

# 2008-2009 Annual Report



## OOY Staff In June 2009

### Management Team

Carol Blair  
Amber Ham  
Terri Hagenlocker  
Joy Stultz

### Employment Services

Sharon McGaughey  
Tammy Zirkle

### Family Services

Ginny Newman  
Judith Schrauder

### Gang and Substance Abuse Prevention

Diane Kellogg  
Erica Orren  
Nancy Tyree

### Juvenile Crime Control

Kathy Gilliam  
Shawn McLain

### Supplemental Education

Jennifer Maddox  
Tami Mullin

### Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Donna Wells  
Rebecca Ullrich

## OOY TAKES ON GANG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION

The Office on Youth (OOY) has been spearheading a community effort to prevent youth from engaging in gang activity. This effort, known as the **SAW 2010 Coalition** has been overseen by a full time Gang Prevention Coordinator since 2007. Because of the close link between gangs and drugs, the OOOY expanded the Coalition to include substance abuse in 2008 and hired a Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator. Currently, these 2 positions serve as staff to the SAW 2010 Coalition helping direct and oversee all Coalition activities.

The SAW Coalition has made a significant impact in the community. **Three community rallies** with over 750 people in attendance have been held to educate community members about gangs and drugs and illicit support in combating this problem one youth at a time. **Over 75 presentations** have been conducted to 1,000 people educating them on gangs, substance abuse, and other destructive behaviors.

The Coalition has offered support to numerous community initiatives by partnering with youth-serving organizations, school systems, and grass-root organizations to implement programming aimed at improving the lives of at-risk youth. The Coalition found that many grass-roots initiatives fail to materialize or discontinue due to start-up costs and lack of program and management know-how. The Coalition has worked hard to bring resources to organizations and people that are enthusiastic about helping at-risk youth. In the past 2 years, **22 community initiatives**

have been supported through this Coalition and another 14 programs received financial support.

Specifically relating to Substance Abuse Prevention, the Coordinator has focused on educating the community about issues related to drug abuse. The new Coordinator has conducted over 35 educational presentations, overseen a community-wide environmental campaign including cinema ads, radio ads, grocery cart advertising, posters, and numerous school directed messaging, and worked intensely with **6 high school and middle school SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) clubs.**

The Coordinator's involvement with the SADD clubs included taking 16 youth to the Virginia Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Project, a week long conference in July. These youth returned to their high schools to become leaders in helping prevent their peers from abusing drugs. Sticker Shock, a campaign to reduce the sale of alcohol to minors was conducted with the assistance of 23 youth. SADD clubs have also been supported with presentations, guest speakers, club activities such as seat belt checks, and substance free homecoming and prom activities.

Tackling the gang and drug problem in our area is a task that involves all sectors of our community. **With the hard work of the SAW Coalition and OOOY staff, our community will be changed!**

*The mission of the SAW 2010 Coalition is to create/implement intentional strategies to prevent youth from involvement in criminal gang activity, drug use, violence & other risky behaviors*

## Employment Services Division

The Office on Youth fills the role of a “youth employment agency” in helping to prepare youth for the workforce by providing employment readiness training, on-site work experience and assistance in securing employment opportunities through the following three programs:

### Summer Youth Employment

The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) provides employment training and work experience primarily during the summer to high school students. During the 2008 summer, the SYEP employed 29 youth at 23 different businesses in the community. The SYEP has strict eligibility requirements based on disabilities and financial need.

### Youth Corps

Youth Corps is a pre-employment training program for youth ages 14-16 who cannot yet gain employment on their own. Youth Corps is designed to give younger youth, in need of positive role models, valuable job training in community workplace settings. Youth Corps served 87 participants at 16 different locations ranging from daycare centers to local restaurants.

In addition, Youth Corps participants voluntarily gave 223 hours of service to the community through 22 community service projects at 8 different community organizations.

### Out-of-School Youth Employment

Out-of-School Youth Employment is an employment/training program for youth ages 16-21 who have been released from compulsory education. Due to their release from compulsory education, most of these youth do not have a high school diploma or GED. The purpose of the program is to prepare these at-risk youth to join the workforce through the development of basic life skills, work readiness skills, and occupational skills.

In 2008-2009, the Out-of-School Youth Employment program served 50 youth by providing such services as employment advice, resume help, GED tutoring, and transportation to job interviews. Of these 50 youth, 13 were formally enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program, a program administered through the Department of Labor. The WIA program has strict eligibility requirements and extensive follow-up services. Of these 13 youth: 3 secured permanent gainful employment, 1 successfully attained their GED, 1 enrolled in occupational school, and 1 obtained their drivers license.



## YOUTH CORPS TESTIMONIAL

Ben Lawson participated in the OOOY's Youth Corps program in 1999. Ben graduated from Stuarts Draft High School and is currently a junior at the University of Virginia. He intends to major in engineering. Ben wrote the following when asked about his Youth Corps experience.

*“I was first introduced to Youth Corps by my childhood friends. They told me how I could help the community and get paid at the same time. So I went to the Office on Youth and enrolled in the program. After being a participant for about 3 years, I can say that it has helped me get to where I am today. It provided me with insight to how my community works and I gained work experience. The program helped me develop better social skills and life long friendships. Youth Corps is an amazing program and without all the experience, skills, and information that I was taught through the program, I don't believe that I would be the University of Virginia student that I am today.”*



## PATHWAY TESTIMONIAL

Pathway staff tell the following story about a young man named Stephen.

“Stephen attended Pathway for three consecutive years and is now residing at the Boys' Home in Covington, Va. Stephen was suspended from his local middle school in the fall of his 7th grade year at the age of 13 for displaying gang signs and disruptive behaviors. He began attending Pathway but was also suspended from the Pathway program due to disruptive and hard to control behaviors. At the start of his 8th grade year, it was determined that Stephen would be expelled from public school. He again began attending Pathway and continued in the program during the entire next school year. At the end of this year, his application to return to public school was denied.

“Stephen began a third year at Pathway, but this time he was very discouraged. At age 15, he had missed nearly two years of school, was expelled for a third year and the possibility of being re-admitted did not look good. Pathway staff began to work with his family to determine alternatives for Stephen's education and his future. In the spring of his 3rd year at Pathway, with the support of the public school system, OOH staff were able to assist Stephen and his family in enrolling him at the Boys' Home.

“At the Boy's Home, Stephen started in a remedial program. He attended summer school to bring up his grades and improve his academic skills. He is currently enrolled in the 9th grade program at the Boys' Home and has the option of playing basketball this winter which was one of the key motivators in his successes over the years. This brings a smile to our faces, indeed.”

- Without the Pathway program, Stephen most likely would have increased his gang involvement.
- Without the Pathway program, Stephen most likely would not be continuing his education.
- Without the Pathway program, Stephen most likely would have become involved with the juvenile justice system and adult corrections.

## Supplemental Education

For students in grades 6-12 who are suspended or expelled from school, the **Pathway Program** provides structured programming so these students can remain positively engaged during the school day. Youth in the program receive academic tutoring in the morning and participate in community service projects in the afternoon.

In 2008-2009, the Pathway program provided structured tutoring and community service opportunities to 138 youth. Thirty-eight different organizations in Augusta County, Staunton, and Waynesboro received over 1,500 hours of volunteer help from Pathway participants.

## Programs For Juvenile Offenders

Juvenile Crime Control staff oversee a variety of programs and services for local court-involved youth. These services are designed to deter juvenile crime and provide alternatives to detention. Services include but are not limited to electronic monitoring, curfew checks, community service placements, anger management classes, and shoplifting classes. In 2008-2009, services were offered to 349 court-involved youth.

## Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Striving to prevent teen pregnancies and reduce risky behaviors among community youth, the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Division conducts a variety of programming that educates teens, parents, and the community about the emotional, physical and financial risks and responsibilities of sexual activity and parenthood. The main goal of these programs is to promote the postponement of initial sexual activity and to discontinue sexual intercourse until marriage. The following is a description of programs and services offered:

### Future Build

Future Build is a program designed to prevent unwed pregnancies in women 20-29 years old who live in Staunton and

Waynesboro Community classes and Train the Trainer Classes were held to discuss such topics as 1) how children benefit from having married parents, 2) the importance of an involved father, 3) communication, and 4) healthy relationships. A total of 78 persons were served by this program.

### Family Life

Family Life is a program taught to area elementary school students on topics related to puberty, hygiene, and personal safety. Family Life was taught to 1,602 elementary students.

### Baby Think It Over

The Baby Think It Over program uses a life-like infant simulator designed to educate youth about the demands of being a parent. In 2008-2009, 551 students participated in the program by taking home an infant simulator over a weekend.

## Vision of You

Vision of You is a ten session decision-making program designed for middle and high school students. The Vision of You curriculum was presented to 901 area youth.

Area teachers and school personnel asked for support from OOO staff to address a variety of topics related to healthy relationships, sex, abstinence, birth control, and pregnancy. In 2008-2009, OOO staff taught 1,047 students about various topics related to relationships, sex, sexually transmitted disease/infections and pregnancy.

## Gang and Substance Abuse Prevention

### S.P.O.K.E.S.

SPOKES stands for Supervised Program Offering Kids Effective Skills. Referred, at-risk youth join the SPOKES program for a 10-week session during which they learn to repair abandoned or broken bicycles and distribute these bicycles to the community. Each session is limited to four youth with one OOO "shop boss." This low staff to youth ratio allows for close supervision and intensive mentoring.

Last year, 16 youth enrolled in the program. An additional 25 youth participated in bike rodeos and 26 bicycles were repaired and distributed to needy members of the community.



Sticker Shock a campaign to promote the consequences of buying alcohol for minors was assisted by 23 youth.

Isaac Diggs, an assistant with our Youth Power Summer Program. The following is his response when asked, "What was the most memorable moment for you when working with the youth participants this summer?"

*"The thing that will stick with me about this summer is when we took the kids on a field trip to the Safari Park and there were two kids who you could tell had never gotten a chance to experience anything like this before. They were just so amazed; it was like a new world had just opened up to them. I will never forget the looks on their faces."*

### Teen Activities

Teen activities are designed to allow youth to socialize and have fun without the pressure of being confronted with drugs or alcohol. In 2008-2009, the OOOY sponsored 11 drug-free Teen Activities, with 951 youth from the region in attendance.

### Substance Abuse Prevention

Project Alert, a drug prevention program, was taught in the traditional school classroom during the school day at Kate Collins Middle School, Ridgeview Christian Academy, and Grace Christian School. This program served 189 youth.

### Summer and After School Youth Power

Youth Power is a free after-school and summer program for middle school youth. Youth participate in team-building, community service projects, and recreational activities. In addition, a drug prevention program, Project Alert, which focuses on building drug resistance skills is incorporated into the program.

In 2008-2009, the after-school Youth Power program served 43 youth living in low-income housing complexes in Staunton. By offering the program on-site, youth who would otherwise have been unable to attend due to lack of transportation were served.

The Summer Youth Power Program served 47 youth.

### Family Services

#### Emergency Family Services

The Promoting Safe and Stable Families grant provided emergency financial assistance to Waynesboro residents. Through this program families received assistance with such things as rent payments, utility bills, daycare costs, counseling co-pays, and/or in-home parenting services. In 2008-2009, 104 families requested emergency assistance; 66 families received emergency funding. Over \$11,976 were distributed through this program.

#### NUMBERS SERVED BY PROGRAM

Program	2007-08	2008-09
After-school Youth Power	19	43
Emergency Family Assistance	67	66
Employment: Out-of-School	42	50
Employment: Summer Youth	29	29
Juvenile Justice Programs	469	349
Parenting	184	283
Pathway	105	138
SPOKES	N/A	41
Substance Abuse Prevention in Schools	214	189
Summer Youth Power	37	47
Teen Activities	677	951
Teen Pregnancy Prevention	4,469	4,179
Youth Corps	137	87
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6449</b>	<b>6452</b>



## PARENT TESIMONIAL

*Judith,*

*I thought I would take a couple minutes to let you know how much I appreciated the Parent Project class. I am the mother of a 13 year old strong-willed, bipolar child. I have raised one child and did not face the challenges that I have faced with my son. The problem is that normal" parenting techniques do not work with strong-willed children. I did not know how to handle him and often gave up or gave in because it was the easiest thing to do - nothing I tried worked.*

*This class helped me look at things in a different way and taught me a new method of handling his very difficult behavior. I am not going to say it has been easy because change is always hard but the techniques I learned have helped. I still can't control my son but I do control things. Taking control of things has helped him change his behavior. His behavior is not perfect but it is better.*

*In addition, I learned that I am not alone. I have often felt that I am the only one with a child like mine. I couldn't really talk to anyone for support because people that don't have strong-willed children just don't understand. In the class I got to meet some people (now friends) that truly understand because they are going through similar issues. Our class ended about three months ago and we still meet three to four times per month. We also talk on the phone in between times.*

*The money that is spent on this class is well worth it. It is a great investment in the future of our children. I feel that all parents with strong willed children should take it.*

*Shirley White*

Parenting Programs recognize the importance of families in the lives of youth. In 2008-2009, the OOOY offered 5 different parenting classes: For Kids' Sake, Guiding Good Choices, Love and Logic, the Parent Project, and Dad's Inc.

**For Kids' Sake** is an educational seminar that provides parents with the knowledge and skills to co-parent in a way that is healthy for their children and themselves. In 2008-2009, 59 parents completed the program.

**Guiding Good Choices** is a program that teaches parents and other caregivers how to help children avoid risky behavior. Last year, 31 parents enrolled in the program.

**Love and Logic** is a basic parenting class for parents of children of all ages. This program teaches simple yet effective parenting techniques. In 2008-2009, 65 parents enrolled in the program. The program was offered five times at four locations.

**Parent Project** is a parenting program designed for parents of adolescents who have begun to display destructive behavior such as drug abuse, truancy, court involvement, etc. This class was started in 2008 and has been offered three times servicing 62 parents.

**Teen Project** is a complementary program to Parent Project. Teen-Project® is a structured skill-building workshop where adolescents are guided through activities designed to help them focus on the skills of making wise choices. Parents enrolled in the Parent Project simultaneously enroll their adolescent in the Teen Project. This class was started in 2008 and has been offered three times serving 45 adolescents.

**Dad's Inc.** (incarcerated) is a seven session parenting program for fathers who are incarcerated at Middle River Regional Jail. Topics covered include the important roles fathers play in their children's development, the effects of a father's incarceration on his children and other family members, how and why to maintain appropriate contact with children, legal issues, healthy relationships, and reunification with families upon release. The class was offered once and served 10 fathers.

An additional 56 parents were served through parenting outreach programs in partnership with the Waynesboro Housing Authority and the Department of Social Services.



## Message from the Director

The last year has provided The OY with many opportunities to nurture and develop partnerships with community agencies and organizations. By pooling our funds and resources, we have been able to expand many of our services and enhance the quality of programming to area youth, despite the economic downturn. Some examples of these partnerships are as follows:

- Staunton and Waynesboro Redevelopment and Housing Authorities gave us the use of meeting rooms to hold on-site after school and summer programming for their residents.
- Partnerships with the Waynesboro YMCA and the Waynesboro Police Department resulted in a very successful Friday night basketball program for area youth.
- Support was given to the Staunton YMCA and Staunton Young Life for scholarships and transportation to boys in the Newtown neighborhood to participate in basketball leagues.
- Wayne Hills Baptist Church generously offered their facility for the 3-day SAW 2010 rally, featuring the performance of "R and J."

- Several area churches opened their doors for us to provide on-going parent education programs. Some of these churches also provided meals for our families.
- Community service opportunities were provided by the Noon Lunch Program at Trinity Episcopal Church, Vector Industries, ARC of Augusta, Ride with Pride, Shenandoah Nursing Home, and the SPCA.

These are just a few examples of the strong collaboration that exists between the Office on Youth and the community. We had a great year in large part because of these partnerships.

On a final note, our Office was successful in creating its own non-profit arm with 501(c)3 status. This non-profit, *Shenandoah Valley Community Focus*, will enable us to apply for additional funding and receive tax-free contributions.

It's been a challenging year, but we have moved forward with the help of our friends and fellow community partners! We look forward to continuing these collaborations and to developing more. Together we can make our community a better place for our children, youth, and families.

This is, after all, ***our Community, our Focus.***

### About the Central Shenandoah Valley Office on Youth:

The mission of the Central Shenandoah Valley Office on Youth is to develop positive connections between youth, their families and communities, to build a strong foundation for a successful future. The OY is a regional government agency committed to meeting the needs of youth and families in Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County. All three localities provide financial support and other resources to the Office. The Regional Youth Commission is comprised of 15 members, 5 representing each locality, and provides citizen input to the Director on issues such as youth programming, funding, and community needs. Commissioners serve as youth advocates and ambassadors and are dedicated to ensuring the provision of comprehensive youth services in our region.

The commissioners for the past year were:

**Augusta County**— Carol Fortune, Holly Herman, John Swett, Linda Yancey, Courtney Yancey

**Staunton**— Ron Cartwright, Yamon Crawford, Chance Crawford, Ophie Kier, Erin Stabel,

**Waynesboro**— Chloe Berry, Sylvia Harris, Karen Knemoller, Laurie Thomas, Judith Walden

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