

2008 Annual Report

The Office on
Children and Youth



office on children
and youth

A partner of the
Institute for Innovation in Health
and Human Services at
James Madison University

Harrisonburg City & Rockingham County, VA

Office on Children & Youth

Mission: To promote positive youth development through working with all youth-serving organizations in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County to support, coordinate and examine the needs of our youth. The Office gathers and evaluates data related to the needs of youth, works to coordinate services for efficient delivery, advocates for needed services, and is a resource center for information concerning youth.



OCY- Annual Teen Health Fair

Quantitative Data:

Related to community involvement:

- ◆ Approximately 20 local health agencies participated in the annual Teen Health Fair
- ◆ 1,500 students participated in the annual Teen Health Fair.
- ◆ Over 2,000 Resource Cards were given out to youth and community members.
- ◆ The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Youth Council was re-instated with 21 members representing all local high schools.
- ◆ The Youth Data Survey was administered to half of all 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in Harrisonburg City Schools, Rockingham County Schools, and Eastern Mennonite High School.
- ◆ Over 1,600 students were participants in the 2007 Youth Data Survey collection.

Goals:

- ◆ Encourage and motivate individuals, organizations, and leaders to join together in nurturing competent, caring, and responsible young people.
- ◆ Use the Search Institute Asset Model of Youth Development to foster long-term initiatives that promote the healthy development of children and youth.
- ◆ Build on the assets in our community and support services to reduce at-risk behaviors.
- ◆ Coordinate current youth services, eliminating duplication of services and examining the unmet needs of youth.
- ◆ Provide a central point of contact for youth services, disseminate information to the community, and promote new initiatives.
- ◆ Develop a comprehensive plan for youth services based on input from agencies, input from the youth survey, and focus group data.
- ◆ Seek funding opportunities.



OCY Staff from Fall 2008

Highlights and successes:

- ◆ The annual Teen Health Fair was held at Spotswood High School and Turner Ashby High School. Approximately 20 local health agencies were present to provide the teens with valuable information. 1,500 students participated in the Teen Health Fair this year.
- ◆ Over 2,000 Resource Cards were given out to youth and community members.
- ◆ After a five year hiatus, staff revitalized the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Youth Council. The Youth Council had 21 members representing Harrisonburg High School, Blue Streak Academy, Dayton Learning Center, Turner Ashby High School, Spotswood High School, Broadway High School, and Eastern Mennonite High School. Accomplishments:
 - ⇒ Created and developed three commercials for the Strong-Families Great Youth Coalition helping parents communicate more effectively with their children regarding alcohol
 - ⇒ Representatives attended the Youth Leadership track at the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America conference in Washington D.C.
 - ⇒ Helped plan the Annual TPP Teen Talent Show.
- ◆ The bi-annual Youth Data Survey was administered to half (over 1,600 students) of all 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in Harrisonburg City Schools, Rockingham County Schools, and Eastern Mennonite High School.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program

Vision: In our community, we want to be recognized as one of the leaders in providing quality prevention services for youth.



Teen Pregnancy Prevention- Vision of You class
in Page County

Mission: The mission of Teen Pregnancy Prevention is to provide information and skills to help teenagers make healthy choices and avoid risky behaviors, such as sexual activity, drug and alcohol use by presenting quality school- and community-based prevention services. TPP strives to see a reduction in teen pregnancy, ensuring that teens in our community grow into happy, healthy adults.

Major Goals/Initiatives:

- ◆ See a 10% reduction in teen pregnancy in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County by 2010.
- ◆ Obtain additional funding sufficient to cover sustainability and expansion into Page County.
- ◆ Hire additional staff that better represents the communities we serve.
- ◆ Increase number of high school students participating in the Youth Council by 50%.
- ◆ Strengthen the Vision of You program by incorporating more Youth Development concepts.
- ◆ Continue to provide and promote Vision of You, Healthy Choices Presentations, and Baby Think It Over.
- ◆ Continue to hold meetings of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition to further develop collaborative efforts, increase awareness, and increase support for TPP.

Highlights and successes:

- ◆ After five years of trying to implement additional Teen Pregnancy Prevention programming in Rockingham County School, TPP staff was able to provide the Vision of You program to 172 students at Montevideo Middle School. As a result of that tremendous success, an additional school, Wilbur Pence Middle School, has requested the Vision of You program for next year.
- ◆ The Vision of You program was requested by four additional teachers.
- ◆ TPP launched a new website (www.findyourreason.org) that received over 3,000 site visits.
- ◆ Toilet Talk was expanded to include a middle school version and a Spanish version. Posters were also developed and distributed in Spanish.
- ◆ TPP has served a record number of community participants.

Quantitative Data:

Related to community involvement:

- ◆ Number of Business Contacts – 78 businesses/agencies participate in the media campaign (these local businesses and agencies agree to display Toilet Talk, posters, and other promotional materials)
- ◆ Number of Harrisonburg-Rockingham Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition Members – 35
 - ⇒ TPP Coalition members represent the following community organizations or agencies: Central Shenandoah Health District, Department of Nursing at JMU, Harrisonburg City Schools, Central Shenandoah Valley Office On Youth, JMU Office of Health Promotion, Eastern Mennonite High School, Valley Community Services Board, Harrisonburg Pregnancy Center, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Health Department, Hand in Hand Resource Mothers, Rockingham Memorial Hospital Community Health, Strong Families-Great Youth Coalition, Healthy Families of the Blue Ridge, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Boys and Girls Club, Office on Children and Youth, Mercy House, Department of Social Services, WHSV TV3, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Big Brothers Big Sisters, and the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board
- ◆ Baby Think It Over – 80 eighth grade students participated
- ◆ Vision of You– 513 seventh through twelfth grade students participated (VOY involves five to ten sessions with each student and varies by school/grade level)
- ◆ Healthy Choices Presentations and Community events – 3,393 people participated

Total numbers served in the community: 4,195

Total hours of service provided to the community: 300 (Direct educational contact) (This count includes ag-

Reading Road Show-The Gus Bus Program

Mission: To provide free literacy materials and activities for at risk children in our community.



The Reading Road Show Bus.

Major Initiatives:

- ◆ Participation in the Early Children Foundation grant initiative "Success By 6 Academy"
- ◆ Increased number of Gus Bus stops
- ◆ Expansion of ages served to include at risk middle school youth
- ◆ Increased cooperation with the public school systems

Goals:

- ◆ To provide a free book bag exchange program containing high quality, culturally diverse children's literature.
- ◆ To increase the amount of time families spend reading together.
- ◆ To educate parents on the importance of reading to their children.
- ◆ To teach parents and daycare providers appropriate reading techniques through activities on the Gus Bus.



Children from one of the daycare sites.

Highlights and successes:

- ◆ Gus the Bus provides services to: neighborhood sites (low income housing units and trailer parks); daycare centers, at risk pre-kindergarten classes and family day care homes. Over 2100 children benefited from Gus the Bus' literacy efforts in 2007.
- ◆ With the addition of literacy materials for elementary school aged even more children are reaping the benefits of the Gus Bus.
- ◆ Local PALS-K scores show that the Gus Bus has made a tremendous impact on the number of children entering school ready to learn. These scores indicate the percent of kindergarten students identified as needing additional intervention. A decrease in scores indicates more children are entering school with the skills needed to be successful. Since the Gus Bus began operating in 2003 there has been a significant drop in these scores, proving the success of the program.



Exploring new books on the bus.

Quantitative Data:

Related to community involvement:

- ◆ Regular Gus Bus visits are provided to over: 30 family daycare providers, 11 daycare centers , 20 pre-kindergarten classrooms, and 30 neighborhood sites.
- ◆ The Gus Bus traveled over 15,000 miles to visit local neighborhoods and daycare centers.
- ◆ Data gained from the Reading Road Show's pre and post surveys:
 - ⇒ 50% reported reading to their children everyday
 - ⇒ 85% of families increased the amount of time that they spent reading with their child
 - ⇒ For the seventy-five percent who had no regular reading routine with their child, about 50% started a routine of reading time with their children
- ◆ Over 700 bags of nutritious snacks have been given out at 3 neighborhood sites because of collaboration with the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank.

Shenandoah Valley Migrant Education Program

SVMEP Mission:

The primary goal of the Migrant Education Program is to ensure that all migrant students reach challenging academic standards and graduate with a high school diploma or complete a GED that prepares them for further learning, productive employment, and to be responsible community members.



Tutor Picnic Pictures

Quantitative Data:

Related to community involvement:

- ◆ 318 children enrolled in Migrant Education programs
- ◆ SVMEP provides outreach to apple harvesters who are in the area for a few months. This last October SVMEP provided a 4 week English workshop for the apple harvesters.
- ◆ Developed resource guides for 8 of the counties served by SVMEP.

Highlights and Successes:

- ◆ A summer program that included 8 migrant students. The theme was “Learning about Virginia while discovering our roots.” The students participated in several field trips including: VA Wildlife Center, Crab Tree Falls, Jamestown and Washington D.C. The 2 week program culminated with the students making a “treasure chest” consisting of items that represent their heritage as well as their new home, Virginia.
- ◆ Worked with CISAT Creative Services to design a new recruiting poster in English and Spanish to hang in local businesses and agencies.
- ◆ Participated in several “Agency Fairs” including those sponsored by: Cargill in Timberville and Dayton; El Dorado Grocery Store; Dayton Learning Center; New Bridges; and Success by Six.
- ◆ The SVMEP staff participated in community agencies by attending regular meetings and/or being on the board. We have participated in: the Healthy Community Council; Hispanic Services Council; Success by Six Coalition; and the Office on Children and Youth. Marcos Quintana is a board member for Skyline Literacy and Melissa Crawford is a board member for Big Brothers Big Sisters.
- ◆ Attended several conferences including a Virginia Migrant Education meeting in Richmond and a National Identification and Recruitment meeting in Kansas City, MO.
- ◆ Staff conducted a needs assessment survey with the families the program serves.
- ◆ The SVMEP collaborates regularly with the school systems in the counties we serve. We regularly exchange information with them as well as provide interpreting and other support as needed.
- ◆ A SVMEP staff member collaborates with the Gus Bus regularly in order to recruit families for SVMEP as well as to interpret for family nights or to translate documents.

Central Shenandoah Youth Suicide Prevention

Central Shenandoah Youth Suicide Prevention Program Mission:

The Central Shenandoah Youth Suicide Prevention Program is dedicated to improving comprehensive community-based suicide prevention and early intervention for at-risk youth.



ABOVE: Jane Wiggins, Program Director of the Youth Suicide Prevention Program

BELOW: Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training Program (ASIST) in March 2009



Facilitates:

- ◆ Initiatives to increase community awareness of suicide risk and protective factors and to reduce stigma associated with mental health care.
- ◆ Training for people in a range of helping roles.
- ◆ Systems to improve surveillance on risk, intervention and outcomes.
- ◆ Programs to strengthen and sustain the larger public health and prevention community.
- ◆ Strategies for enhancing comprehensive school and campus-based policy and program implementation.

Major Goals:

- ◆ Create a broad base of support to guide program planning and implementation, and to promote program longevity.
- ◆ Strengthen the 'safety net' around out-of-school youth within the Staunton, Augusta, Waynesboro community.
- ◆ Raise public awareness of mental health and illness and reduce stigma associated with mental health care.

Highlights and successes:

- ◆ Trained approximately 380 school, university and community service staff to recognize and respond to youth who may be at risk for suicide.
- ◆ Provided leadership for Rockingham County Schools in the creation of a comprehensive suicide prevention plan, to be implemented in all schools.
- ◆ Helped to train teams from Rockingham County Schools and Waynesboro City Schools in the use of a student education program, SOS (Signs of Suicide).
- ◆ Become an active participant in a region-wide network of community coalitions to foster on-going collaboration.
- ◆ Created new leadership for continuing suicide prevention efforts by training new trainers and training of school psychology graduate students at James Madison University.



ASIST in March 2009

Youth Council

Mission: The Youth Council serves a variety of purposes: to let youth have a voice in community planning, to provide youth with leadership opportunities, to provide youth with community service opportunities, to engage in risk prevention activities, and to have fun.



Youth Council members at our end of year picnic.

Quantitative Data:

- ◆ 2007-2008 Youth Council Members
 - ⇒ 3 male members and 18 female members
 - ⇒ 10 eleventh graders, 6 tenth graders, and 5 ninth graders
 - ⇒ The 21 members are representatives of: Harrisonburg High School, Broadway High School, Turner Ashby High School, Spotswood High School, Eastern Mennonite High School, the Blue Streak Academy, and the Dayton Learning Center
 - ⇒ Two members are English as Second Language students (Spanish)
 - ⇒ Members range in age from 14-18 years old
 - ⇒ 67% of members are Caucasian
 - ⇒ 24% of members receive free or reduced lunch

Major Goals:

- ◆ To expand the Youth Council's interest in drug and alcohol prevention and education to also include prevention of teen pregnancy.
- ◆ To recruit additional members in 2008-2009 so that the group size totals 30-35 members.
- ◆ To increase funding so that more time can be spent on additional projects and the expansion of topics that the group targets.



Kim Hartzler-Weakley, Caitlin Worthy, and Cindy Reeves (Strong Families-Great Youth Coalition) at the CADCA Capitol Hill Rally

Highlights and successes (2007-2008):

- ◆ At the start of 2007-2008, there were no active members in Youth Council. This group had existed from 1998-2003 but had to disband due to a lack of funding. Staff revived the group at the start of the 2007-2008 school year and recruited 21 active members throughout the year, of which none were seniors.
- ◆ Attended the Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America (CADCA) Youth Leadership forum in Washington D.C.
- ◆ Youth served as mentors for an art project involving 9-12 year old migrant students.
- ◆ Planned a talent show for a teen pregnancy prevention program.
- ◆ Worked with the Strong Families- Great Youth (SFGY) Coalition in order to produce commercials that focused on prevention of under-age consumption of alcohol. The group started this process by meeting with the Chair of the SFGY Coalition. Time was then spent reviewing old commercials that had been used by the coalition, and deciding what the group liked and disliked about those commercials. The Youth Council then met with two creative design members from the local TV station to develop concepts. All three commercials that were produced are based on concepts developed by Youth Council members. After the scripts were written the group took part in filming the commercials.

The Office on Children and Youth

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