



NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release
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GRANT FUNDING AFFORDS MORE PROGRAM OFFERINGS FOR ORANGE COUNTY YOUTH

Orange County, VA – The Orange County Office on Youth is pleased to announce it is once again offering programs in the community with the award of a three year grant from the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) in the amount of \$148,131. Specifically, the grant allows the Office on Youth the opportunity to continue tobacco prevention programming in Orange County.

This grant funding, which was available as of July 1, 2018, allows the Office on Youth to offer the Strengthening Families Program to Orange County youth twice per year for the next three years (for ages 6-11 and ages 10-14). The Strengthening Families Program has been implemented internationally, and is a skills-building curriculum that is proven to delay the onset of adolescent substance use, lower levels of aggression in youth, increase youth resistance to peer pressure, and reduce youth conduct problems in school. Further, the program is designed to improve parent skills, including building a positive relationship with their youth, setting appropriate limits, and following through on consequences, while showing love and support for their children.

The Office on Youth is excited about continuing its prevention efforts with the County's elementary students. The next session will run September 18, 2018 – December 18, 2018 and is open to households with youth ages 6-11. The Strengthening Families Program will be held at Orange Baptist Church from 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. This program takes a whole family approach and involves parents/caregivers and youth through its duration.

This fully grant-funded offering is not only free to all participants, but provides childcare for younger family members, in addition to a meal each week. Gas station gift cards are also provided to each family in attendance to help cover transportation costs.

Weekly sessions begin with dinner for the entire family, followed by separate parent/caregiver and youth group sessions, and end with a family session. Many families find the program is a great way to spend time with their child and strengthen the family bond prior to teenage years.

Registration is now open and free to those interested; however, space is limited. For additional information or to register, please contact Ashley Jacobs, Program Coordinator, at (540) 672-5484 or ajacobs@orangecountyva.gov. Information can also be obtained at www.orangecountyva.gov/strengtheningfamiliesprogram6-11.

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