

2007-2008 Annual Report



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Message from the Director

Budget year 2007/2008 was a difficult year for us with the falling economy and subsequent budget cuts. It was even more difficult for most of the families we serve. You will see the challenge that we are all facing (trying to maintain the same level of service or lifestyle, with fewer resources) reflected in this year's annual report as it has been cut back and abbreviated! But here at the Office on Youth, we're unfaltering in our commitment - as our tag line so well states: Our Community, Our Focus! We are actively seeking ways to continue to provide services to our youth and families who are struggling to cope, in need of guidance, training, or activities and who are seeking to be more involved in their

community. As limited resources make this work more challenging, we're still very much here; but, we rely on your help! I invite you to join with us - read this report; spread the word about our services; volunteer to help; or contribute financially - after all, this is Our Community, Our Focus!

Thanks for your support!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol Blair".

our Community, our Focus

2007-2008 Grant Highlights

In 2007-2008, the Central Shenandoah Valley Office on Youth (OOY) was awarded several new grants from local, state and federal sources. Locally, the OOOY was honored to receive awards from three local foundations: the Gannett Foundation, the Community Foundation of the Blue Ridge, and the United Way of Greater Augusta.

The OOOY received a \$2,500 grant from the Gannett Foundation. The Gannett Co. is a leading news and information company. In the United States, the company publishes 85 daily newspapers and is the parent company of the Staunton News Leader. Through the generous local support of the Staunton News Leader, the OOOY was awarded this grant to expand parenting programs.

The OOOY was the proud recipient of a \$4,500 grant from The Community Foundation of the Blue Ridge. This grant helped the OOOY purchase much needed multimedia equipment for use in its parenting workshops. The purchase of this equipment is an essential component to reaching the goal of expanding parenting services in our community. This equipment will allow more classes to be offered, at more locations, to more parents. The Community Foundation of the Blue Ridge is a 501(c)3 community organization that is dedicated to the management, growth, and distribution of funds as awards, scholarships, and grants to the local community each year. The mission of the Community Foundation of the Blue Ridge is to enrich the quality of life by responding to needs and inspiring philanthropy in our community.

The OOOY was awarded many state grants in 2007-2008. A new award, never before received by the OOOY was a \$22,482 grant from the Virginia Department of Social Services. This grant funded the initiation of a new parenting workshop entitled the Parent Project. The program teaches parents strategies targeted toward the most destructive of adolescent behaviors. It helps parents learn and practice identification, prevention, and intervention strategies that help stabilize the family unit.

The OOOY was extremely honored to be awarded one of twenty grants awarded nationwide by the United States Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. This award was a \$199,909 grant for two-years to assist in Gang Prevention Coordination. This grant provides funding for the Office's Gang Prevention Coordinator position as well as community activities that are designed to mobilize community members to support area youth-serving organizations and to encourage volunteers to make intentional and positive connections with youth in our community. The grant also funds a Community Service Coordinator who works to provide meaningful community service opportunities to at-risk youth.

Supplemental Education

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

In 2007-2008, the Pathway program provided structured tutoring and community service opportunities to *105 youth*. Thirty different organizations in Staunton and Waynesboro received over 1,300 hours of volunteer help from Pathway participants.

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:

Youth Corps served *137 participants* ages 14-16 in Staunton, Waynesboro and Augusta County. Youth were placed at 30 different locations ranging from daycare centers to computer installation and repair businesses. Over \$50,000 was paid to these youth for the services they performed at these job sites. In addition, youth voluntarily gave 190 hours of service to the community through 21 community service projects at 15 different community organizations.

In 2007-2008, the **Out-of-School Youth Employment** program served *42 youth* by provided such services as employment advise, resume help, GED tutoring, and transportation to job interviews. Of these 42 youth, 16 were formally enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program, a program administered through the Department of Labor. The WIA pro-

gram has stricter eligibility requirements and more extensive follow-up services. Of these 16 youth: 3 secured permanent gainful employment, 5 successfully attained their GED, 1 is enrolled in occupational school, and 2 obtained their drivers license.

During the 2007 summer, the **Summer Youth Employment** program employed *29 youth* at 25 different businesses in the community. The Summer Youth Employment program has strict eligibility requirements based on disabilities and financial need.

Programs For Juvenile Offenders

Juvenile Crime Control staff oversee a variety of programs and services to local court-involved youth. These services are designed to deter juvenile crime and provide alternatives to detention. A variety of services are provided to court-involved youth including but not limited to electronic monitoring, curfew checks, community service placements, anger management classes, and shoplifting classes. In 2007-2008, services were offered to *469 court-involved youth*.

Gang Prevention

Under the direction of the SAW Coalition, the OOOY directs a multi-faceted approach toward gang prevention. First, this project seeks to mobilize the business, political, and faith communities to realize the need for service to and involvement with youth in the community. Second, the project seeks to create opportunities that to positively engage youth and provide them with structured programming as well as opportunities to connect with adult mentors.

SAW has provided targeted resources to areas within the community that are gang targeted. Extensive community revitalization efforts have been undertaken including a community day, neighborhood watch partici-

pation, and support for various grassroots community initiatives.

SAW has also sponsored several initiatives to provide on-site programming to at-risk youth residing in these areas.

In 2007-2008, the SAW Coalition initiated several community awareness events to include a Community Rally with over 200 people attending, 18 informational meetings held throughout the community, and sponsoring Alex Lebenstein a holocaust survivor as a community guest speaker.

SAW helped facilitate 4 adopt-a-school partnerships between area schools and community organizations, and helped place 10 volunteers as mentors through Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

SAW continues to work with many facets of the community to maintain, create, and establish different types of programming that serve at-risk youth and provides opportunities to mobilize the community at-large to become involved in the life of youth.

Teen Activities

Teen activities are designed to create places where youth can socialize and interact with other youth without the pressure of using drugs or alcohol.

In 2007-2008, the OOOY sponsored 13 substance-free Teen Activities. A total of *677 youth* from the region attended these events.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Striving to prevent teen pregnancies and reduce risky behaviors among community youth, the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Division of OOOY 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 voluntary sexual intercourse until marriage. The following is a description of programs and services offered:

Future Build is a program designed to prevent unwed pregnancies in women 20-29 years of age who live in Staunton and Waynesboro. Community classes and Train the Trainer Classes are held to discuss such topics as 1) the benefits of marriage to a child, 2) the importance of a father, 3) communication, and 4) healthy relationships.

In 2007-2008, Future Build served 12 participants in Community Classes, 15 participants from the Middle River Regional Jail, and trained 36 community persons through Train the Trainer classes. A total of 63 persons were served by this program.

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 1,180 elementary students.

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 838 area youth.

Area teachers and school personnel can ask for support from OOH staff to address a variety of topics related to healthy relationships, sex, abstinence, birth control, and pregnancy. In 2007-2008, OOH staff taught 1,566 students about various topics related to relationships, sex, and pregnancy.

The **Baby Think It Over** program is a life-like infant simulator designed to educate youth about the demands of being a parent. In 2007-2008, 490 students participated in the program by taking home an infant simulator.

Prom Promise is an abstinence campaign conducted in all area high schools prior to Prom night that encourages youth to remain abstinent on prom night and beyond. In 2007-2008, 332 high school students committed to abstinence on prom night.

Family Services Division

Family Services are provided through a combination of parenting workshops and free structured programming for youth.

Community Corps is a free summer enrichment program for middle school aged youth. Youth participate in various team building, community service projects, and recreational activities. During the 2007 summer, 37 youth enrolled in Community Corps.

Project Alert After-School Program

Project Alert is an after-school program for 11 to 13 year olds. Project Alert is a drug prevention program that focuses on building drug resistance skills. This after-school program also incorporated community service projects into the weekly activities. In 2007-2008, the after-school program served 19 youth.

In addition to offering the All Stars curriculum after-school this program was offered to Kate Collins Middle School students during their health/physical education class. This program served 214 youth at Kate Collins.

Parenting Programs recognizes the importance of families in the lives of youth and in the community. In 2007-2008, the OOH offered 5 different parenting classes: For Kids' Sake, Kids in the Middle, Guiding Good Choices, Love and Logic, and the Parent Project.

For Kids' Sake is an educational seminar for parents with custody issues resulting from divorce or separation, with the goal of providing parents with the knowledge and skills to nurture their children through this difficult

process. In 2007-2008, 42 parents completed For Kids' Sake.

Guiding Good Choices is a program that teaches parents and other caregivers how to help children avoid risky behavior. Last year, 37 parents enrolled in the program. The program was held 4 times at three different locations in the community.

Love and Logic is a basic parenting class for parents of children of all ages. This program teaches simple yet effective parenting techniques. Love and Logic saw a significant increase in participation. In 2006-2007, 29 parents enrolled in the program. In 2007-2008, 82 parents enrolled in the program. The program was held twice as many times as the previous year at six different locations.

Parent Project was a new parenting initiative implemented in 2008. This class was offered once and serviced 23 parents.

Emergency Family Services

Promoting Safe and Stable Families provides needed emergency financial and/or familial assistance to Waynesboro residents. Through this program families can receive assistance with such things as rent payments, utility bills, daycare costs, counseling co-pays, and/or in-home parenting services. In 2007-2008, 74 families requested emergency assistance. Of those 74 families, 67 families received emergency assistance from the OOH. Last year over \$9,590 were distributed to needy families through this program.

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 OYO 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 resource to the Office. The Regional Youth Commission is comprised of 15 members, 5 representing each locality, and provides citizen input to the Director and staff on issues such as youth programming, funding, and community trends. The Commissioners serve as youth advocates and ambassadors for our office, and are dedicated to ensuring the provision of comprehensive youth development services in our region.

The commissioners for the past year were:

Augusta County– Carol Fortune, Holly Hermon, John Swett, Linda Yancey, Katie Yancey

Staunton– Ron Cartwright, Yamon Crawford, Candy Calloway, Erin Stabel

Waynesboro– Nicolas Gore, Karen Knemoller, Sylvia Harris, Laurie Thomas, Judith Walden

Funding Overview

In Fiscal Year 2007-2008, The Central Shenandoah Valley Office on Youth had a total operating budget of just over \$1 million dollars. Of this, 42% was funded by the local municipalities of the City of Staunton, City of Waynesboro, and Augusta County. The remaining 58%, representing \$587,258 was received through a combination of state, local, and federal grant funds.

The OYO continually seeks grant funding to meet many of the important youth and family needs in our community. Grant funding is extremely fluid. Funding streams change depending on the priority of grant makers and political priorities. For example, current funding streams exist for initiatives that incorporate youth and community service projects. For this reason in 2007-2008, the OYO sponsored four different youth programs that incorporated a community service component.

Grants are also time-limited funding that generally exists for one-year periods though some multi-year grants are available. Due to the fluid nature of grant funding the OYO must remain flexible to provide services for which it can secure funding. For this reason, many of our programs change or must be altered to meet the priorities of grant programs.

No matter how substantial grant funds may be, grant funding never covers 100% of the operating expenses of a program. To fill many of the operational gaps left from grant funding, local dollars are used. Local dollars are used to cover basic operational expenses and to fill gaps in grant funding as these needs arise.



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