

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



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

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## **PREFACE**

This report contains information concerning the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth's distribution of funds designated to reduce and prevent childhood obesity 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 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) empowers Virginia's youth to make healthy choices by reducing and preventing youth tobacco use, substance 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 between the state attorneys general of 46 states and the nation's major tobacco manufacturers over tobacco-related health-care costs.

Since VFHY began its work, youth tobacco use in Virginia has seen great declines. Smoking among high school students has been cut by more than 75 percent, from 28.6 percent in 2001 to 6.5 percent in 2017. Smoking among middle school students has also dropped more than 75 percent, from 10.6 percent in 2001 to 2.4 percent in 2017.

Due to VFHY's success at reducing youth tobacco use in the Commonwealth and delivering prevention messaging to young people, the General Assembly expanded the Foundation's mission and scope of work in 2009 to include reducing and preventing childhood obesity. With the expanded mission, the General Assembly also 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. One out of three children in the United States is obese or overweight. In Virginia, 28 percent of high school students are obese or overweight. Virginia currently ranks 36th in the nation for childhood obesity in 10- to 17-year-olds, however, Virginia is 28<sup>th</sup> in the nation for high school obesity. Obesity prevalence among high school students in Virginia is 12.7 percent, lower than the national rate of 14.8 percent. Among adults, Virginia ranks 28<sup>th</sup> in the nation for obesity, with about one out of three adults (30.1 percent) considered obese.

Childhood obesity can lead to serious, lifelong, and life-threatening health problems such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease, problems that were once only seen in adult populations. Experts fear that due to the obesity epidemic, this may be the first generation of children to have shorter life expectancies than their parents.

Since beginning work on its expanded mission, VFHY has instituted a series of community-based grants to help form and strengthen community partnerships to prevent and reduce childhood obesity on the local level. VFHY has also conducted statewide surveys of childhood obesity prevalence in Virginia and has hosted "Weight of the State" conferences focusing on childhood obesity prevention. Other VFHY childhood obesity prevention initiatives include public health campaigns aimed at promoting healthy behaviors among young people. VFHY's youth-led volunteer group, Y Street, is also working to increasing awareness of the benefits of breakfast and promote alternative breakfast models in schools.

## **SUMMARY**

During the 2009 General Assembly session, the General Assembly expanded the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth's mission to include childhood obesity reduction and prevention. In 2010, the General Assembly directed the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) Board of Trustees to devote at least \$1 million per year from its budget toward childhood obesity prevention efforts.

### **Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCAT)**

Most of the VFHY funding for childhood obesity prevention is dedicated to the Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCAT) initiative, which establish and support community partnerships to fight childhood obesity on the local level by addressing policy, systems, and environmental change strategies.

In 2018, VFHY awarded its fifth round of two-year HCAT childhood obesity prevention grants, providing a total \$1.2 million in HCAT grants for FY19 and FY20 to establish and support 22 community partnerships across Virginia. Funding and training provided by VFHY through the HCAT grants allow these community organizations to implement evidence-based practices in childhood obesity prevention recommended by the national Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *(A list of 2018 grant recipients can be found on page 9 of this report.)*

VFHY's HCAT grantees implement a variety of IOM/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; increasing breastfeeding; and increasing awareness of good nutrition habits. HCAT grantees, selected by an independent grants application review panel, are required to comply with VFHY reporting procedures and evaluation.

Communities being served by VFHY's FY19-20 HCAT grantees include: Albemarle County, Arlington County, Augusta County, Bland County, Bristol, Buchanan County, Carroll County, Charlottesville, Chesterfield County, Culpeper County, Dickenson County, Emporia, Fairfax County, Floyd County, Fluvanna County, Franklin County, Galax, Giles County, Grayson County, Greene County, Hampton Roads, Harrisonburg, Lee County, Lexington, Loudoun County, Louisa County, the Middle Peninsula, Montgomery County, Nelson County, Norton, Page County, Patrick County, Pulaski County, Radford, Richmond, Roanoke County, Rockbridge County, Rockingham County, Russell County, Salem, Scott County, Smyth County, Suffolk, Tazewell County, Warren County, Washington County, Wise County, Wythe County, and Williamsburg.

### **Collaboration with other partners**

VFHY actively participates in and supports the Nutrition and Food Security Workgroup of the Governor's Children's Cabinet, chaired by First Lady of Virginia Pamela Northam. VFHY and the

workgroup stakeholders (which include, but are not limited to, the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Department of Health, American Heart Association, School Nutrition Association, community organizations, and local nonprofit agencies) are addressing three areas of focus for improving the health of children in Virginia:

1. expanding access to nutritious food and decreasing food insecurity prevalence for pregnant women;
2. increase access to nutritious foods and decrease food insecurity for children (a focus where VFHY contributes expertise such as sharing best practices); and
3. promoting community-based food systems to increase access to healthy, local foods.

VFHY also continues to participate in cross-agency collaborations with the Virginia Department of Education, the Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Virginia Department of Social Services and other agencies to address food insecurity by improving food systems so that nutritious and fresh food products are more accessible to Virginia's children and families. Additionally, VFHY is assisting in re-launching and re-branding the Virginia Food Access Network as Feed VA. Established in 2017, Feed VA supports and connects organizations statewide that are addressing food-access inequities such as childhood hunger. Through the Feed VA site, community groups have access to the data mapping, toolkits, and peer mentorship they need to maximize impact.

VFHY also supports efforts to increase school breakfast participation across the state. Through the school breakfast stakeholders group, VFHY is working with groups such as No Kid Hungry, the Virginia School Nutrition Association, Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, Virginia Action for Healthy Kids, the state Department of Education and school and community partners to promote school breakfast as a strategy for improving health and education outcomes. VFHY's high school volunteer group, Y Street, has taken a leadership role in these efforts by creating Great Starts with Breakfast, a campaign to increase school breakfast participation. Y Street members are promoting the Virginia School Breakfast Challenge in public schools statewide as well as meeting with school leaders to encourage the utilization of alternative breakfast models such as breakfast after the bell programs. VFHY also supports efforts encouraging schools and divisions to increase participation in school breakfast programs.

Furthermore, VFHY encourages grantees to hold Virginia Healthy Youth Day events every January to promote increased physical activity, tobacco-free living, and better nutrition for children. Established by a Virginia General Assembly resolution, Virginia Healthy Youth Day promotes healthy lifestyles for Virginia's children. In 2019 VFHY will hold a youth engagement breakfast event with General Assembly members and stakeholders to highlight the foundation's role in empowering Virginia's children to make healthy choices.

Another VFHY initiative is Rev Your Bev, which raises awareness about the health effects of consuming sugar-sweetened beverages. Rev Your Bev brings community groups, educators, and health advocates together to change the way Virginians think about beverages. The Rev Your

Bev initiative culminates in Rev Your Bev Day each May when partners celebrate with interactive displays and educational opportunities. Since 2013, more than 250,000 Virginians have participated in more than 1,500 Rev Your Bev events held across the state. In 2018, Rev Your Bev Day focused its efforts on early childhood education centers and preschool providers to increase awareness of healthy beverage choices. In addition to generating awareness, Virginia early childhood education providers were encouraged to establish center-based healthy hydration policies that would sustain the programmatic goals of the Rev Your Bev campaign. As part of VFHY's partnership with the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation in a statewide Nemours grant to implement the Early Care & Education Learning Collaboratives Project, Rev Your Bev Day expanded to more than 250 early childhood education centers in 2018.

To support efforts to increase access to healthy foods within Virginia communities, VFHY also participates in the American Heart Association's Closer to My Grocer campaign, along with a diverse coalition of stakeholders including health, business, government, and child advocacy organizations. Closer to My Grocer promotes strategies for attracting supermarkets, corner stores, farmers' markets and other healthy food retailers throughout the Commonwealth. To assist in these efforts and address food deserts in Virginia, Y Street's Fresh Spot campaign, works to increase awareness about community access to fresh, affordable, locally grown produce via neighborhood corner stores and supermarkets. Through Fresh Spot, Y Street members collect information about the availability and accessibility of fresh, nutritious foods and provide consumer education on gaps in access to healthy foods.

Finally, VFHY has collaborated with the Virginia Department of Health to administer the Virginia Youth Survey. This biennial statewide youth survey, which was last administered in fall 2017, provides information on nutrition, physical activity, and other health behaviors for Virginia middle and high school students. Through this partnership, VFHY and the Virginia Department of Health are reducing the overall cost of conducting multiple surveys and the burden on schools. This data provides valuable statewide and regional statistics and insights into youth health trends for VFHY, VDH, and partner agencies statewide to determine which geographic areas and youth subcultures should be prioritized for public health interventions.

**FY19 CHILDHOOD OBESITY FUNDING OVERVIEW**

<b>HCAT grants</b>	<b>\$795,000</b>
<b>Marketing initiatives</b>	<b>\$145,000</b>
<b>Conferences and trainings</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>
<b>Administrative</b>	<b>\$145,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,115,000</b>



## HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT) GRANT RECIPIENTS

ORGANIZATION / PROJECT	FY18 BUDGET	FY19 BUDGET	PURPOSE
<p><b>Alternatives Inc.</b></p> <p>HCAT-4-Mindful Eating and Exercise (HCAT-4-MEE)</p>	\$29,574	\$28,237	<p>Since 2006 Alternatives has used VFHY's HCAT funding to: develop a coalition of local government, behavioral health and early childhood providers; secure funding and resources for evidenced-based prevention programs; and provide training, technical assistance, evaluation services and advocacy.</p> <p>In FY16 and FY17 Alternatives formed HCAT-4-MEE. Going forward, Alternatives aims to continue to formalize the coalition structure to improve health and physical activity for children ages 2-10 by institutionalizing changes in policies and practices. For FY18 and FY19, HCAT-4-MEE coalition stakeholders will expand to include:            Community Based Organization: Alternatives; Business: Wingspan;            Community Coalition: Smart Beginnings of the Virginia Peninsula; Healthcare: Hampton/Newport News Community Services Board; Healthy Families, Early Childhood Providers: Downtown Hampton Child Development Center, Hampton University Child Development Center, Langley Air Force Base Child Development Center, New Mt Olive, Tick Tock Around the Clock and Warwick Kids Academy; Head Start: Williamsburg-James City County; After-School Program: Six House; and Foundation: Virginia Early Childhood Foundation.</p> <p>Component I infrastructure activities focus on expanding coalition membership and refining organizational policies and procedures that link best practices of nutrition, physical activity, oral health and</p>

social/emotional development. Specific action steps include: recruiting additional sites for participation; providing training and educational resources for sites; and offering educational topics that increase parental knowledge and support regarding increased physical activity and better nutrition.

Component II activities include HCAT-4-MEE members implementing policies & practices to promote oral health, healthy foods and healthy beverages and increase physical activity in participating preschool, child care, and after-school programs. Participants will use the NAP SACC pre/post assessment and develop action plans to align best practices of oral health, nutrition, physical activity and social/emotional development impacting more than 650 children and families.

**Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth & Families Foundation**

\$30,000

\$30,000

Healthy Communities Action Team

The Arlington HCAT utilized its FY17-18 VFHY grant funding to carry out an extensive community-led stakeholder engagement process resulting in a childhood obesity prevention plan that identified key barriers to healthy living for families at greatest risk for childhood obesity and provided a compendium of strategies for future implementation. This proposal builds upon priorities identified in that strategic plan, which focused on promoting physical activity and consumption of vegetables in children ages 0-5. The three priority settings for implementation efforts are schools, community and childcare settings.

The Arlington project has three main elements: HCAT sustainability and two school-based interventions. In June 2017 Arlington County Public Schools (APS) adopted a School Wellness Policy that created an opportunity for the Arlington HCAT to use FY18-FY19 VFHY grant funding to capitalize on existing momentum and a renewed focus on wellness in the school setting.

While VFHY funds are directed primarily at school strategies, the Arlington HCAT will work to raise additional funds to implement strategies in community and childcare settings. The HCAT will also engage in a series of coalition-sustaining efforts to maintain motivation of its members toward action and expand membership to include five additional partners by January 2020.

The two school-based interventions include:

- A Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)/APS salad bar pilot program in partnership with Real Food for Kids (RFFK), modeled after the pilot that RFFK successfully implemented in Fairfax County Public Schools.
- An initiative with School Health Advisory Board (SHAB) and Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHI) to provide technical assistance and Wellness Champion training in two schools at highest risk for childhood obesity. The goal is to support school efforts to establish local school wellness councils and implement Arlington’s 2017 School Wellness Policy. This intervention is modeled after IPHI’s success with its Healthy Montgomery Transforming Communities Initiative.

<p><b>Bacon Street Youth and Family Services</b></p>	<p>\$29,880</p>	<p>\$30,000</p>	<p>The Healthy Williamsburg Youth Collaborative (HWYC) is a partnership that brings together a variety of agencies that have already been working in Greater Williamsburg in areas of health, youth engagement, food security, wellness and physical fitness to unite under a common vision and work together to comprehensively address youth obesity. Our challenge has been that many partners have been doing this work for some time, but by leveraging all partners’ collective abilities, we believe we can accomplish</p>
<p>Healthy Williamsburg Youth Collaborative</p>			

something greater for our children and tomorrow's youth.

Part I focuses on connecting community agencies already working on childhood obesity in a common purpose, and by providing guidance and technical support, creating a connection that will sustain and leverage our collective energy for greater community change. The creation of the HWYC will allow for a shift from "siloed" work to collaborative work tackling childhood obesity. The primary focus of this initiative will be policy change related to healthy meals, food access, physical fitness, mental health and screen time.

Part II will fill an already identified need in the community with a comprehensive strategy that addresses childhood obesity in Greater Williamsburg during the summer months. Forty-five low-income youth in middle school will have the opportunity to participate in twice-weekly programming for eight weeks each summer. The focus of the program will be addressing healthy eating, physical fitness, mental health and youth health and wellness in general. Programming will be provided through onsite activities, field trips, healthy competitions, presentations, cooking, gardening, and other youth-driven activities.

<p><b>Culpeper Wellness Foundation</b>  Culpeper HCAT</p>	<p>\$16,741</p>	<p>\$16,000</p>	<p>Culpeper Wellness Foundation, Culpeper County Schools, Culpeper Parks and Recreation, Kid Central and Culpeper OPTIONS have formalized existing partnerships by creating the Culpeper Healthy Community Action Team. Together we will address the issue of childhood obesity by encouraging greater activity among our local youth through securing increased access to school gym facilities, where we will provide free youth programming and the development and expansion of youth fitness programming</p>
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			including, but not limited to, youth served by OPTIONS and Kids Central. Programming may be provided by Culpeper Sport and Fitness, Powell Wellness Center and/or Culpeper Parks and Recreation.
<b>Eastern Virginia Medical School, Office of Sponsored Programs</b>  Healthy Hampton Roads Communities in Action, Healthy Kids Initiative	\$30,000	\$30,000	<p>The Consortium for Infant and Child Health’s (CINCH) Healthy Kids Initiative will engage the Hampton Roads community by expanding partnerships cultivated under the Healthy Hampton Roads movement. Prior VFHY funding allowed CINCH to expand its Business Case for Breastfeeding, Breastfeeding Welcome Here, and Breastfeeding-friendly childcare initiatives. These models utilize a sustainable policy, systems and environmental change approach, facilitated by technical and material support.</p> <p>The Healthy Kids Initiative will build upon the successes achieved through these breastfeeding-focused initiatives and expand into additional early childhood nutrition-focused areas. Healthy Kids will address a community need for breastfeeding support for working moms. The “Back to Work” toolkit will provide resources for moms, families, and employers. To support this resource, CINCH will develop a Hampton Roads Breastfeeding Task Force to respond to specific incidents and challenges in the community.</p> <p>The Healthy Kids initiative is committed to promoting optimal nutrition from infancy through childhood, therefore, in addition to supporting breastfeeding, the initiative will work with early care and education centers (ECEs) to promote healthy eating/physical activity through policy change. Advancing the work and building upon the successes of our local partners with the “Let’s Move!” initiative, Healthy Kids will engage ECEs across Hampton Roads to participate in nutrition/physical activity policy and</p>

			<p>environmental assessments (adapted from Let’s Move! for regional consistency) and implement sustainable policy changes to promote complete childhood nutrition in early care settings. Engaged ECEs will be given provisions, educational resources and training to support policy/environmental changes and build leadership capacity among the early care community. A multimedia campaign (website, social media, publications) will promote the Healthy Kids Initiative and the aforementioned activities.</p>
<p><b>Fairfax County</b></p> <p>Fairfax Food Council: Increasing Access to Healthy Food for Fairfax County Youth and Families</p>	\$30,000	\$30,000	<p>The Fairfax Food Council (FFC) will expand its reach by engaging community members through the creation of FFC neighborhood stakeholder groups that will play a part in the formation of objectives and plans of FFC work groups. By fostering community ownership and advocacy for food system change, the FFC aims to have a greater impact on addressing food insecurity needs and healthy eating that affect children’s health.</p> <p>Building and capitalizing on our community engagement efforts, the FFC will implement proven evidence-based strategies that affect community food access and education. We will support the expansion and growth of farmers markets and community gardens in Fairfax County through zoning advocacy that seeks to amend outdated policies and create a more equitable food landscape. Using Geographical Information System (GIS) data, the FFC will develop a garden mapping instrument that can be used to identify areas lacking community garden opportunities.</p> <p>Along with the creation of a sustainable network of garden resources, a workshop series with targeted outreach efforts to communities will help to promote new gardens with the goal of increased</p>

			<p>consumption of fruits and vegetables.</p> <p>SNAP matching at farmers markets will continue to be a focus through dedicated outreach and promotion of the program. FFC will implement engagement activities targeting preschool and school-age youth to increase consumption of healthy foods and increase participation at the markets.</p> <p>These work plans, coupled with increasing community engagement, seek to address childhood obesity and food insecurity through system and policy change. In addition, the FFC will continue to work collaboratively toward its vision of a robust food system where healthy, accessible and affordable food is valued as a basic human right.</p>
<p><b>Greater Richmond Fit4Kids</b></p> <p>Greater Richmond Coalition for Healthy Children</p>	<p>\$30,000</p>	<p>\$30,000</p>	<p>The Greater Richmond Coalition for Healthy Children HCAT aims to prevent and reduce childhood obesity by advocating for policy and environmental changes that enable students to eat healthier and move more during the school day. With new school leadership throughout the region, the time is right to push for important policy and systems change.</p> <p>This HCAT builds capacity among partners and community members to successfully influence school leadership to prioritize children’s health. Advocacy training is incorporated into all HCAT meetings. The HCAT is launching a Healthy Kids Academy to train students, parents and teachers as advocates. The HCAT also aims to strengthen School Health Advisory Boards (SHABs) in the region. At the community and highest levels, our voices will be heard advocating to prevent childhood obesity.</p> <p>Building on the successes of No Kid Hungry and VFHY’s Y Street youth volunteer group – which have significantly increased the</p>

number of students eating breakfast at school – this HCAT will work to improve the nutritional quality of school breakfasts. Current school breakfasts in the region contain up to twice the amount of added sugar a student should consume in an entire day, and a diet high in added sugars is one of the leading causes of childhood obesity. Collaborating with school nutrition services staff, school board members, SHABs and our Healthy Kids Advocates, we will work to reduce the sugar content of school breakfasts in Richmond and Chesterfield County by 33 percent – impacting more than 85,000 students.

Because children at high risk for obesity are least likely to have recess, our HCAT will advocate to ensure that every child in our region has daily, active recess. We will educate school leaders on a recent bill passed by the Virginia General Assembly giving schools the flexibility to count recess as instructional time; engage students, parents and teachers in the process of advocating for daily recess; and provide training and recess kits to schools – increasing the physical activity levels of 16,000-plus elementary-aged children in Richmond and Petersburg.

<p><b>Greensville/ Emporia Community Health Action Team (CHAT)</b></p>	<p>\$29,676</p>	<p>\$27,314</p>	<p>The Greensville/Emporia Community Health Action Team (CHAT) is seeking funding to help prevent and reduce childhood obesity in the Greensville/Emporia area by implementing the CHAT HELP (Healthier Emporia/Greensville for Life Project) plan, which includes: expanding CHAT by adding additional community partners; engaging in media advocacy strategies to highlight activities and accomplishments; renovating and enhancing the Meherrin River Trail for safety and accessibility; building a park to increase accessibility for low-income families; encouraging the Emporia Farmer’s Market to accept Supplemental Nutrition</p>
<p>CHAT HELP (Healthier Emporia/Greens ville for Life Project)</p>			



			Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) and WIC Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP); and assisting local stores with training and outreach to encourage customers to make healthier food choices.
<b>Healthy Floyd</b>	\$30,000	\$30,000	<p>Now a local nonprofit, Healthy Floyd (formerly Floyd HCTeam) is working hard to ensure that its childhood obesity prevention initiatives in Floyd continue. Since incorporating in late 2016, the new 501(c)3 has generated more than \$4,000 in local donations, doubled the number of local partnerships and reignited widespread community interest. VFHY's continued funding for Healthy Floyd in FY18 and FY19 is especially critical as the group works to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Build sustainability by obtaining two regional/national foundation grants (in addition to VFHY's funding) and raising a minimum of \$8,000 from local sources by June 2020.</li> <li>2) Strengthen sustainability by attending two or more trainings related to capacity building, collective impact, fundraising and/or digital media by June 2019; and increase impact by offering two trainings by June 2020.</li> <li>3) Ensure sustainability by implementing diverse media strategies (print, web, social media, digital advertising) to amplify impact, build brand recognition and increase grassroots funding 100% by June 2020.</li> </ol> <p>Increased funding and strengthened infrastructure will allow Healthy Floyd to initiate, build and/or further institutionalize the following Component II activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase &amp; deliver produce from local farms to 72 children in four at-risk Pre-K classes at two schools and Head Start for 20 weeks.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand new Tasting Tuesdays program to include 15 veggies each for 1,000 students and 80 teachers and staff at three schools, Head Start and early childhood education center.</li> <li>• Expand 95210 education (including Rev Your Bev lessons) to include primary grades in all schools and at least one early childhood education center.</li> <li>• Increase physical education opportunities for pre-school &amp; primary students while promoting youth leagues and after-school activity programs to families at four public schools.</li> <li>• Decrease sedentary behavior and promote recreational use of public and private spaces by organizing community-wide, multi-generational walk/run initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b>LENOWISCO Health District</b>	\$29,998	\$30,000	LENOWISCO Health District is developing an HCAT for Lee County and implementing the evidence-based 5210 Let's Go! Program in five primary (K-4) schools in the Lee County Public Schools system.
5210 Let's Go Lee County!			
<b>Loudoun County Health Department</b>	\$24,898	\$25,198	The Loudoun Pediatric Obesity Coalition (LPOC) aims to make it easier for families to achieve healthy lifestyles in Loudoun County. More than 50 percent of families surveyed in our recent community needs assessment currently feel that it is not easy to have a healthy lifestyle. Nearly 60 percent of families surveyed by LPOC want cooking classes, 44 percent would like to see more fitness clubs and recreational opportunities closer to home, 41 percent want food pantries and programs to offer more fruits and vegetables and 30 percent want access to a community garden.
Loudoun Pediatric Obesity Coalition's Cross-Sector Response to Help Families Lead Healthier Lifestyles			In partnership with Loudoun County Public Library, LPOC will create and lead walking

clubs at library branches and introduce a fitness tracking lending program so that everyone can access technology that supports the development of healthy habits without worrying about the barrier of cost. To further promote walking, LPOC will create storybook walking trails, which will increase the number of free physical opportunities and integrate fitness with literacy – an important need in Loudoun, which has a high percentage of foreign-born residents with limited English proficiency.

Since many families live in housing situations that would not support a garden, LPOC will implement a community vegetable garden at a Social Services building.

Building on the success of an LPOC after-school cooking program and an LPOC program that provided Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) boxes of locally sourced produce to families in need, LPOC will look to expand these programs into new sites and develop them for sustainability and institutionalization within partner organizations.

To address the underutilization of food pantries despite the need for their services, LPOC will train physicians and community volunteers to conduct food insecurity screening and referrals to community resources. Working together, LPOC members will create a culture of health that is easy for all families to access.

<p><b>Middle Peninsula – Northern Neck Community Services Board</b></p>	<p>\$30,000</p>	<p>\$30,000</p>	<p>Celebrate Healthy Living Project: Preventing Childhood Obesity in Ten Rural Communities is a multi-county and multi-strategy project designed to build, strengthen and sustain rural communities’ capacity to prevent and reduce childhood obesity.</p> <p>Project strategies include: continuing to create and strengthen new and existing local</p>
<p>Healthy Citizens Pulaski County</p>			

and regional collaborative partnerships; and identifying and addressing gaps in community resources to ultimately impact environmental policies and practices throughout the 10 Middle Peninsula-Northern Neck communities, covering an expansive area of 2,200 square miles.

This project will continue to expand the initiatives/strategies that result in positive community outcomes. The HCAT will expand Mini-Community Gardens in 10 additional daycare centers/preschools. The Mini-Community Gardens initiative has increased children's awareness of the importance of eating fresh fruits and vegetables, and knowledge of growing and preparing fresh produce. This strategy resulted in environmental change in youth serving organizations, replacing sugar-filled and highly processed snacks with fresh fruit and vegetables.

Project staff will also work with school cafeteria leadership to promote the inclusion of more fresh fruits and vegetables in school meals. Ten healthy food preparation workshops will be offered to youth-serving organizations. Ten merchant education outreach programs will be implemented in local grocery stores.

This project will work with farmers markets throughout the MPNN Region to encourage the acceptance of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and WIC Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) by generating community awareness and engaging in fundraising efforts to assist farmers markets to purchase the equipment required to accept these benefits.

The annual Celebrate Living Day Event and

			Celebrate Healthy Calendar Project will also be implemented each project year.
<b>Nurture</b>	\$30,000	\$30,000	<p>The #RVAbreastfeeds Healthy Communities Action Team will engage coalition and community partners in activities that promote a breastfeeding-friendly community, while also building infrastructure and buy-in necessary to achieve long-term sustainability.</p> <p>Building on prior successes, HCAT activities will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) building local capacity for lactation support among communities of color by collaborating with hospitals and agencies to pilot peer lactation support programming</li> <li>2) conducting a community needs assessment utilizing an ecological model centered around pregnant/postpartum parents from diverse backgrounds to identify opportunities to improve the breastfeeding environment</li> <li>3) developing a community-focused television media campaign that offers breastfeeding-positive messaging targeted to young African-American citizens</li> <li>4) a Richmond City WIC outreach initiative to WIC partners and select employers to advocate for breastfeeding-supportive practices and policies</li> <li>5) organizing a breastfeeding symposium for providers and community members to effect change at the family, service and policy level</li> <li>6) continuing to conduct outreach to retail businesses, particularly within African-American and Hispanic communities, to encourage explicit support of public breastfeeding.</li> </ol>
#RVAbreastfeeds Healthy Communities Action Team			

	<p>To support and sustain coalition activities, HCAT members will review the approved workplan, assign clear roles and organizational accountability, conduct regular bi-monthly meetings for formal HCAT members and interested stakeholders, identify web-based and local opportunities to increase knowledge of breastfeeding support and health equity strategies, participate in conferences that further the goals of the HCAT, conduct a quarterly process evaluation on grant objectives, create and regularly review an grants calendar, and finally, convene HCAT members and key stakeholders in a strategic planning process to prioritize and guide future initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Page Alliance for Community Action</b></p> <p>Page Alliance for Community Action HCAT</p>	<p>\$30,000    \$30,000</p> <p>Page Alliance for Community Action is a coalition of agencies, organizations and youth that collaborate to promote healthy and positive development of families in Page County.</p> <p>In 2012, with funding from VFHY, the coalition created a HCAT and developed an action plan to combat childhood obesity. Using data from the Valley Health Community Needs Assessment and youth surveys, the action plan focuses on promising practices and activities that would impact the data and improve the health of our community. Our projects for the next two years will continue the successful strategies, activities and events that our HCAT members have established in our community and schools. We will continue marketing our HCAT activities and accomplishments on social media and PACA website to build our coalition capacity by recruiting and maintaining new members.</p> <p>Some of our project strategies include: working in the schools by facilitating nutritional curriculum and physical activities; supporting the Farm to School program;</p>

supporting the school division’s wellness policy, which regulates the nutrition and physical activities of the students; providing free and discounted scholarships for disadvantaged youth to participate in community runs and athletic camps; spearheading the Earth Day and Turkey Trot 5k runs; providing free swimming lessons at the Town of Stanley public pool; working with our high school youth to provide healthy events for their peers, promoting our Lending Closet for slightly used athletic clothes and equipment; and promoting recreational activities at our local parks.

Our work plan for the next two years will include working with the towns of Luray and Shenandoah to improve the fitness trail at Dean Park and the playground equipment at the WigWam Village. These local parks need updated equipment to ensure they are safe and appealing places for families and community members.

<b>Project GROWS</b>	\$30,000	\$30,000	<p>To improve the health of youth in Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County, Project GROWS (PG), Waynesboro City Public Schools (WCS), Augusta Health, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Staunton City Public Schools (SCS), Staunton Parks and Recreation (SPR) and the Staunton Augusta YMCA (SAYMCA) will partner on a number of programs, both in-school and after-school, that connect youth and their parents to gardening, nutrition and cooking education. These initiatives build on the strong foundation of work our HCAT has accomplished over the last six years and will include infrastructure and systems to sustain healthy youth programming in our region into the future.</p> <p>In Waynesboro, HCAT partners will promote increased consumption of fruits and vegetables through nutrition education programming and fresh food tastings. This</p>
Project GROWS: Expanding Food Access and Education in the Central Valley			

program will include:

- 1) collecting annual student height and weight data to help measure outcomes and long-term impact
- 2) providing in-classroom and after-school family nutrition programming at an elementary school where 100 percent of students qualify for free and reduced lunch
- 3) expanding and sustaining fresh food tastings by holding an annual tasting event in every elementary school, involving cafeteria staff, and including take-home nutrition information; and
- 4) selling local produce to WCS for their summer feeding program.

In Staunton, HCAT partners will collaborate on a comprehensive summer feeding, nutrition and gardening education program. SCS will assist PG in becoming an open summer feeding site and support two summer lunch events during which camp participants from SPR and SAYMCA will engage in cooking, nutrition and gardening education while enjoying a fresh local meal. SCS will purchase local produce for the events, as well as for summer feeding programs and during the regular school year. PG will also send ambassadors to the SPR and YMCA summer and after-school programs to provide nutrition education in conjunction with physical activity programming.

<b>Rockbridge Area Community Services</b>	\$30,000	\$30,000	The overall goals of this project are to expand the Rockbridge Area Healthy Kids HCAT (RAHCAT) by further building local capacity to implement promising practices and activities emphasizing policy, systems and environmental change leading to improved access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity to prevent
Rockbridge Area Healthy Kids HCAT (RAHCAT)			



and reduce childhood obesity in our area. RAHCAT originally built upon strong collaborative partnerships already in existence through the Rockbridge Area Prevention Coalition (RAPC), and through the successful partnership of founding members that helped provide necessary infrastructure to build and sustain local initiatives and environmental change. Recognizing that community involvement is vital to childhood obesity prevention efforts, the initial formation of the team in collaboration with RAPC allowed the groups to share infrastructure and key community partners that were already engaged in activities and best practices in community prevention focused on children and youth.

For FY18 and FY19, the team plans to expand by sustaining its core partners while increasing partnerships to implement innovative activities focused on environmental change around nutrition, access to healthy foods, and physical activity.

Key activities include: 1) establishing a training program to provide a pool of nutrition educators; 2) expanding nutrition education in schools; 3) implementing food education/access events; 4) promoting recreational activity through expansion of school-based and summer activity programs; 5) building two geocaching sites providing public access; 6) providing hiking opportunities for youth and families; 7) implementing a healthy retail initiative; 8) developing a junior ranger park program; and 9) developing a walking prescription program with healthcare partners.

These proposed project activities were developed in multiple planning meetings with HCAT members, utilizing data from our needs assessments, food and recreation mapping and partner input.

<p><b>Salem Area Ecumenical Ministries</b></p> <p>SAEM Student-Led Food Pantry and Expansion of HCAT</p>	<p>\$29,478</p>	<p>\$29,971</p>	<p>For Component I, SAEM HCAT will participate in infrastructure building by expanding the current Salem Ecumenical Ministries group to include more community partners and businesses, expand local congregations and include youth to identify current strengths and weaknesses of food initiatives and obesity prevention efforts. The group will provide regional trainings to include network mapping and evaluation consultation to discover gaps in services and better focus our collective efforts.</p> <p>Component II will focus on a Community Nutrition project that has two objectives. The first objective is creating an environmental change by increasing access to healthy foods by establishing a student-led food pantry that will be a “student-choice” design, allowing students to shop from a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables and healthy staples and provide feedback. The food pantry will be supported by school-based food drives and community food collection efforts. The school-based pantry will serve up to 314 students during the first year and an additional 122 students during the second year. The school-based efforts allow students to shop for items to take home, eliminating the need for transportation. The school food pantry will be guided by a student council and continuously stocked by congregational volunteers.</p> <p>The second objective of the project focuses on creating policy change that refocuses anti-hunger efforts to allow students to tackle obesity and food insecurity. This will be done by setting collection guidelines to encourage food collection based on low-fat, low-sugar, and low sodium options. The student pantry council will create a written policy for the governance of the food pantry and “bring-a-food” event admission policies</p>
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			to be submitted to the School Board for approval. Training and engagement will be provided for the coordinators, HCAT members and local congregations to include nutrition knowledge, food safety, fundraising and community resource mapping.
<b>Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital</b>  Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) in Virginia's Planning District 10	\$29,634	\$28,796	This project will strengthen the local obesity prevention coalition, Move2Health, and build on the implementation of CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) through training, materials and technical assistance. CATCH is an evidence-based childhood obesity prevention program that increases children's physical activity and healthy eating behaviors in schools, early childhood programs and community settings. Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital and the Move2Health coalition plan to enhance partnerships with schools, after-school programs, early childhood centers, parks and recreation directors and other organizations to further implement CATCH within Virginia's Planning District 10, which includes the city of Charlottesville and Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson counties.
<b>Sentara RMH Medical Center</b>  Healthy Community Council Obesity Action Team	\$29,989	\$29,987	This HCAT will implement three approaches to reduce childhood obesity rates in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, impacting 3,250 children.  The first approach is to provide fresh fruits and vegetables in 12 low-income neighborhoods through a mobile market and a community garden in Harrisonburg. The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (BRAFB) and the Gus Bus, a mobile literacy unit, will partner to provide a systems change where the mobile market has a food preparation and tasting station to increase the use and consumption of fruits and vegetables. As many families in these neighborhoods do not speak English, materials will be

translated into Spanish and Arabic. The HCAT will also provide resources to the predominantly African-American and first-generation immigrant Northeast neighborhood to increase participation in their community garden as an environmental strategy. This will include marketing efforts to educate the neighborhood about the importance of fresh fruits and vegetables in preventing childhood obesity. Experienced gardeners will mentor those with less experience in growing their own produce.

The second approach will be to expand child obesity prevention efforts into Rockingham County by institutionalizing Instant Recess before school and throughout the day.

The third approach is to continue to look to the future while still focusing on current activities. Preventing childhood obesity is a long-term endeavor. A strategic plan will be developed throughout the current funding period to determine steps for upcoming years. Of special significance in the strategic planning process will be determining interest in and need for a local food access council.

<p><b>Southwest Virginia 4-H Educational Center, Inc.</b></p>	<p>\$30,000</p>	<p>\$30,000</p>	<p>The Southwest Virginia 4-H Educational Center has selected eight partner agencies to develop an HCAT to explore environmental, policy and system changes to prevent youth obesity and substance abuse in the 13 far southwestern counties of Virginia. This project is anchored in the center’s long-established and successful summer camp program, which enjoys a strong reputation among community partners. VFHY funding will allow the center to expand summer camp activities to include garden planning and plot cultivation, fresh and healthy food preparation using garden produce, preparation of healthy snacks for younger children in after-school programs,</p>
<p>SWVA 4-H Center: Healthy Habits at Camp &amp; Beyond!</p>			

recreation targeting physical activity goals for participants, and a variety of outreach activities in the communities of Southwest Virginia.

On-campus activities will begin each funding year with a “Healthy Habits Challenge” kickoff for participants and will shift to experiential learning programs and physical activity goals during the off-campus season. Camp staff, who are extremely influential to campers, will promote healthy habits during camp then challenge youth to continue those habits back in their home communities. All these activities align with a culture shift over the past five years at the center and in the surrounding communities to focus on fresh, healthy food and physical engagement.

A primary on-campus partner is the local Upward Bound program, which provides educational and community-service opportunities to youth preparing for college entrance. Off-campus, community outreach efforts involve regional public libraries in partnership with the HCAT to supplement the center’s “Healthy Habits” challenge initiative encouraging nutrition and physical activity. State Delegate Todd Pillion, an HCAT member, will seek support from regional and statewide elected officials, pursue special recognition of project participants and assist planning reward and leadership events for youth throughout the region.

<p><b>Suffolk Partnership for a Healthy Community</b></p>	<p>\$30,000</p>	<p>\$29,391</p>	<p>This project’s goals include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishing two new learning gardens in Suffolk focused on at-risk children. Children will learn to grow fresh fruits and vegetables and receive nutrition education on the benefits of eating healthy snacks and meals. We will establish a</li> </ol>
<p>Healthy Communities Action Teams to Prevent Childhood Obesity</p>			

centralized teaching garden, in addition to supporting our nine existing school and preschool gardens, reorganized under the name Suffolk Digs. Hilton Garden for Kids will be established at the Hilton Garden Inn.

2. Establishing a First Bike Program that will provide bikes, helmets, locks, and safety training to at-risk youth, aged 6-10 years. The goals of the program are to increase physical activity and reduce screen time, thus reducing obesity. We will educate children on bike safety, the benefits of physical activity, how to assemble and maintain their bikes, and how to create a culture of physical activity with their peers.
3. Policy Considerations for Healthy Eating and Active Living: We will expand the reach of our current HCAT to analyze policies and environmental changes that are needed to provide youth with safe places to bike, the need for bike amenities, and bike lanes/designated safe bike riding zones. The determinations of this group should help provide a biking environment that will help sustain and encourage fitness activities to combat childhood obesity. We will also analyze and recommend policies and environmental changes needed to increase the number of children who access gardening to: augment their dietary intake of fresh foods; improve food access; reduce food insecurity; and lower obesity/overweight rates. We'll investigate the most effective ways to provide nutritional education about incorporating fresh whole foods in the daily diet as a means of maintaining wellness and preventing

			<p>chronic disease conditions. The HCAT will issue a report with its findings and recommendations. Where possible, policies and environmental changes will be implemented within the two-year grant period.</p>
<p><b>Warren County Community Health Coalition</b></p> <p>Project WAHOO</p>	\$30,000	\$30,000	<p>Project WAHOO seeks to target childhood obesity through a variety of avenues. It will promote increased exercise among youth through the 95210 website that allows youth to track their exercise as well as healthy food consumption and water intake to earn prizes that are exercise related. It will also bring the SPARK obesity prevention program, which is an evidence-based program used to keep children moving during physical education, to Warren County Middle School and continue to support the SPARK programs at Skyline Middle School and Hilda J Barbour Elementary School.</p> <p>Increased exercise opportunities will also be provided by helping to support the building of a playground at the top of Freezeland Road. Exercise and healthy nutrition will also be promoted through an exercise station for kids at the Warren County Wellness Festival. Students at both middle schools who are in financial need will have their fees paid to go to the high and low ropes course at the 4-H Center and to go on hikes there.</p> <p>The program will also target healthy eating, not only through the 95210 website, but in building greenhouses at Warren County Middle School and Skyline Middle School, where students will grow food to be sent home with students during the school year. During the summer, the backpack program will receive \$5 vouchers (for students who receive sustaining food) to be used at the Front Royal Farmers Market, where cooking demonstrations will be conducted every other week that provide recipes</p>

incorporating backpack program foods with what is available at the market.

Students in the MORE program will create nutritional message videos to be shared online and on school TV announcements. Students will also make videos that encourage fellow students to drink more water and get daily exercise.



## **CONCLUSION**

As per the General Assembly's direction, the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth's Board of Trustees designated \$1 million in dedicated monies to fund and assist obesity prevention activities in FY2019.

VFHY allocated most of these designated funds to 22 community groups across Virginia through VFHY's Healthy Community Actions Team (HCAT) grant initiative, which utilizes evidence-based practices for childhood obesity prevention recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Institute of Medicine.

Throughout FY2019 VFHY will continue to educate, engage and promote healthy living for Virginia's youth through partnerships, evidence-based strategies and best practices for improving nutrition, increasing physical activity and reducing obesity.

VFHY actively participates and supports the Nutrition and Food Security Workgroup of the Governor's Children's Cabinet, which is chaired by First Lady of Virginia Pamela Northam. Partnering with workgroup stakeholders such as the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Virginia Department of Education, VFHY is helping to address issues such as expanding access to nutritious foods and decreasing food insecurity among children and pregnant women.

In partnership with the Virginia Department of Health, VFHY conducted the Virginia Youth Survey. This survey's data collection and analysis provides insight into the health behaviors of Virginia middle and high school youth with statewide and regional statistics.

VFHY will continue investing in local community actions to prevent and reduce obesity through HCAT funding opportunities.

During FY19 VFHY's youth-led volunteer group, Y Street, will continue promoting school breakfast programs through its Great Starts with Breakfast and Fresh Spot campaigns.

In FY19 VFHY will continue to expand partnerships with statewide stakeholders, encouraging the use of new methods to increase access to healthy foods and promote opportunities for physical activity.

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