



Virginia
Commission on Youth

Strengthening Families Year Two

December 8, 2004

Leah Hamaker



Strengthening Families Study – Year Two

- In 2003, the Commission on Youth was directed to:
 - ❖ Assess and identify elements that strengthen families;
 - ❖ Analyze measures other states are taking, as well as various federal initiatives to strengthen families;
 - ❖ Determine strategies to strengthen family service systems; and
 - ❖ Formulate recommendations that strengthen families and support marriage.

- Preliminary research conducted during the first year and more intense study activities to occur during the second year.



Strengthening Families Study – Year Two

- Convene regional focus groups of experts;
- Convene a Statewide Advisory Group to review findings from Focus Groups; and
- Report findings and recommendations to the Commission prior to the 2005 General Assembly Session.



Strengthening Families Study – Year Two

Regional Focus Groups

- Tidewater – Virginia Beach, August 16
(Virginia DMHMRSAS Office)
- NOVA – Manassas, September 17
(Youth for Tomorrow Campus)
- Southwestern, VA – Roanoke, October 21
(Blue Ridge Community Services Board)



Virginia Commission on Youth

Tidewater – Virginia Beach, August 16 (Virginia DMHMRSAS Office)

Dept. of Human Services
Family Presentation Services, Inc.
Youth Matters, Inc.
Portsmouth Juvenile Court
Service Unit
Virginians Against Handgun Violence
Making a Difference Foundation
Norfolk Dept. of Human Services
Children of the Sun
Neighborhood and Leisure Services
Virginia Beach Department of Public
Health

The Honorable Yvonne B. Miller
The Honorable Mamye E. BaCote
Places and Programs for Children, Inc.
Church Representatives
Jackson-Field Homes
Chesapeake Family Resources Center
Inova Keller Center
Lutheran Family Services
City of Virginia Beach Representatives
The Institute for Family Centered
Services



Virginia Commission on Youth

NOVA Focus Group - Manassas, VA September 17, 2004

Court Service Unit Staff
Dept. of Juvenile Justice
Prince William County DSS
Manassas City Public Schools
Young Life
Northern Virginia Family Services
Arlington Community Action
Program
Prince William County Attorney's
Office
Prince William County
Department of Social Services

VA House of Delegates, Office
of the Speaker
Churches
Representatives/Pastors
Manassas Park City Schools
Northern Virginia Family Service
Youth for Tomorrow
Center for Family Services/
Virginia Tech
City of Manassas DSS



Virginia Commission on Youth

Statewide Advisory Group Richmond, General Assembly Building October 25, 2004

- Department of Education
 - Department of Social Services
 - Department of Juvenile Justice
 - Department of Health
 - Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Substance Abuse Services
 - Supreme Court of Virginia
 - Assembly of Independent Baptists
 - Va. Association of Counties
 - Va. Municipal League
 - First Things First of Richmond
 - Office of Comprehensive Services
 - The Family Foundation
 - Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
-



Findings from Focus Groups and Statewide Advisory Group

1. Lack of Statewide Coordination and Collaboration
2. Data Needed on Virginia's Marriage and Divorce Rates
3. Need for a Statewide Information Clearinghouse for Children and Family Services
4. Need for Greater Education Efforts in Healthy Relationships
5. Need for Education Efforts for Adults and Families
6. Continuation of Current Family Strengthening Efforts in Virginia
7. Lack of a Family Advocacy Network in Virginia
8. Need for Ongoing Monitoring and Analysis



Virginia
Commission on Youth

Recommendations