMP's second grant was used for general training and technical assistance for volunteer school-based mentoring programs in Virginia that have little or no budget. These programs work with youth from disadvantaged populations and high need areas. The funding also provided the volunteer program coordinators with program assistance where needed and the mentors received training packets at each of their training sessions. A small portion of this grant was used for creating a draft Program Resource Manual and Mentor Handbook for the pilot Women's Prison Mentoring Program in Fluvanna County to build a mentoring program.





## **The Community Gang Prevention Initiative of Martinsville**

The Community Gang Prevention Initiative of Martinsville (CGPIM) is an effort which started in the 21<sup>st</sup> District Court Service Unit (CSU), Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), in August of 2010. The departure of a gang specialist within the CSU prompted a reevaluation of efforts provided within the Unit to address juvenile gangs. A new commitment was put forth to coordinate and host law enforcement intelligence meetings which would ensure the sharing of information as it relates to juveniles involved in criminal gangs, and enhance working relationships with local law enforcement officers. These law enforcement intelligence meetings, held on alternate months, began to gain value and representation beyond the immediate areas



of Martinsville and Henry County to include North Carolina, Danville, Franklin County, state and federal officials. These meetings began to include non profits, other human service agencies and the faith based community in order to address the issues of prevention, intervention and enforcement.

The primary goal of this initiative is to increase the opportunity for needed services to an underserved population. An additional goal is to provide positive alternatives for youth to avoid involvement in gang behaviors or the “gang lifestyle.”

Our first objective was to put financial and service delivery procedures in place. The next objective was to educate partners to deal effectively with our specialized population and to recognize gang signs and symbols. The final objective involves working with community partners to match selected youth and their families with the most appropriate services.

We have experienced several successes to date. We have put in place a fairly comprehensive selection of vendors along with financial tracking and procurement procedures to effectively utilize the funding. Key partners have been identified and their individual roles have been defined. Services have been initiated for a total of five juveniles and their families. Training has been provided for our partners and their staff on gang recognition and prevention efforts. The successful collaborative effort of this initiative has inspired other local agencies to apply for, and be awarded, additional anti-gang funding for their unique programs. We have encountered two major challenges. In this initial stage, partners need to be educated to avoid the label of “gangster” when soliciting participation in the program. Another challenge has been making the procurement procedures user friendly while meeting DJJ and state guidelines.

## **College Campus Safety and Anti-Violence Public Service Announcement Challenge**

The College Campus Safety and Anti-Violence Public Service Announcement (PSA) Challenge offered college students all across the Commonwealth to utilize their artistic talents and collaborate with their peers to create their own PSA addressing these major

issues affecting our college communities. The PSA challenge was open to students enrolled at any Virginia public, private, four-year or two-year college or university.



The PSA Challenge began January 31, 2011 and ended April 30, 2011. Videos were to be 30 seconds or less in length. Students formed teams of up to six people to work on the videos, and there was no limit to the number of people who participated in the video. The public selected the winner by online voting. A three person team from Longwood University won the challenge submitting a video entitled, “It Only Takes One Night To Change Your Life” outlining the dangers of underage drinking and driving.

## 2011 Gang Awareness and Prevention Conference

The 2011 Gang Awareness and Prevention Conference was held in Richmond on August 24<sup>th</sup> along with specialized second day of advanced level gang training on August 25<sup>th</sup>. Topics at the conference included national and statewide gang trends, anti-gang strategies, and how law enforcement and prevention specialist can work together to impact gangs in our communities. The conference also offered through the Department of Criminal Justice Services credits for law enforcement personnel. The conference hosted

approximately 500 participants, speakers, presenters and exhibitors from around the Commonwealth and throughout the country.

Featured speakers on August 24<sup>th</sup> included:

- Breakfast Keynote Speaker, Jim Burch, Bureau of Justice Assistance
- Lunch Keynote Speaker, Al Valdez, renowned author, former supervisor of the Orange County Gang Unit and gang expert, professor at University of California, Irvine
- Kevin Donavan, National Gang Intelligence Center, National and International Gang Trends
- Jimmy Horn, Gangs and Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice
- Robert Sprinkle, Richmond Police Department Gang Unit, Gangs 101
- Michael Will, Bureau of the Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Undercover Motorcycle Gangs
- Virginia Gang Investigators Association representatives presenting information on Statewide Gang Trends
- Office of the Attorney General representatives presenting information on Gangs and New Media, Gang Prosecutions, GRIP and the new Anti-Gang Video



- Gwen Mason, United States Attorney's Office, Successful Partners with Law Enforcement –

### Finding and Getting Gang Prevention Grants

- Conte Yates, Loudoun County Prevention Specialist, Joining Forces for Gang Reduction: Community, Schools and Law Enforcement Working Together

A second day of specialized gang training took place on August 25<sup>th</sup> also featuring Al Valdez as the keynote speaker. The day focused on gang mentality, the use of violence and how violence is a universally understood street language. The class also explored why training is so important for criminal justice professionals and how some gang members inadvertently train using similar devices and are able to become involved in violent acts.

## Family Impact Seminar



Family Impact Seminars were created to better connect research and policy in an effort to promote a family perspective in policymaking. The model includes developing a partnership with key state legislators to join with university faculty in identifying family related state-level problems, possible policy solutions, political feasibility and prevention.

This partnership culminates in a topic specific annual seminar, with briefing reports and discussion sessions, and serves as a resource for state policymakers by providing them with access to nonpartisan, solution-oriented research on a current policy issue that they are actively debating, such as education, health care, mental health care, and child care. The topic for the 2011

seminar was workforce development. Strong, functional families are 'protective factors' and lend themselves to overall positive youth development.

This year's speakers and topics included:

- Setting the stage: Employment Opportunities and Workforce Development Programs for Virginia's Families, Mr. Bob Sledd, Senior Economic Advisor to the Governor
- *Workforce Development Policy: How to Move Ahead in the Coming Years*, Harry Holzer, Ph.D., Professor of Public Policy, Georgetown University Public Policy Institute
- *Community Colleges: Promoting a Focus on Student Success*, Susan Gooden, Ph.D., Professor, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs and Executive Director of the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute, Virginia Commonwealth University
- *Jobs in a Clean Energy Economy: Science, Engineering, and Policy Perspectives*, Daniel Kammen, Ph.D., Chief Technical Specialist for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, the World Bank

## Top Gun

The Commonwealth Attorney's Services Council (CASC) launched the Top Gun Program; an anti-gang training tool conducted by a faculty of prosecutors and law enforcement officers with extensive experience in gang related drug prosecutions and demonstrated competence in training.

CASC has conducted the Top Gun program for 18 years. In 2010 the program adopted a gang related drug case scenario. The program is a specialized, intensive training for 50 individuals - 25 drug/gang law enforcement investigators and 25 prosecutors - paired in two person teams from jurisdictions throughout the Commonwealth.

Each of the 25, two person teams from across the Commonwealth of Virginia were trained in the current drug trends in Virginia, the latest investigative techniques to combat controlled drug manufacture and distribution, the effects of the various controlled substances on individuals, especially youth, the latest case law developments which lead to successful prosecutions of individuals and gangs involved in the manufacture and distribution of controlled substances. Emphasis was placed on prevention efforts and team building: enhancing the level of communication and cooperation and cross-training between the law enforcement departments and the prosecutors' offices in each of the represented jurisdictions and particularly highlighting the destructive nature of the use of controlled substances and the violence engendered by the manufacture and distribution of these substances, especially in the gang cultures. The outcome to be achieved was to have the individual law enforcement investigator/prosecutor teams return to their jurisdictions equipped with the best practices in anti-drug, anti-gang enforcement techniques and share these practices with their departments and offices resulting in more effective prosecutions of drug and gang related violent offenses.

## **The Henry County Gang Prevention Program**

The Henry County Sheriff's Office, along with the Henry County Public Schools, the DJJ 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial District CSU, and the DOC Probation and Parole District 22 Office are working together to create the first program of its kind in our area. This effort will incorporate the knowledge, skills and abilities of our partners to identify the needs of many "at-risk" youth who are in grave danger of becoming hard-core gang members and provide alternate education and activities to prevent them from starting down the road to gang membership. Already established Community Gang Meetings in the area have brought many public and private partners together with one focus in mind, to prevent youth from joining gangs in the first place and eradicate existing gangs.

## **Production of Drug Court Video Providing Statewide Application and Use**

The award-winning documentary, "The Arrest is Only the Beginning; How Virginia Drug Courts Succeed," is an excellent vehicle to educate communities on the efficacy and availability of Drug Court programs to help individuals charged with non-violent criminal offenses obtain a meaningful recovery from drugs and alcohol. In its present form, the documentary focuses on the Twenty-third Judicial Circuit. The project will create additional interviews throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, to give the documentary a wider application for all communities of Virginia, to educate and offer hope to Virginians of all ages.

Specific target audiences include students, parents and professionals, including advocates for drug and alcohol reform such as therapists, social workers,

and guidance counselors, as well as communities throughout our State with established Drug Courts, and those who seek to have one established locally.

## Future of GOSAP

Federal SDFSCA funding has ended and GOSAP is currently operating on carry-over funds. Many local school districts have suspended programming previously funded through this funding stream at the end of the 2009-2010 school year. Other school districts are also maintaining some semblance of programming utilizing carryover funds while seeking other external funds. All carry-over funding came to an end in September 2011. The GOSAP office will be exploring grant opportunities to continue the valuable prevention efforts beyond fall of 2011.

Building upon numerous achievements, GOSAP will continue to provide leadership and coordination in the collaborative implementation of Virginia's prevention efforts including the continuation of chairing the advisory council for the Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF.SIG) awarded to Virginia's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). This grant funding will seek to address the state's priorities as determined by the SPF-SIG Epidemiological Workgroup and SPF-SIG Advisory Council. These priorities include the problematic consumption pattern of young adult binge drinking among 18-24 year olds and general underage drinking that lead to the consequence of motor vehicle crashes involving a driver who is under the influence of alcohol and between the ages of 15 and 24 years of age.

Further, GOSAP will seek to establish a Youth Advisory Council on Public Safety. Today's youth are faced with issues such as school violence, substance abuse, sexual assault and gang related activities. By engaging with Virginia's youth directly, we can capture a unique perspective on what youth face everyday within their communities. GOSAP will also look to explore a permanent partnership with the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and continue to be a voice within the Commonwealth's substance abuse prevention and education community.

## Contact Information

The GOSAP office location and contact information are:

Office of the Secretary of Public Safety  
1111 East Broad Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
P: (804) 786-9072  
F: (804) 371-6381  
E: [gosap@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:gosap@governor.virginia.gov)  
W: <http://www.gosap.virginia.gov>

### **Additional Credits:**

Center for School-Community Collaboration  
VCU School of Education  
6-8 North Harrison Street, Room 203  
P.O. Box 842020  
Richmond, VA 23284-2020

### *Photos:*

Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation  
Microsoft Images  
Office of the Attorney General  
Prince William County Schools  
Straight Street  
Virginia Mentoring Partnership