



2023

**IMPACT REPORT:
CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION**

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Background



Childhood obesity can lead to serious, lifelong, and life-threatening health problems



Established in 1999 by the Virginia General Assembly, 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.

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.

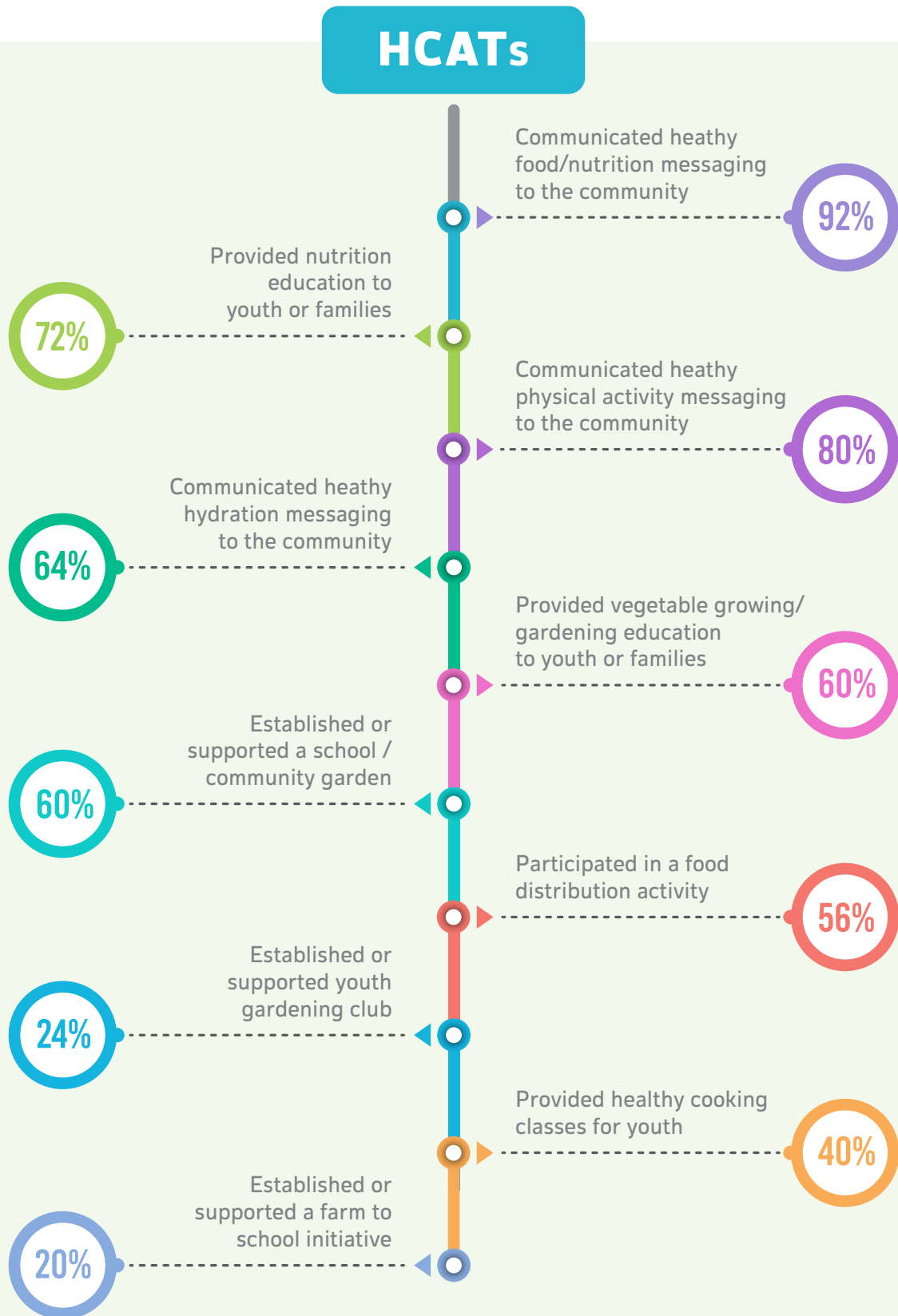
Childhood obesity can lead to serious, lifelong, and life-threatening health problems such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease, problems that were once only seen in adult populations. Experts fear that due to the obesity epidemic, this may be the first generation of children to have shorter life expectancies than their parents. According to the America Health Rankings from the United Health Foundation, Virginia currently ranks 31st in the nation for childhood obesity in 10- to 17-year-olds.

The most recent data from the 2021 Virginia Youth Survey shows:

- 31.7% of high school students are obese or overweight
- obesity prevalence among high school students in Virginia is 16.4%

The Virginia Youth Survey is conducted by the Virginia Department of Health and VFHY every other year and was last conducted in Fall 2021. Unfortunately, due to delays from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), data from this survey was not made available until late Spring 2023. Data collection for the next Virginia Youth Survey will take place in Fall 2023.

In the past year **Healthy Communities Action Teams..**



Comprehensive Approach



HCATs are community collaboratives that drive long-term policy, systems



Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCAT) Grants

In 2010, VFHY began funding Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCATs) to address the multiple factors influencing childhood obesity across Virginia. HCATs are community collaboratives that drive long-term policy, systems, and environmental changes to reduce childhood obesity in their communities. In 2020, VFHY awarded its sixth round of HCAT childhood obesity prevention grants, increasing the grant period from two years to three years in order to provide more sustained funding to grantees. VFHY approved around \$2.3 million in funding to 25 HCATs over three years. In FY 2024, VFHY will be funding 30 HCATs across the state, the highest number of HCATs it has ever supported.

Most of the VFHY funding for childhood obesity prevention is dedicated to the HCAT initiative, which establishes and supports community partnerships to fight childhood obesity on the local level. Funding and training provided by VFHY through the HCAT grants allow these community partnerships to implement evidence-based practices in childhood obesity prevention recommended by the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



VFHY approved \$2.3 million in funding to 25 HCATs over three years.

Comprehensive Approach



VFHY's HCAT grantees implement a variety of strategies for childhood obesity prevention



By the Numbers

Physical Activity Initiatives

37,000

Number of young people who participated in VFHY grant-funded **physical activity initiatives** during the past year (not including social media views or other passive participation).

Nutrition Education Initiatives

46,500

Number of young people who participated in VFHY grant-funded **nutrition education initiatives** during the past year (not including social media views or other passive participation).

Virginia Healthy Youth Day

Established by a Virginia General Assembly resolution, Virginia Healthy Youth Day promotes healthy lifestyles for Virginia's children. In January 2023, VFHY, and the First Lady of Virginia Suzanne S. Youngkin celebrated Healthy Youth Day by hosting a Virginia Healthy Youth Day breakfast to thank and congratulate leadership team members of the Foundation's youth engagement program, Y Street, for their efforts towards empowering themselves and their peers to make healthy decisions.

To celebrate Virginia Healthy Youth Day, Y Street Leaders conducted 15 meetings with legislators to share their experiences implementing the Share the Air and Rev Your Bev campaigns within their legislative districts.

Comprehensive Approach

Rev Your Bev & Y Street

VFHY implemented another successful celebration of our healthy hydration campaign, Rev Your Bev, partnering with early childhood education centers across Virginia to promote water as the number one beverage of choice for children. Since 2013, more than 290,000 children and youth have participated in more than 4,500 Rev Your Bev events held across the state in classrooms, early childhood centers, and community centers. Since 2018, Rev Your Bev efforts has focused 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 are encouraged to establish center-based healthy hydration policies that would sustain the programmatic goals of the Rev Your Bev initiative. As part of VFHY's partnership with the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation in a statewide Nemours Children's Health grant, Rev Your Bev Day engaged more than 500 early childhood education centers in May 2023.

Statewide campaign efforts in early childhood settings aligned with Y Street's Rev Your Bev activities in high schools where youth advocated for water consumption as an important measure to prevent obesity during Rev Your Bev Week and throughout the school year. During Rev Your Bev week Y Street youth engaged schools and students from PreK-12 in a variety of activities. This included distributing more than 500 kits across Virginia that contained interactive hydration lesson plans developed by Virginia educators for childcare providers, preschool classrooms, family day homes, and more to help students adopt and sustain healthy hydration habits early on. Y Street members hosted water-themed events at schools to get youth excited about drinking water. More than 30,000 children participated in educational events during Rev Your Bev Week.



Comprehensive Approach



FeedVA

VFHY’s continued maintenance and promotion of FeedVA was supported by staff throughout 2023. Established in 2017, this effort supports and connects organizations statewide that are addressing food and nutrition security. The FeedVA website continues to house the largest set of Virginia specific data, resources, and stories relevant to food access, agriculture, and nutrition.

Through the website, community groups have access to data mapping, resources, community-based coalitions, and can learn about funding opportunities that can be used to maximize impact. Existing partnerships with the Virginia Department of Social Services, Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Department of Education, the Federation of Virginia Food Banks, and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, allow FeedVA to operate as a central hub for Virginia’s state agencies to promote relevant resources, data collection methods, meeting registrations, and coalition development.



Empower Series

VFHY hosts virtual content through the “Empower Series” –a collection of virtual events aimed to help youth, advocates, and decision-makers empower themselves and others to make healthy choices. Empower Series events have hosted over 10,000 people since its inception in 2020.

Comprehensive Approach



Champions for Youth Summit

In the spring of 2023, VFHY and Prevention Connections hosted the first **Champions for Youth Summit** in Falls Church. This was an opportunity for about 500 public and private partners to learn evidence-based best practices that empower youth to make healthy choices. The next **Champions for Youth Summit** will be held in Reston in the fall of 2024.

Collaboration with Partners

VFHY serves on the steering committee for the Virginia Food for Virginia Kids initiative that is coordinated by the Virginia Department of Education. Other steering committee members include representatives from the Center for Ecoliteracy, Chef Ann Foundation, No Kid Hungry Virginia, Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, and the University of Virginia.

Additionally, VFHY supports Virginia's Farm to School efforts by serving on the statewide leadership team, which met throughout FY23 to complete the state's strategic plan to increase Farm to School programming across the Commonwealth. Other leadership team members include representatives from Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Virginia Department of Education school nutrition staff, Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom, Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP), and school district nutrition directors.

Grantee Success Stories:

Roanoke Foodshed Network

Sustainable Community Gardens

Community gardens fill numerous needs: They provide fresh, healthy, accessible food. They beautify a neighborhood and function as a communal green space that fosters social connections. And in schools, gardens can be used as hands-on education to teach kids about science, nutrition, and more.

The Roanoke Foodshed Network (RFN) is a coalition of partners creating an equitable and resilient food and farm system in the Roanoke region. Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP), a Roanoke-based nonprofit, serves as the fiscal agent for the network. Over the past year, RFN's Healthy Food Access Group has been focused on nurturing school community gardens around the area.

In addition to starting and maintaining community gardens, RFN has invested in infrastructure to make these resources stronger. The Network provides financial support to community partners to purchase supplies and support staff to maintain the garden.

A major challenge facing community gardens, especially those in schools, is finding regular, long-term support. Teachers and school administrators often are already overwhelmed with daily responsibilities and do not have the capacity to water and weed a garden plot every day.

The financial support provided by RFN has helped address this problem. Additionally, one community partner, Shawn Jadrnicek, an Agriculture Extension Agent with Virginia Cooperative Extension, offered a solution. He implemented a number of infrastructure improvements to make the gardens more low-maintenance, such as adding an automated irrigation system so they do not have to be watered by hand. Maureen McGonagle, LEAP's director of regional partnerships, said, "Public outdoor infrastructure is an incredibly powerful thing in a community because it gives space for people to convene, and the social connections that can be formed in those spaces can have ripple effects we can't even anticipate."

This work was funded through a VFHY HCAT grant.



Grantee Success Stories:

HCAT Arlington

Flexible StoryWalks™

HCAT Arlington has found that temporary infrastructure can have a lasting impact.

HCAT Arlington is a community advocacy group working to prevent childhood obesity in Arlington County. They collaborated with two local organizations, Aspire and Read Early And Daily (READ), to produce two StoryWalks™ in 2022.

Arlington County's Parks & Recreation department welcomes temporary installations, but permanent structures in the parks are rarely approved. HCAT Arlington found that StoryWalks™ – an example of temporary infrastructure – are a perfect way to implement projects in the area's parks, as the pages can be removed. They found approximately two months to be the ideal length of time for a StoryWalk.

StoryWalks™ bring literacy, nature, and exercise together by affixing a picture book, page by page, to trees or posts along an outdoor path. The first StoryWalk™ implemented by HCAT Arlington was placed along a popular walking trail leading to a community center, and the second on a loop surrounding a public park. To make the program accessible to children who cannot yet read or not yet fluent in English, HCAT Arlington chose books with short, simple text and engaging illustrations. The book selected for second StoryWalk™, Call Me Tree, ramped up the physical activity benefits: each page features a yoga pose that the children mirror as they read.

StoryWalks™, like the parks they are housed in, enrich the community in a number of ways. In addition to nurturing kids' literacy, they give families an opportunity to get active together. HCAT Arlington intentionally placed their StoryWalks™ in parks near low-income housing communities, providing an easy, free, and accessible activity for the families living there. Like LEAP, HCAT Arlington has been a VFHY grantee since July 2020, and we will support them through June 2024.



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT)

GRANT RECIPIENTS 2020-2023

Organization and Project	Funding Year 1,2,3	Description
Alternatives, Inc. HCAT-4-Mindful Eating and Exercise (HCAT-4-MEE)	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>Since 2006, Alternatives has developed a coalition of local government, behavioral health, and early childhood providers, secured resources for evidenced-based prevention programs, and provided training and advocacy.</p> <p>In FY17 HCAT-4-MEE was formed to improve the health and physical activity for children 2-10 by institutionalizing changes in policies and practices. Activities include implementing policies and practices to promote oral health, healthy foods, and physical activity in participating preschool, child care, and after-school programs.</p>
Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth and Families Foundation Arlington Healthy Communities Action Team (HCAT)	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The Arlington HCAT will implement and evaluate the Fresh Food Explorers program with Virginia Preschool Initiative classrooms in Arlington Public Schools. The HCAT will work with strategic partners in Arlington, such as the School Health Advisory Board, to advance policy level changes in the school system to reduce childhood obesity and promote active living.</p>
City of Manassas Manassas Healthy Community Action Team (MHCAT)	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The MHCAT will focus on several key issues in the City of Manassas. MHCAT will work with the City to identify improvements that need to be made to allow easier access to healthy food choices and recreational and healthy living activities as well as determining areas in the City that are underserved and/or facilities that are in need of improvement. This focus includes improving parks, park accessibility, and increasing multimodal transportation options.</p>

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT) GRANT RECIPIENTS 2020-2023

Organization and Project	Funding Year 1,2,3	Description
Cultivate Charlottesville Charlottesville Food Justice Network HCAT	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The Charlottesville Food Justice Network HCAT is a collaborative community approach aimed at increasing health outcomes and obesity prevention efforts for Charlottesville youth. The HCAT improves healthy school meals, engages youth in school gardens, and cultivates leadership and life-long healthy living skills. The HCAT aims to transform school meal options with a 40% increase in healthy, fresh foods offered while implementing educational programs in the schoolyard. Each program activity amplifies youth leadership, decision-making, and vision.</p>
Culpeper Wellness Foundation Culpeper HCAT	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The Culpeper HCAT continues to increase access to gym facilities for youth served by Culpeper County Public Schools, OPTIONS and Kids Central. Programming will be provided by Culpeper Sport and Fitness, Powell Wellness Center, and/or Parks and Recreation. The HCAT also hosts nutrition education provided by Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension and will work with schools to implement a Safe Routes to School program to increase the number of children safely walking and biking to school.</p>
Eastern Virginia Medical School Hampton Roads Breastfeeding Education and Advocacy Team (HR-BEAT)	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The Consortium for Infant and Child Health (CINCH) HR-BEAT will engage the Hampton Roads community by developing and expanding partnerships with breastfeeding partners and increasing access to breastfeeding training. A social marketing campaign will actively engage the community, provide education, and change social norms and policy. HR-BEAT is committed to bringing the community together to develop community-driven solutions to support breastfeeding across subsets of the Hampton Roads community.</p>

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT)

GRANT RECIPIENTS 2020-2023

Organization and Project	Funding Year 1,2,3	Description
Fairfax County Health Department Fairfax Food Council	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The Fairfax Food Council will leverage student advocacy to inform healthy food messaging and nutritional literacy. The Council will expand the Fairfax County Public Schools Garden to Cafeteria program beyond elementary schools to include middle and high schools, serving high-risk, underserved students. School gardens located at secondary schools can provide access to healthy foods among some of the most vulnerable or food insecure students in Fairfax County.</p>
Greater Richmond Fit4Kids Greater Richmond Coalition for Healthy Children	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The Greater Richmond Coalition for Healthy Children has successfully implemented programs and policies in the Richmond region to ensure healthy eating and physical activity in schools. The Coalition has seen major success in areas related to school-based physical activity, active transportation, and nutrition. The focus of their work has expanded to other school divisions in the region with the goal of ensuring 30 minutes of daily recess and improving the nutritional quality of school breakfast.</p>
Greensville/Emporia Community Health Action Team CHAT HELP (Healthier Emporia/Greensville for Life Project)	\$29904 \$29424 \$30000	<p>The Greensville/Emporia Community Health Action Team (CHAT) helps prevent and reduce childhood obesity by implementing CHAT HELP which includes: providing capacity-building activities by identifying and providing training; engaging in community-wide media campaigns promoting physical activity and healthy eating; enhancing the Meherrin River Trail making it more accessible for residents; building and maintaining a park that is safe, attractive and located close to residential areas; and encouraging residents to make healthier food choices.</p>

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT) GRANT RECIPIENTS 2020-2023

Organization and Project	Funding Year 1,2,3	Description
<p>Healthy Floyd</p> <p>Healthy Floyd</p>	<p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>Healthy Floyd is working hard to ensure that initiatives to prevent childhood obesity in Floyd grow and thrive with widespread community support. Projects include: increasing preschool and elementary-aged student vegetable consumption, expanding 95210 education, increasing physical activity opportunities for preschool and primary students by promoting youth leagues and after-school activities, and decreasing sedentary behavior by promoting recreational use of public and private spaces by organizing various community-wide, multi-generational walk/run initiatives.</p>
<p>LENOWISCO Health District</p> <p>Healthy Kids-Live Healthy In Scott County Coalition</p>	<p>\$28946</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>The LENOWISCO HCAT will continue to implement the 5210 Let's Go! Program in three (3) Scott County public elementary/primary schools K-6th. The HCAT will assist school wellness teams in the implementation of policies that support 5210 Let's Go! program's strategies for healthy eating, more physical activity, less screen time and less intake of sugary drinks.</p>
<p>Loudoun County Health Department</p> <p>Loudoun Pediatric Obesity Coalition</p>	<p>\$25000</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>The Loudoun Pediatric Obesity Coalition (LPOC) works to make active play free and equitably accessible in the county while continuing to strengthen nutrition education programming and garden-based learning. LPOC also promotes breastfeeding policies through an awards program. In response to demand for free community garden space, LPOC plans to research community garden zoning and potential sites for community gardens near low-income residents. LPOC will train a network of Play Rangers and host free active eco-play pop-up events.</p>

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT)

GRANT RECIPIENTS 2020-2023

Organization and Project	Funding Year 1,2,3	Description
<p>New River Valley Community Services</p> <p>Giles Community Garden Healthy Community Action Team (GCG-HCAT)</p>	<p>\$28000</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>A new GCG-HCAT will be formed with a vision statement and strategic plan. Training opportunities will be pursued to assist with organizational capacity. The GCG-HCAT will make infrastructure improvements to the existing community garden and provide educational programs and weekly meals for at-risk youth and families during the growing season. The team will provide targeted outreach and education to identified low-income neighborhoods with the goal of establishing community gardens in those areas.</p>
<p>Nurture</p> <p>#RVAbreastfeeds</p>	<p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>#RVAbreastfeeds will seek the Breastfeeding Family Friendly Community (BFFC) designation as outlined in the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action. Additional strategies include: 1) Breastfeeding Real Talk Facebook Live series. 2) Social media messaging. 3) Breastfeeding Welcome Here campaign. 4) Outreach to local elected officials and public health leaders. 5) Recruit champions to assume leadership for components of the BFFC initiative. 6) Develop a 3-year strategic plan for the BFFC initiative. 7) Develop lactation guidelines for public schools.</p>
<p>Orange County Office on Youth</p> <p>Orange Healthy Community Action Team (Orange HCAT)</p>	<p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>The Orange HCAT will implement local activities and systematic changes at all Orange County School-Aged Childcare program sites as well as the Love Outreach Food Pantry, a subset of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. The ultimate goal of the Orange HCAT is to provide more fresh produce options and interactive educational opportunities about healthy eating choices, as well as more outdoor/physical activity opportunities to Orange County youth.</p>

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT)

GRANT RECIPIENTS 2020-2023

Organization and Project	Funding Year 1,2,3	Description
<p>Page Alliance for Community Action</p> <p>Page Alliance for Community Action HCAT</p>	<p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>Page Alliance for Community Action HCAT works to improve access to safe parks and recreational activities and promote healthy choices for youth during the school day. Their work includes improving the built environment by installing a splash pad at Hawksbill Park and improving the playground equipment at local parks. The HCAT will also work with the school division to install water bottle filling stations to increase the daily intake of water for students.</p>
<p>Petersburg Public Library</p> <p>Petersburg Healthy Community Action Team (HCAT)</p>	<p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>The Petersburg HCAT is working to target over 2,400 youth in the City of Petersburg to implement Farm to School programming centered around the Virginia Department of Education's Harvest of the Month program. The HCAT has established a network of support for urban farmers/community gardeners within Petersburg and is working to increase SNAP participation through marketing and outreach strategies and support collaborative initiatives that expand access to healthy food in high priority areas via a mobile market.</p>
<p>Project GROWS</p> <p>Project GROWS HCAT</p>	<p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p> <p>\$30000</p>	<p>The Project GROWS HCAT will partner with Augusta Health, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Staunton City Public Schools, Staunton Recreation & Parks, and the Staunton Augusta YMCA to provide gardening, nutrition, and cooking education. In Staunton, HCAT partners will collaborate on a comprehensive summer feeding, nutrition, and gardening education program. In Waynesboro, HCAT partners will promote increased consumption of fruits and vegetables through nutrition education and food access programming.</p>

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT) GRANT RECIPIENTS 2020-2023

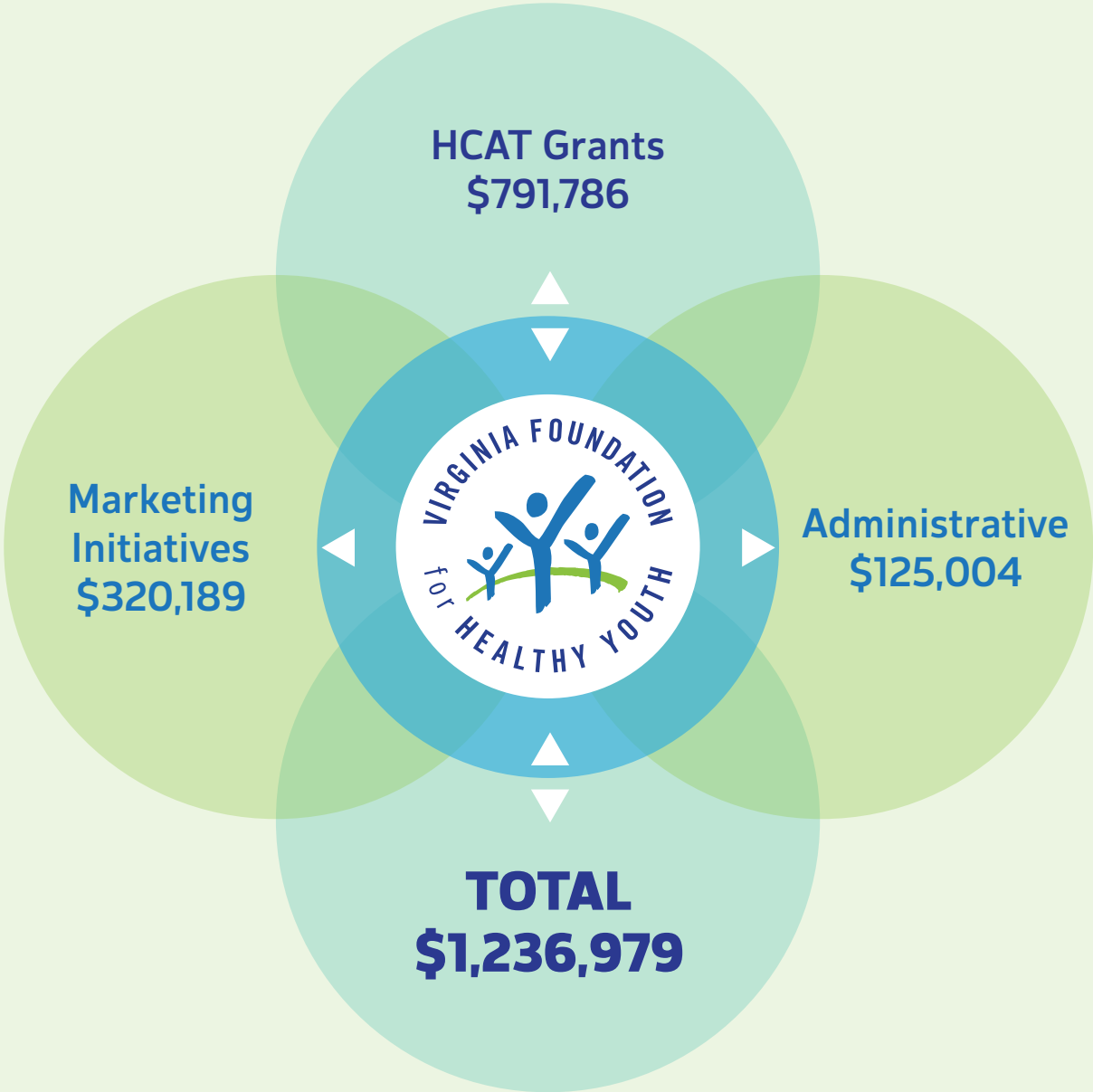
Organization and Project	Funding Year 1,2,3	Description
Radford City Schools Radford HCAT	\$29564 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The Radford HCAT will increase wellness and sustain an improved health culture in the Radford community by addressing hunger mitigation and food security efforts, and the physical environment that fosters fitness and improved nutrition education.</p>
Rockbridge Area Community Services Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids (LHRK) HCAT	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The LHRK HCAT partnership is working collaboratively to implement innovative strategies focused on policy, systems, and environmental change around nutrition, access to healthy foods, and physical activity.</p> <p>The HCAT is working to expand healthy retail efforts, enhance community/volunteer trainings, expand after-school programming emphasizing healthy eating and physical activity, expand the Walking Prescription pilot program, and promote and enhance access to local trails.</p>
Salem Area Ecumenical Ministries SAEM Student-Led Food Pantries Sustainability and Community Engagement	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>The SAEM HCAT increases access to healthy foods through student-led food pantries that will be a "student-choice" design where students can shop from a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, and healthy staples.</p> <p>The food pantries, established at Andrew Lewis Middle and Salem High are supported by school-based food drives and community food collection efforts. The project will also focus on creating policy change that refocuses anti-hunger efforts to allow students to tackle obesity and food insecurity.</p>

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TEAMS (HCAT) GRANT RECIPIENTS 2020-2023

Organization and Project	Funding Year 1,2,3	Description
Smart Beginnings Southeast Sussex and Surry Food Insecurity Collaborative	\$29662 \$29460 \$30000	<p>The Sussex Surry Early Childhood Food Insecurity Collaborative will engage young children and their families impacted by food insecurity. It will connect families to its VA Quality participating early childcare programs and to other related community partners. It will utilize GO NAPSACC, an evidence-based program, to address healthy eating habits in childcare programs.</p>
University of Virginia Cancer Center Fostering Healthy Beverage Choices to Reduce Obesity Risk: Tazewell County Public Schools HCAT	\$29998 \$30000 \$30000	<p>This project will focus on developing an HCAT within Tazewell County Public Schools and building its capacity. This team will provide direct nutrition education to students in Tazewell County to reduce sugar-sweetened beverages and increase water intake through the implementation of Kids SIPsmartER in 7th grade Health/PE classes. The HCAT will also identify additional activities to improve beverage behaviors among students in other grades within Tazewell County.</p>
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Healthy Start	\$30000 \$30000 \$30000	<p>Healthy Start provides experiences, education, and access to healthy lifestyle choices for young children and their families. This community collaboration project will serve low income and underserved families in Roanoke through education and outreach about healthy local foods alongside programs to make these foods affordable and accessible in their neighborhoods. The team's efforts will also include an expanded focus on changing the local food system to be more supportive of healthy, local choices thus making it sustainable.</p>

Summary

FY22 Childhood Obesity Funding Overview



Conclusion



VFHY will continue investing in local communities to prevent and reduce obesity through HCAT funding.



Per the General Assembly's direction, the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth's Board of Trustees designated at least \$1 million in dedicated monies to fund and assist obesity prevention activities in FY23.

VFHY allocated most of these funds to 26 community groups across Virginia through VFHY's Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCAT) grant initiative, which utilizes promising and evidence-based practices for childhood obesity prevention recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. VFHY will continue investing in local communities to prevent and reduce obesity through HCAT funding.

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 a cross-sector of childhood obesity prevention initiatives in Virginia such as the Nutrition and Food Security Workgroup of the Governor's Children's Cabinet, Virginia Farm to School, Virginia Food for Virginia Kids, the Governor's Scorecard on Nutrition & Physical Activity, and ongoing efforts in the Early Childhood Education community to enhance meal and snack options for children and promote water consumption for children. In addition to these strategies, VFHY continues to emphasize health equity by promoting the importance of good nutrition and food security among youth by providing free trainings on promising and evidence-based tactics through VFHY's Empower Series brand of content.

In FY24 VFHY will continue its work assisting with the Virginia Youth Survey to collect data on health factors including child overweight and obesity, nutrition and physical activity, expanding partnerships with statewide partners, encouraging the use of evidence-based practices to increase access to healthy foods, and promoting opportunities for physical activity. VFHY remains a good steward of the funds entrusted to it to reduce and prevent childhood obesity, and youth tobacco and substance use.





Empowering Virginia's youth to make healthy choices



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