



VIRGINIA FOUNDATION FOR HEALTHY YOUTH
ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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The Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) remains steadfast in its commitment to tackling the two leading causes of preventable death: tobacco use and obesity, as well as a rising concern, substance use. Over the last 25 years, VFHY has worked diligently to address tobacco use prevention and that success has seen VFHY’s mission expanded twice to include childhood obesity, and substance use.

Since 2001, high school smoking rates in Virginia have dropped from **28.6% to 2%**. It is estimated that our prevention work contributes to preventing at least 118,000 of Virginia’s youth from smoking each year.

Unfortunately, youth continue to be at risk of using new products brought into the market each year. Currently, we are seeing products like e-cigarettes that contain nicotine or marijuana (cannabis) and other substances that contain fentanyl and opioids. We continue to educate our grantees on these issues, and fund state-wide public health marketing campaigns that address the ongoing threats to public health. Additionally, VFHY has taken a leading role in assisting First Lady Suzanne S. Youngkin’s fentanyl prevention initiative, It Only Takes One.

VFHY looks to continue collaborating with other public and private partners to empower youth to make healthy choices and will remain a great steward of the funds received from the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement

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Marty H. Kilgore

Marty Kilgore

VFHY Executive Director

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About VFHY

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BACKGROUND

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 and nicotine use, substance use, and childhood obesity. VFHY receives no taxpayer funds and is funded solely by a small share of Virginia's annual payments from the nation's major tobacco manufacturers through the Master Settlement Agreement.

Comprehensive Approach

Tobacco-use and obesity-related illnesses are the leading preventable causes of death in Virginia. VFHY takes a comprehensive approach to prevention work that includes reaching about 40,000 youth each year through classroom-based prevention programs in public schools, after-school programs, community centers, childcare centers and prevention programs across the state.

VFHY's **award-winning marketing campaigns** deliver prevention messaging to more than 500,000 children annually. In addition, VFHY's **research program** provides scientific insight on methods to effectively reduce tobacco use. Since 2002, VFHY has funded 40 large research projects at universities throughout Virginia.



VFHY staff

Childhood Obesity Prevention Programs

Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCATs)

In 2024, VFHY began funding 30 Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCATs) across the state, the highest number it has ever supported. These community collaboratives drive policy, systems and environmental (PSE) changes to support eight healthy behaviors which can prevent and reduce childhood obesity.



Childhood Obesity Prevention Programs

Community collaboratives facilitate changes in policy, systems, and the environment (PSE) to promote eight healthy behaviors that can help prevent and mitigate childhood obesity.

Healthy Behavior	Youth Impacted
Breastfeeding	559
Decreasing Consumption of Sugar Sweetened Beverages	4,061
Reducing Stress with Increased Mindfulness	1,565
Getting Enough Sleep	1,292
Decreasing Screen Time	1,905
Moving More	12,363
Reducing Consumption of Energy Dense Foods	1,030
Eating More Fruits and Veggies	19,026
Total	41,801

Childhood Obesity Prevention Programs

Organization and Project	HCAT Name	Region	FY 2023 Funding
Cultivate Charlottesville	Cultivating Healthy Youth: Healthy food & physical activity in the garden, at school, on the plate	Central	\$30,000.00
Greater Richmond Fit4Kids	Greater Richmond Coalition for Healthy Children	Central	\$30,000.00
Nurture	#RVAbreastfeeds Healthy Communities Action Team	Central	\$30,000.00
Orange County Office on Youth	Orange Healthy Community Action Team (Orange HCAT)	Central	\$30,000.00
Page Alliance for Community Action	Page Alliance for Community Action HCAT	Central	\$30,000.00
Petersburg Public Library	Petersburg Healthy Community Action Team (HCAT)	Central	\$30,000.00
Project GROWS	Sustaining Food Access and Education in the Central Shenandoah Valley	Central	\$30,000.00
Rockbridge Area Community Services	Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids (LHRK)	Central	\$30,000.00
Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth & Families Foundation	Arlington Healthy Communities Action Team (HCAT)	North	\$30,000.00
City of Manassas	Manassas Healthy Community Action Team (MHCAT)	North	\$30,000.00
Culpeper Wellness Foundation	Propel Kids-Programming, Nutrition Education and Safe Routes to School	North	\$30,000.00
Fairfax County	Increasing Consumption of Healthy Food and Beverages Among Fairfax Youth and Families	North	\$30,000.00
Loudoun County Health Department	Loudoun Pediatric Obesity Coalition Gets Moving for Accessible Healthy Living	North	\$25,000.00
Warren County Community Health Coalition	Project WAHOO (Working to Achieve Healthy Outcomes and Opportunities)	North	\$30,000.00

Childhood Obesity Prevention Programs

Organization and Project	HCAT Name	Region	FY 2023 Funding
Alternatives, Inc.	HCAT-4-Mindful Eating and Exercise (HCAT-4-MEE)	Southeast	\$30,000.00
Eastern Virginia Medical School	Hampton Roads Breastfeeding Education and Advocacy Team (HR-BEAT)	Southeast	\$30,000.00
Greensville/Emporia Community Health Action Team (CHAT)	CHAT HELP (Healthier Emporia/Greensville for Life Project)	Southeast	\$29,904.00
Smart Beginnings Southeast	Sussex and Surry Food Insecurity Collaborative	Southeast	\$29,662.00
Healthy Floyd	Healthy Floyd	Southwest	\$30,000.00
LENOWISCO Health District	Live Healthy In Scott County Coalition (LENOWISCO Health District)	Southwest	\$28,946.00
New River Valley Community Services	Giles Community Garden Healthy Community Action Team (GRG-HCAT)	Southwest	\$28,000.00
Radford City Schools	PROJECT GROW	Southwest	\$29,564.00
Salem Area Ecumenical Ministries	SAEM Student-Led Food Pantries Sustainability and Community Engagement	Southwest	\$30,000.00
University of Virginia Cancer Center	Fostering Healthy Beverage Choices to Reduce Obesity Risk: Tazewell County Public Schools HCAT	Southwest	\$29,998.00
Local Environmental Agriculture Project	Healthy Start	Southwest	\$30,000.00

Youth Tobacco Use Prevention

Carroll County Public Schools Prioritizes Holistic Wellness for Youth Tobacco Use Prevention

In Southwest Virginia, Carroll County Public Schools practices a prevention program that focuses on the mental and physical wellbeing of students, as well as education and intervention, for students found using tobacco and nicotine products. The school system uses VFHY grant funding to implement INDEPTH, a youth nicotine use prevention program developed by the American Lung Association. INDEPTH focuses on providing intervention as an alternative to disciplinary action for students found using tobacco and nicotine products.



Rather than face suspension or even legal action for underage possession, students enrolled in INDEPTH receive lessons about the dangers of tobacco and nicotine, along with strategies to help them overcome urges to use these products. Effective nicotine use prevention programming goes deeper than simply telling youth that tobacco and nicotine are bad for them – it equips youth with the resources they need to avoid these products. Carroll County Public Schools takes intervention and prevention programming to the next level by incorporating exercise classes.

Students participating in INDEPTH can take classes in yoga and weightlifting, and the program previously had an instructor offering self-defense and CrossFit classes.

The exercise classes support tobacco prevention in multiple ways. Physical activity is known to improve mood and alleviate stress, addressing one of the main reasons why young people turn to nicotine and other substances: **to cope with mental health struggles.**

Youth Tobacco Use Prevention

Exercise also shows youth how damaging smoking and vaping is to the body – students experience how important having healthy lungs, stamina, and energy is for leading a full life. Ashely Coble, the Student Assistant Counselor for Carroll County Public Schools, notes that kids and teens often start vaping simply out of boredom. Exercise classes give students a fun and productive way to fill their free time.

Another important part of Carroll County's prevention efforts is education. Coble has found that many students who use e-cigarettes are not aware of what's in these products or their potential to seriously harm their physical and mental health. "Vaping is relatively new, so [scientists] haven't had the last thirty years to study the effects on what it's doing to a person... We don't know, essentially, what it's going to do to you in the very long run," Coble said. She added that students are shocked to learn that e-cigarette liquid contains dangerous chemicals like formaldehyde.

But there is hope: Coble has seen students open up throughout the program, becoming more willing to share their feelings and experiences with program facilitators and their peers. Many students who go through the program express a desire to quit vaping for good.



Youth Tobacco Use Prevention Grants

Organizations that receive Tobacco Use Prevention Grants provide tobacco prevention or cessation instruction to youth across Virginia. This evidence-based instruction takes place over multiple sessions and increases the knowledge and self-efficacy skills of thousands of youth each year.

Sixty-one organizations received Youth Tobacco Use Prevention grant funding in fiscal year 2024.

- **Youth Development**

- » Fifty-two organizations provided substance use prevention or cessation instruction to youth across Virginia. This evidence-based instruction takes place over multiple sessions and increases the knowledge and drug refusal skills of thousands of youth each year. These programs are implemented in public schools, after-school programs, community centers, childcare centers and prevention programs across the state.

- **Community Innovation**

- » Seven organizations designed and implemented community projects to reduce tobacco, nicotine, and vaping product use among specific youth populations.

- **Juvenile Justice**

- » Two organizations provided prevention or cessation instruction to young people in the Virginia juvenile justice system.

Over the past 25 years over 1.5 million youth have successfully completed evidence-based youth tobacco use prevention programs through VFHY grants.

FY 24 Numbers

- **39,339:** Number of youth who successfully completed an evidence based youth tobacco use prevention or cessation programming.
- **14,000:** Number of youth who successfully completed VFHY's Nicotine Products Prevention Module

At the conclusion of the 2021-2024 grant term, 95% of grantees reported that they were likely to continue offering youth tobacco and nicotine prevention or cessation programming in the future.

As a result of the support offered to them by VFHY:

- **84%** of grantees report having a greater understanding about the dangers of emerging tobacco and nicotine products.
- **84%** of grantees report having a greater understanding of current trends of youth tobacco/nicotine product use.
- **71%** of grantees report having a greater capacity to help youth stop using tobacco or nicotine products.
- **88%** of grantees report having a greater capacity to prevent youth from using tobacco or nicotine products.
- **66%** of grantees report they have become a leader in their community for youth tobacco/nicotine use prevention.

Youth Tobacco Use Prevention Grantees List

Region	Process Name	Organization Name	FY 2024 Funding
Central	Juvenile Justice Targeted Grant	Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice / Residential Services	\$54,811.00
Central	Juvenile Justice Targeted Grant	Chesterfield Juvenile Detention Home	\$19,900.00
Southeast	Petersburg Targeted Grant	Petersburg Public Library - Youth Services	\$89,162.00
Southeast	Petersburg Targeted Grant	Petersburg City Public Schools	\$29,694.00
Central	Community Innovation	Region Ten Community Services Board	\$33,000.00
Central	Community Innovation	Henrico Too Smart 2 Start Coalition	\$33,000.00
Central	Community Innovation	Orange County Office on Youth	\$33,000.00
Central	Community Innovation	Substance Abuse Free Environment, Inc. (SAFE)	\$33,000.00
Southeast	Community Innovation	Southside Behavioral Health	\$33,000.00
Southwest	Community Innovation	University of Virginia Cancer Center	\$33,000.00
Southwest	Community Innovation	Mountain Empire Older Citizens	\$33,000.00
Central	Youth Development	Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Virginia	\$55,000.00
Central	Youth Development	Boys & Girls Clubs of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County	\$55,000.00
Central	Youth Development	Chesterfield County Public Schools	\$50,000.00
Central	Youth Development	Horizon Behavioral Health	\$53,055.00
Central	Youth Development	Page Alliance for Community Action	\$7,531.00
Central	Youth Development	Sentara RMH Medical Center	\$55,000.00
Central	Youth Development	ReadyKids	\$55,000.00
Central	Youth Development	Medical Home Plus	\$54,677.00

Youth Tobacco Use Prevention Grantees List

Region	Process Name	Organization Name	FY 2024 Funding
Central	Youth Development	Rockbridge Area Community Services	\$55,000.00
North	Youth Development	SCAN of Northern Virginia	\$64,350.00
North	Youth Development	Arlington County Community Services Board	\$38,148.00
North	Youth Development	Warren County Community Health Coalition	\$62,268.00
North	Youth Development	Edu-Futuro	\$59,000.00
North	Youth Development	Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services	\$55,000.00
North	Youth Development	Fairfax County Public Schools	\$21,619.00
North	Youth Development	Fairfax County CSB-Wellness and Health Promotion	\$61,407.00
North	Youth Development	Verdun Adventure Bound	\$55,000.00
North	Youth Development	Loudoun County Community Services Board	\$55,000.00
North	Youth Development	Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.	\$55,000.00
North	Youth Development	Northwestern Community Services	\$57,698.00
North	Youth Development	The Childcare Network	\$49,936.00
North	Youth Development	Kids Clubs of Northern Shenandoah Valley	\$36,798.00
North	Youth Development	Wesley Housing	\$59,000.00
North	Youth Development	Youth Apostles Institute - Don Bosco Center	\$45,436.00
Southeast	Youth Development	Alternatives, Inc.	\$55,000.00
Southeast	Youth Development	Bacon Street Youth and Family Services	\$59,000.00
Southeast	Youth Development	Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Neck	\$54,866.00

Youth Tobacco Use Prevention Grantees List

Region	Process Name	Organization Name	FY 2024 Funding
Southeast	Youth Development	Eastern Shore Community Services Board	\$55,000.00
Southeast	Youth Development	Eastern Virginia Medical School	\$55,000.00
Southeast	Youth Development	Crossroads CSB	\$26,775.00
Southeast	Youth Development	Family YMCA of Emporia-Greenville	\$54,949.00
Southeast	Youth Development	Middle Peninsula Northern Neck CSB	\$55,000.00
Southeast	Youth Development	C. Waldo Scott Center for H.O.P.E.	\$35,566.00
Southeast	Youth Development	Three Rivers Health District	\$49,204.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services	\$55,000.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare	\$55,000.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Bristol Virginia Public Schools	\$50,742.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Grayson County Public Schools	\$45,967.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Henry County Schools	\$55,000.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Highlands Community Services	\$55,000.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Martinsville City Public Schools	\$55,000.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Montgomery County Public Schools	\$11,210.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Piedmont Community Services	\$55,000.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Planning District 1 Behavioral Health Services	\$54,707.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Carroll County Public Schools	\$55,000.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Roanoke Catholic School	\$36,467.00

Youth Tobacco Use Prevention Grantees List

Region	Process Name	Organization Name	FY 2024 Funding
Southwest	Youth Development	Mt. Rogers Community Services	\$44,565.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Smyth County Public Schools	\$54,890.00
Southwest	Youth Development	Twin County Prevention Coalition	\$42,092.00
Southwest	Youth Development	EO Companies	\$55,000.00

How the Family YMCA of Emporia-Greenville Uses Active Breaks to Support Prevention Education



What if the most impactful part of helping kids learn was not a lesson plan or assignment, but a break – downtime to let the mind rest and process?

Elizabeth Justice, Positive Action Coordinator for the Family YMCA of Emporia-Greenville, can attest to the power of a brain break.

Positive Action is a program that emphasizes the power of positive actions to nurture mental, physical, and emotional health. And it's an evidence-based, VFHY-approved program for preventing substance and tobacco/nicotine product use. Elizabeth's job takes her to each class in Greenville Elementary School to teach the Positive Action curriculum.

Why Take Brain Breaks?

When Elizabeth started working at Greenville Elementary two years ago, she noticed that other teachers at the school frequently employ "brain breaks," short breaks built into the school day to let students rest their minds before returning to their lessons.

Research shows brain breaks to be effective for helping students focus in class. However, in Elizabeth's experience, they were losing their effectiveness. She realized most of the teachers were using the same brain breaks every time, and they were usually sedentary, like watching a video. She started brainstorming ideas for quick ways to recharge that would give students the mental rest they were craving.

Grantee Spotlight

At the same time, Elizabeth was focusing on her own health and attending exercise classes. Her gym routine inspired an idea: Why not shift to active brain breaks, with the students performing quick, fun workouts?

Get Active



Elizabeth now utilizes two types of active brain breaks: cardio drumming and Tabata workouts. Cardio drumming routines are rhythmic, music-inspired workouts using motions that mimic drumming, and Tabata involves short bursts of different exercises. So far, Elizabeth has only used workouts designed by other creators, but she plans to develop her own routines soon.

Each break lasts only a few minutes, but the effects are felt all day long. Immediately after a break, the students are more focused and engaged with the lesson than they were before. Over time, as active brain breaks have become a part of the Positive Action routine, Elizabeth has noticed improved moods and excitement to learn in her students.

She credits this to the kids having a chance to burn some excess energy and let their minds rest. Additionally, the active breaks are a form of positive motivation.

Kids look forward to the breaks but know they will only have one if they finish the day's Positive Action lesson. Active breaks are a perfect support to prevention education. Studies show a link between physical activity and decreased use of substances and tobacco/nicotine products. Plus, as Elizabeth highlighted, Positive Action integrates physical health, with the program's second unit focusing on "positive actions for the body and mind."

Elizabeth says that her experience teaching Positive Action and incorporating active brain breaks into her lessons has taught her the importance of going with the flow. "I have definitely learned to be flexible, to adapt, and I have learned that these children really need a positive, encouraging person throughout their day," she said.

Unfazed

In 2022 VFHY launched a health communications campaign for cannabis prevention, using the brand Unfazed. The goal of **Unfazed** is to provide teens accurate information about cannabis, which helps inform their decision to not use. The growing cannabis industry can be challenging to navigate, **Unfazed** remains a source for fact-based and accurate information about the risks of cannabis. The campaign implemented was called "Brain Science," which focuses on showing the science on why cannabis use puts the developing teen brain at risk. **Unfazed** delivered cannabis risk messaging on media channels where cannabis use is normalized. This includes social media platforms, streaming audio, and online video content. "Brain Science" messaging reached more than 500,000 youth in 2022-23.

Please visit unfazedva.com for more information about the campaign.

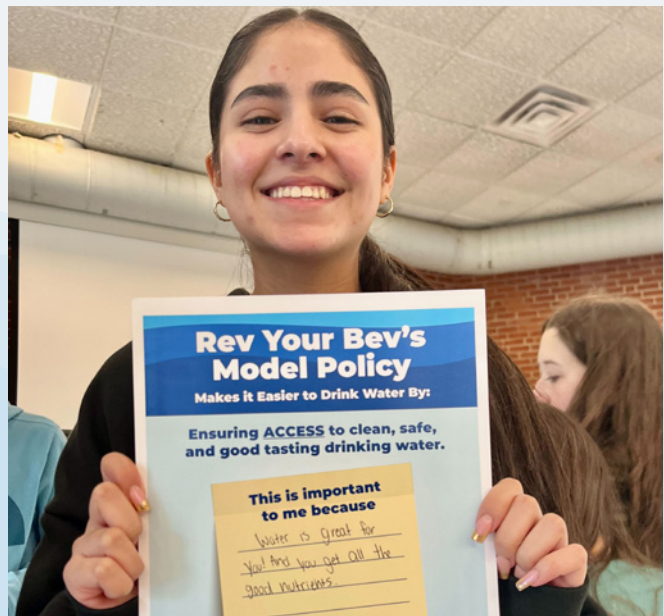


Rev Your Bev

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.

During the 2024 Rev Your Bev "week of action" Y Street members were engaged to advocate for water consumption as an important measure to prevent obesity in their local school districts, by hosting school events to get their peers excited about drinking water. Additionally, more than 500 free classroom toolkits were distributed to Virginia child care providers, preschool classrooms, family day homes and more to help students adopt and sustain healthy hydration habits early on. These classroom toolkits contained interactive hydration and water-themed lesson plans developed by Virginia educators to celebrate the health benefits of water for our youngest learners.

More than 35,000 children participated in the 2024 Rev Your Bev Week. 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.



2024 Y Street Spotlight: DeSean Brownley



Since 2004, the Virginia Foundation For Healthy Youth's youth engagement program, Y Street, has trained over 11,000 teens to tackle tobacco and obesity prevention efforts in the Commonwealth. Each year, a select group of dedicated youth is chosen to serve on the Y Street Leadership Team (YSLT), where they play crucial roles in shaping policy change.

Among these leaders, DeSean Brownley, a senior at Tallwood High School in Virginia Beach, has distinguished himself as a remarkable member of the Y Street movement. He has been instrumental in educating local elected officials and park leaders about the Share The Air campaign, participating in the 2023 Virginia Municipal League Conference and the 2024 Virginia Recreation & Park Society Conference in Norfolk.

Beyond the conference settings, he has met with Virginia Beach City Councilors and the Virginia Beach Clean Community Commission, advocating for the adoption of tobacco-free and e-cigarette-free outdoor policies to protect residents from exposure to secondhand smoke and vape aerosol and preserve our parklands. "Connecting with key decision-makers shows my passion for the cause and illustrates the tangible impact of their support in driving essential change," said DeSean. "My passion is deeply rooted in real-life experiences, and these interactions enable me to communicate those experiences, helping them understand the reasons behind my efforts."

In addition to his outstanding work in creating 100% tobacco-free outdoor environments, DeSean participated in Virginia Healthy Youth Week, where he met with members of the Virginia

2024 Y Street Spotlight: DeSean Brownley

General Assembly to educate them about Y Street's mission. In November, he also attended the 2024 the Virginia Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, & Dance Conference in Virginia Beach to raise awareness about the Rev Your Bev campaign and the importance of promoting healthy hydration in schools.

As the Executive Board's Vice President, he has embraced his role, such as facilitating interactive sessions at the Y Street Leadership Team Summits and training new students at school trainings to become activated members. DeSean also mentors his peers, facilitating regular meetings to foster engagement. His enthusiasm is contagious; fellow members regard DeSean as a source of guidance and motivation. Known for his welcoming and inclusive demeanor, he ensures everyone feels valued, encouraging them to step out of their comfort zones. "Each individual in this program contributes their own unique perspective, but we consistently prioritize making sure that everyone feels supported. Whether someone needs assistance in class or is apprehensive about meeting with a key decision-maker, we truly are like family—and we treat each other that way. If one person needs assistance, there are always 15 others ready to help."

DeSean's positive influence extends beyond his leadership roles—he truly embodies the spirit of collaboration, mentorship, and community, leaving an indelible mark that will continue to inspire others for years to come.



Youth Tobacco Use Prevention Research Grants

Grantee	Research Project	FY 23 Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Collaborating Partners
Eastern Virginia Medical School	A Risk-Tailored Approach to Connecting Youth with Vaping Prevention and Cessation Resources	\$150,000	Paul Truman Harrell, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Pediatrics Division of Community Health and Research	Consortium for Infant and Child Health (CINCH), the Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters, American Lung Association, Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Virginia Department of Health
George Mason University	Systems Simulation Modeling for Youth Tobacco Prevention and Control Research in Virginia	\$150,000	Hong Xue, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Health Administration and Policy, College of Health and Human Services	The College of William & Mary, Georgetown University, Georgia State, Tobacco Free Alliance of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University
University of Virginia	Testing an Anti-Tobacco Intervention to Reduce Tobacco and Nicotine Use Among High School Students	\$149,338	Melissa Little, PhD, MPH University of Virginia, School of Medicine, Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences	New River Health District, school divisions and high schools in the New River Health District
Virginia Commonwealth University	Understanding Youth Exposure to Tobacco Marketing in Non-Metropolitan and Rural settings	\$150,000	Bernard F. Fuemmeler, PhD, MPH Professor, Gordon D Ginder, MD Chair in Cancer Research, Associate Director, Cancer Prevention and Control Department of Health Behavior and Policy	Truth Initiative, University of South Carolina
Virginia Commonwealth University	The Virginia Youth Tobacco Projects Research Coalition Core	\$159,794	Alison B. Breland, PhD, Associate Research Professor Department of Psychology	The College of William & Mary, Eastern Virginia Medical School, George Mason University, James Madison University, Old Dominion University, Virginia Tech, University of Virginia, Virginia State University

Youth Tobacco Prevention Research Projects



Systems Simulation Modeling for Youth Tobacco Prevention and Control Research in Virginia

The goal of this project is to assess the effects of a package of policy tools and prevention strategies on the use of conventional cigarettes and electronic cigarettes among youth (under the age of 18) in Virginia using a systems modeling approach, and estimate the differential impacts of these policies on different racial/ethnic groups to address racial/ethnic and related socioeconomic health disparities. The researchers will use systems simulation modeling to refine and develop new Virginia-based tobacco simulation models to address three high-priority areas in youth tobacco prevention and control: regulatory actions, marketing, and communications.



A Risk-Tailored Approach to Connecting Youth with Vaping Prevention and Cessation Resources

Using a community engaged research process and existing data, this research project will develop and refine risk tiers describing Eastern Virginia youth tobacco use risk profiles. The process will be informed by convening partners in the region and the Virginia Youth Survey. The researchers will develop and objectively define risk profiles representative of adolescents in the region who are at various levels of the tobacco risk continuum (e.g., low risk, high risk, experimenter, current user, dependent user).

The researchers will develop and evaluate a risk-tiered action plan tool to help stakeholders connect youth with prevention and treatment resources in Eastern Virginia clinical, educational, and community settings.



Youth Tobacco Prevention Research Projects



Testing an Anti-Tobacco Intervention to Reduce Tobacco and Nicotine Use Among High School Students

The study will test the efficacy of a universal group-based Brief Tobacco Intervention (BTI) plus Automated Text Messaging (ATM) for 9th grade students enrolled in high schools in the New River Health District. The BTI has demonstrated efficacy in helping younger participants reduce their tobacco use in a randomized clinical trial with young adults presenting for military service.

Additionally, the BTI was effective in changing latent cognitive constructs associated with future tobacco use, suggesting that strengthening the BTI could produce prevention and treatment effects among youth. The project will use a sequential, multi-method research design beginning with qualitative focus groups and then implement a fully crossed cluster randomized clinical trial. Focus groups with students will identify the most promising intervention themes and strategies for targeting the BTI intervention and developing the ATM. The researchers will deliver and evaluate the interventions in a fully crossed group-randomized clinical trial.



Understanding Youth Exposure to Tobacco Marketing in Non-Metropolitan and Rural Settings

In this study the researchers aim to better understand risk factors for youth tobacco use in non-metropolitan areas within the state. Specifically, they will conduct a targeted community survey of youth (n=500) living in Danville, VA and surrounding communities. They will examine risk and protective factors of tobacco use with a focus on tobacco marketing exposure. Using a nested case-control design (n=250) with ecological momentary assessment (EMA) and global positioning system (GPS) tracking methods, the researchers will examine tobacco marketing exposure profiles among tobacco use risk patterns defined as: (a) non-users and no susceptibility (Controls, n=100); (b) used in the past (but not in past 30 days) or susceptible (Vulnerable Cases n=75); and (c) past 30-day use (User Cases, n=75).

Using this combination of community-based surveys and real-time assessments of subjects in their natural environments, the researchers will determine types of tobacco marketing associated with past 30-day tobacco use and tobacco susceptibility. In exploratory analyses they will determine the extent to which tobacco marketing exposure relates to progression to past 30-day use or tobacco susceptibility 12 months later.

Youth Tobacco Prevention Research Projects



VCU

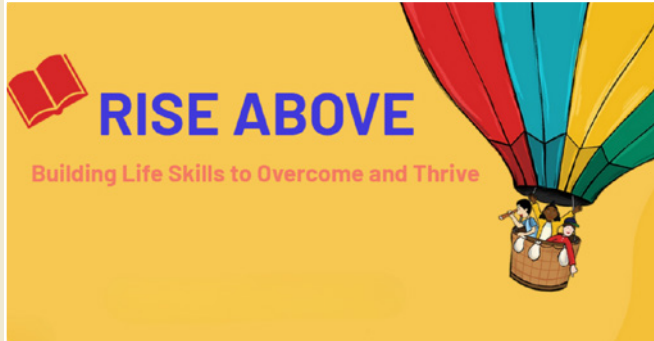
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

The Virginia Youth Tobacco Projects Research Coalition

The Virginia Youth Tobacco Projects Research Coalition advances youth tobacco use prevention through an integrated program of basic and applied research, research translation and dissemination. The goals are to: 1) Attract new faculty to research youth tobacco use prevention; 2) Facilitate the development of multi-university, multi-disciplinary collaborations; 3) Disseminate the results of research; 4) Leverage additional funding; 5) Promote the translation of findings into improved prevention services and tobacco control policies.



Youth Tobacco Prevention Research Projects



The Innovation in Child and Family Wellness Research Group at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) used VFHY funding to create a new trauma-informed approach to prevention. This brand-new tobacco and substance use prevention program, titled Rise Above, empowers kids and teens by helping them develop the skills they need to live a healthy, substance-free life. Rise Above is a trauma-informed tobacco and substance use prevention program for kids and teens. Youth-serving professionals can request materials, including instructors' manuals and student journals, to implement the Rise Above curriculum in classrooms, after-school programs, community groups, and settings. The curriculum consists of 20 sessions for small groups of students ages 10-18.

Every detail of the curriculum is designed with the input of youth and the service providers who implement the program, such as teachers, counselors, and social workers. Sunny Shin, MSW, Ph.D., Professor at VCU and Director of Rise Above, considers user feedback to be integral to the program's success.

"Evidence-informed curriculum development is important. When I say evidence, it's not just scientific, but practical wisdom that is out there in the community.... If you were to develop a tobacco prevention intervention, start in the community where you want to implement your program," he said.

The program's trauma-informed approach is also vital. Dr. Shin watched other prevention programs struggle because they failed to truly understand the circumstances that drive youth to turn to substances. It is well-known that adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, are strongly correlated with substance use, so any prevention program that does not recognize and address trauma is likely to be ineffective.

Rise Above seeks to rectify this shortcoming. With the program's trauma-informed approach, "we are saying, number one, we recognize there are ACEs and trauma that are widely present in our community. And, number two... we specifically talk about how stress influences your brain and body," said Dr. Shin. The curriculum incorporates mindfulness techniques and teaches coping strategies to help youth find healthy ways to handle stress and difficult situations.

Rise Above is part of VFHY's Tobacco-Free Generation Curriculum Guide of approved tobacco prevention programs. Three VFHY grantees from the new grant cycle are implementing the program in their own communities starting July 1, 2024.

Learn more about Rise Above:
<https://www.riseabovenow.org>



Financials / Statement of Activities

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024

REVENUES:			
Master Settlement payments (Note 6)			\$10,409,276
**Interest Income (Note 6)			\$972,567
*Proceeds from securities lending transactions (Note 1-C)			\$90,924
Grants, Reimbursables and other revenues (Note 6)			\$2,785,102
Total Revenues			\$14,257,869
Expenditures:	Expenses	Adjustments	Net (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Assets
Tobacco Settlement Expense:			
Administration (Note 7)	\$1,667,550		-1,667,550
Depreciation Expense (Note 3)	\$0	\$0	0
Expenses for Securities Lending (Note 1-C)	\$90,924	\$0	-90,924
Grant Expenses (Note 4-C)	\$2,676,167	\$0	0
Marketing (Note 8)	\$3,206,118	\$0	-3,206,118
Program Expense (Note 8)	\$4,020,160	\$0	-4,020,160
Research and Evaluation (Note 9)	\$1,594,102	\$0	-1,594,102
Obesity (Note 8)	\$1,240,188	\$0	-1,240,188
Inter-Agency Expenses (Note 10)	\$130,000	\$0	-130,000
State General Fund Transfers Out (Note 11)	\$76,133	\$0	-76,133
Total Expenditures	\$14,701,341	\$0	-14,701,341
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures			-443,472
*Fund Balance/Net Assets, July 1, 2023		*	22,634,825
Fund Balance/Net Assets, June 30, 2024			22,191,353
*reflects \$7495 restatement			

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements

* The Commonwealth's policy is to record unrealized gains and losses in the General Fund in the Commonwealth's basic financial statements. When gains or losses are realized, the actual gains and losses are recorded by the affected agencies.

** Please note \$178,164 of the interest income earnings with Investments held with the Treasury did not get recorded in Cardinal until FY25



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

VFHY

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