



Eastern Shore Healthy Communities

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Table of Contents

Message from our Chair and Vice Chair	1-2
2021 Highlights.....	3-4
Framing Documents	5
Executive Committee	6
Better Birth Outcomes	7-8
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.....	9-10
Food Access & Equity	11-12
Life-Long Wellness.....	13-14
Poverty	15-16
Resilient & Trauma-Informed Communities.....	17-18
Message from the Executive Director	19
2022 Meeting Dates	20



We are grateful to our funders, the Virginia State Office of Rural Health and Family & Children's Trust Fund of Virginia for their support of Eastern Shore Healthy Communities and our efforts to create a trauma-informed Eastern Shore.

We are also grateful to Jay Dooling, an extraordinary artist who never fails to provide outstanding graphic design; and to Richard Dooling, also an extraordinary artist, who designed our website and helps us, when asked, to maintain it.

An Invitation to a Brave Space

Together we will create *brave space*
Because there is no such thing as a “safe space” –
We exist in the real world
We all carry scars and we have all caused wounds.
In this space
We seek to turn down the volume of the outside world.
We amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere,
We call each other to more truth and love
We have the right to start somewhere and continue to grow.
We have the responsibility to examine what we think we know.
We will not be perfect.
It will not always be what we wish it to be
But
It will be *our* brave space together,
And
We will work on it side by side.

By Micky Scottbey Jones based on a poem by Beth Strano



James Shaeffer, Ph.D., Chair

A Message from Our Chair

Each year we write down and say aloud our accomplishments. We also celebrate partner contributions and look ahead to the direction our strategic plan will lead us. We do this because we are accountable to ourselves, our funders and the Eastern Shore of Virginia community.

We are volunteers. Anything we do together goes beyond performing family and professional commitments. These extraordinary efforts mark community progress towards well-being. We've worked for Eastern Shore well-being, creating brave spaces to take bold actions, for the past 12 years.

Addressing social determinates of health, like birth, aging, poverty, food insecurity, trauma and social justice is not always safe. It is brave. We are working towards culture change where the well-being of every single Eastern Shore of Virginia resident is given every possible chance.

Coronavirus consumed our personal and professional lives for the second year in a row, leaving scant time and energy for extra action. During this past year Eastern Shore Healthy Communities partners advanced our mission inspired by a strong belief in our shared vision. More is needed.

Well-being takes hundreds, if not millions, of strategically driven acts. It requires sustained efforts from motivated organizations and individuals. And it will take decades. We are impacting policy, systems and environments to create a sustained culture of well-being. We have one decade of work behind us.

In this report, we also acknowledge all who battled COVID 19: those who died or lost a loved one; who isolated to stay safe; who lost jobs and suffered financial hardship; who labored as essential workers so others could have food, clothing, shelter, education and health care; and those who masked, got vaccinated and respectfully social distanced from one another.

Looking back, we will never regret a minute of working towards community well-being. Even though our gains are slow, it is worthy work. Looking forward, we know so much more action is needed. Keep it up.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Shaeffer". The signature is fluid and cursive.

James M. Shaeffer, Ph.D., Chair



Cara Burton, M.L.S., Vice Chair

Message from Our Vice Chair

Healthy Communities partners have worked together during the pandemic to create brave spaces to meet while we haven't been able to physically share a space. Virtual meetings, phone calls, and chance meetings at the store have kept us in touch. We still can't help but feel the ties that bind are strained.

We also have struggled with our mental spaces. I certainly feel my mental space is noisy and jumbled as I am sure many of you reading this also experience. We appreciate your continued efforts to focus on well-being, both for yourself and our community, and devoting mental space and time to Healthy Communities.

As we slowly begin to meet in person and provide programs in person, let's rejoice in these connections! We will rejoin Healthy Communities in a way. Let's renew our commitments. Reconnect with our peers. And welcome new partners. We look forward to seeing you in the coming year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cara Burton".

Cara Burton, M.L.S., Vice Chair

2021 Highlights

JANUARY

Eastern Shore Plan for Well-Being

Strategic Plan 2021-2023

The **Executive Committee** recommended that the 2021-2023 Eastern Shore Plan for Well-Being go to the full coalition for a vote. **All work groups** began working on purpose statements and strategy action planners. **Resilient & Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group** shared reflections on the disturbing insurrection activities at the Capital.

FEBRUARY



The **Annual Meeting** observed 2021 as a year of Turmoil, Trauma and Resilience as the community worked hard to reduce transmission of coronavirus and ESHC partners continued to work strategically on initiatives. The **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group** noted with excitement, the Chamber of Commerce of the Eastern Shore's new Diversity Statement displayed on their website.

MARCH

Community input begins for Eastern Shore of Virginia Emergency Food Plan

A **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group** presentation on *Trauma and Racism* stimulated discussion on historic trauma and its lasting physical and psychological effects. **Food Access and Equity Work Group** plans began to take shape for community input into an Emergency Food Plan to address in the future ways to prevent the food shortages experienced during COVID-19.

APRIL



The **Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group** offered a series of trauma-informed workshops with many community members attending. Karen Downing presented *Racism as a Public Health Crisis* to **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group** partners and great discussion followed. We learned the relationship between trauma, poverty, and racism and the need to open doors and begin healing to impact well-being.

MAY



Optimism pointed us to prepare for a post-COVID Community and we held an **Eastern Shore Healthy Communities Full Coalition Meeting** featuring a panel discussion on the topic. **Life-Long Wellness** began work on a social media campaign of six key messages for senior well-being.

JUNE

Burnout & Overload

Presented by Charlena Jones
Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities
Work Group Meeting

The *Eastern Shore Post* published a letter from the **Better Birth Outcomes Work Group** advocating for Family Life Education in the Public Schools. Charlena Jones presented *Burnout and Overload* to the **Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group**. **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group** noted with pleasure the new Boys and Girls Club Diversity Statement. **Food Access and Equity Work Group** partners reported that Northampton County Public Schools has applied for CEP so all students are afforded equal opportunity for free school meals.

Better Birth Outcomes Work Group approved the first of three social media messages, each message reflected by a diversity of spokespersons and available in English and Spanish. **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group** discussed *Why Gender Identity Justice Matters for Everyone*. We learned that our “safe space” was indeed a “brave space” given the conversation topic. **The Food Access and Equity Emergency Food Sub-Committee** discussed how to keep people from hoarding in times of shortage.



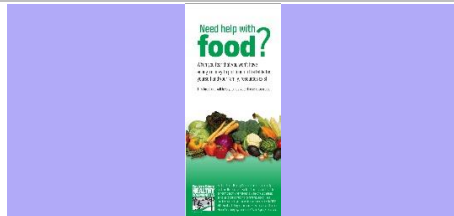
The omicron variant put an end to our dreams of a post-COVID community and our resiliency allowed us to carry on. The **Full Coalition** meeting offered a panel discussion focused on next steps. **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group** noted national and local events marking passages for diversity: the first female governor of New York; the first female CEO of the YMCA national; the first ever African American female to assume the post of General Registrar/Director of Elections in Accomack County.



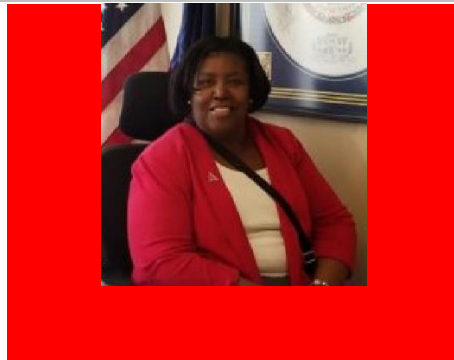
Executive Committee members held their Annual Retreat to review progress on the *Eastern Shore Plan for Well-Being 2021 -2023*. **Better Birth Outcomes** partners heard a report on the success of their first ever Teen Family Life Education course. **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion** partners enjoyed Karen Downing’s presentation on *Systemic Bias in Virginia Law*. **Poverty Work Group** partners approved a Transportation Issue Brief and three social media messages. **Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group** learn about *Compassion Fatigue* from Karen Emerson. **Life-Long Wellness** approved their six social media messages. ESHC will post and share with all partners.



Karen Downing’s presented *Restorative Justice* to **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group** partners. **Food Access and Equity Work Group** printed and distributed its third updated *Need Help with Food? Brochure*. It provides all resources for food assistance on the Eastern Shore. Amy Wilcox presented *Secondary Traumatic Stress* at the **Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group** meeting.



Karen Downing shared with the **Full Coalition** *Systemic Bias in Virginia Law*. Based on Gov. Northam’s appointment of a nine-member Commission to examine racial inequity in Virginia law, Karen provided examples of the commission’s to date, ending with a call to action to advocate for codification of the Commission. The **Poverty Work Group** applied for funding from Anthem to become a certified *Open Table* franchisee for this evidence-based program that trains community members and pairs them with “friends” in need of support. The relationship often prevents an individual or family from moving into poverty or helps them in a crisis. Enough expertise and wealth exists in any community to keep our neighbors from falling into poverty.



All partners took a rest from ESHC duties and enjoyed the holidays.



Framing Documents

Vision

All residents of the Eastern Shore of Virginia report a growing, positive sense of health, well-being, and self-empowerment.

Mission

As a volunteer multi-sector partnership, Eastern Shore Healthy Communities' mission is to develop an accountable community using policies, systems, and environmental change strategies to improve the health and success of Eastern Shore of Virginia residents.

Values

Teamwork. We are a group of diverse people working together toward a clearly defined, shared vision.

Effective Decision Making. We support a process in which all opinions are respected and considered. All participants are equally important and working towards a common goal.

Duty/Commitment. We accept our duty and commitment to work towards achieving our shared mission and vision.

Proactive. We use a "root cause" approach to community well-being issues; looking at ways to address the source of the concern to reduce or prevent the occurrence of that concern.

Systemic Equity. We believe that all persons have the right to full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to be healthy and enjoy well-being.

Creativity/Innovation. We use creative and innovative approaches to move towards well-being.

Framework

Eastern Shore Healthy Communities is a partnership of businesses, organizations, faith communities, and individuals of all ages, representing a diversity of community sectors and professions, engaged in addressing and improving **policies, systems and environments** to support Eastern Shore well-being. We work together for **collective impact**. We create and enhance policies, whether political, corporate or social, for lasting impact. We influence systems because of their broad reach. We address environments: physical, corporate, media or virtual because they support action and influence culture. We invest in work that is high impact and sustainable because that is what creating a culture of well-being requires.

Diversity

Eastern Shore Healthy Communities envisions all residents reporting a growing, positive sense of health, well-being and self-empowerment. Its mission is to develop an accountable community, using policies, systems, and environmental change strategies to improve the health and success of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. We believe that our partnership, as well as our community, is nourished and strengthened by the diversity of our residents. Therefore, we commit to having a partnership that is reflective of our diverse community.

Our partnership values equity, believing that all persons have the right to full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to be healthy and enjoy well-being. We intend to improve the way that vulnerable groups are treated and understood. To do this we will challenge ourselves to continuously learn and self-reflect, recognize and influence power imbalances, and remain accountable to our mission, vision, and values, especially with regard to diversity, equity and inclusion.

We intend for our actions to serve as a model for communities, educational institutions, employer organizations, and social groups and we will actively work for our community organizations and institutions to adopt similar diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices.

Executive Committee

Members of the Executive Committee began 2021 contemplating the new post-pandemic normal and ended the year addressing a new coronavirus variant. By now, this group is proficient in COVID-19 prevention strategies for their own organizations and for the community. It turns out, flexibility and resiliency are now the *new normal* for everyone, including this Committee that is Eastern Shore Healthy Communities governing body.

The Executive Committee recruits and nominates officers and the full partnership of voting members elect officers of this committee by vote. It hires or appoints an executive director and creates work groups and appoints chairs.

Officers include a chair, or co-chairs, and a vice chair. The Chair presides over the full Coalition, its meetings and Executive Committee meetings, with the Vice Chair presiding in the absence of the Chair. These officers determine issues requiring a vote of the voting Organizational and Individual Membership. They participate in setting meeting agendas with the Executive Director or Coordinator, appoint task forces, work groups, committees and their chairs, and insure mission accomplishment by appointed groups and chairs.

In addition, this Committee sets the Coalition's strategic agenda by creating and monitoring the strategic plan, monitoring strategy accomplishment and alignment with the coalition's vision, framework and diversity statement.

This year the Committee

- approved the *Eastern Shore Plan for Well-Being 2021-2023*, ESHC's fourth strategic plan;
- formed a committee to determine a successor for the Executive Director who will step down in August 2022;
- held a leadership retreat in September to discuss the CommuniVax project, hear strategic plan updates from work group chairs, and make needed changes to the strategic plan. CommuniVax is a national coalition of social scientists, public health experts, and community advocates, in which ESHC is a partner. The focus is strengthening national and local COVID-19 vaccination efforts for historically underserved Black, Hispanic/Latino, and Indigenous populations who have endured disproportionate impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- presented three educational full coalition meetings:
May 13. *What to Expect in our Post-COVID Community?* Panelists included Dr. Richard Williams, Eastern Shore Health District; Dr. Joan Lingen, Eastern Shore Rural Health System, Inc.; Minister Karen Downing, Jerusalem Baptist Church; Sarah Barban, Chamber of Commerce of the Eastern Shore of Virginia; Dr. James Shaeffer, Eastern Shore Community College; Dr. Rhonda Hall, Accomack County Public Schools; Charmin Horton, Foodbank of Southeastern VA and the Eastern Shore and Vicki J. Weakley, Accomack County Social Services Director.
August 12. *Resilience in the Face of COVID 19 Resurgence. Body Mind and Spirit.* Panelists included MiMi Sedjat, LCSW, Executive Director, Eastern Shore Community Services Board; Dr. Lea Porche, Assistant Professor, Maternal-Fetal Health, Eastern Virginia Medical School, and The Rev. Gary Miller, St. John's United Methodist Church.
November 10, *Systemic Racism in Virginia Law*, presented by Karen Downing.

James Shaeffer, Ph.D., Chair

President
Eastern Shore Community College

Cara Burton, MLS, Vice Chair

Library System Director
Eastern Shore Public Library System

Deb Brown, MBA, BS, BSN, RN

Chief Nursing Officer
Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital

Kathy Carmody, RM, SPHR, IPMA-SCP

Chief Human Resources Officer
Accomack County Administration

Scott Chandler, Past Chair

Business Manager
Eastern Shore Health District

Matthew Clay

Chief Executive officer
Eastern Shore Rural Health System, Inc.

Minister Karen Downing

Associate Minister
Jerusalem Baptist Church

Andre Elliott

Executive Director
Eastern Shore Family YMCAs

Mozella Francis, Past Vice Chair

Director, Northampton County Social Services Department

Chris Holland

Superintendent
Accomack County Public Schools

Patti Kiger, Executive Director

Instructor
Eastern Virginia Medical School

Charles Kolakowski

Administrator
Northampton County Administration

Eddie Lawrence

Superintendent
Northampton County Public Schools

Roberta Newman, MME, BME, Past Chair

Coordinator, Smart Beginnings Eastern Shore; President Cape Charles Development Co. and NewRoads Consulting, Inc.

Donna Smith, BFA, NPM

Chief Executive Officer
Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/Community Action Agency

MiMi Sedjat, LCSW

Executive Director, Eastern Shore Community Services Board

Danny Vestal, Past Chair

Executive Director
YMCA Camp Silver Beach

Vicki Weakley, MSW

Director, Accomack County Social Services Department

Better Birth Outcomes Work Group

The Better Birth Outcomes Work Group focuses on the reproductive health of women and their babies. The group works to insure that all people have access to family life education and birth control measures with which they are comfortable. Partners support the Nurse-Family Partnership, an evidence-based home visiting program for low-income women who are pregnant for the first time. NFP supports women during their pregnancy and first two years of their child's life. Finally, partners focus on insuring that all women have access to providers to give the best chance for healthy birth outcomes.

Advocating for important preventive action to improve population health is worthy and important. Oddly, the topic of human sexuality seems to trigger anxiety in even the most educated of us.

This Work Group has created a brave space in which partners take action to solve this issue. Partners have offered support to our public schools to teach Family Life Education. The group has even started its own summer Family Life Education program with the help of a host of community members who teach the course, provide classroom space, promote the program, feed students, and incentivize attendance with prizes.

Parents can be the best teachers of human sexuality if they are comfortable with the task and knowledgeable. Parents differ in their ability to convey important information and often do not know the community prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases, date rape, incest and agencies that exist to help people with needs related to these real problems.

Women who are informed about their reproductive health are better prepared to make important decisions that support having, or not having, a healthy baby when they are ready emotionally, educationally and financially.

This year, the Better Birth Outcomes Work Group

- completed their strategy action planner, part of the Eastern Shore Plan for Well-Being 2021-2023 that guides action towards their objectives
- adopted a purpose statement
- created and held their first human sexuality course for teens, with 10 students attending, and a large contingent of community agencies and organizations providing classroom space, teaching, meals, incentive items for attendance, promotion and publicity
- contributed to the Nurse-Family Partnership with referrals, recruitment and retention items. The Nurse-Family Partnership is the Eastern Shore Health Districts' home health visiting program for first-time mothers. The group sent a letter to members of both county school boards, superintendents, editors of the Eastern Shore Post and Eastern Shore News, encouraging the schools to teach Family Life Education. A letter to the Editor was published in the Eastern Shore Post on June 28, 2021
- created a series of social media messages to encourage Black women to take charge of their own unique health risks and medical needs when pregnant; encouraging women to have children when they are emotionally and financially prepared; and encouraging women who need assistance with food to apply for WIC
- began creating a list of organizations that provide training on diversity issues in medicine.

Sandra Balmoria, MD, Co-Chair
Eastern Shore Rural Health System Inc.

Kathy Lewis, RN, BSRN, Co-Chair
Eastern Shore Health District

Joyce Amrien, RN, BSN
Eastern Shore Health District

Julie Callahan
Eastern Shore Women's Club

Saadia Davis
Eastern Shore Health District

Minister Karen Downing
Jerusalem Baptist Church

Tiffany Flores, MILS
Eastern Shore Public Library System

Tanya Forlevil, BSN RN
Eastern Shore Health District

Juan Gomez
Eastern Shore Rural Health System Inc.

Susan Johnson, MEd, LPC
Eastern Shore Community Services Board

Charlena Jones
Business Consultant, Evangelist

Patti Kiger, M.Ed.
Eastern Virginia Medical School

Tanya Owens, CNM, DNP
Eastern Shore Health District

Ann Pruitt, BSN, RN, RNC-OB
Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital

Cheryl Revell, RN
Eastern Shore Health District

Angela Scheib, RN, BSN
Eastern Shore Health District

Lorraine Strand
Eastern Shore Health District



Be Your Own Best Advocate

Black women are three-to four-times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than white women according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. When it comes to pregnancy, follow the lead of Beyoncé and Serena Williams. Get early prenatal care from a team of medical experts you trust. Read up on pre-eclampsia - one of the leading causes of maternal death – and eclampsia (seizures that develop after pre-eclampsia). And be your own strongest and best advocate.



Better Birth Outcomes Work Group
eshealthycommunities.org



Un bebe feliz.... Una mama feliza

El programa de Mujeres, infantes y niños (WIC) existe para proteger su salud. Si califica como bajo de ingresos, es madre lactante y tiene niños menores de 5 años, contacta su representante local de WIC.

Los residentes del condado de Accomack llamen a 757-787-5842
Los residentes del condado de Northampton llamen a 757-442-6448



Better Birth Outcomes Work Group
eshealthycommunities.org



Happy Baby...Happy Momma

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) exists to safeguard your health. If you qualify as low income, are a nursing mom, and have children up to age 5, contact your local WIC representative.

Accomack County residents call 757-787-5842
Northampton County residents call 757-442-6448



Better Birth Outcomes Work Group
eshealthycommunities.org



Happy Baby...Happy Momma

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) exists to safeguard your health. If you qualify as low income, are a nursing mom, and have children up to age 5, contact your local WIC representative.

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Better Birth Outcomes Work Group
eshealthycommunities.org

This is a sample of social media messages created by the Better Birth Outcomes Work Group in 2021. Each message is available in Spanish and English and the photographs in the Happy Baby...Happy Momma and You've Got Goals feature photos of people who are white as well as Black and Latinx. If partners or friends would like to publish these messages on their own social media, they can be found on the following Google Share Drive https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wZoOWT_UHSqitMyn_ISS3xDrB7hQ1ISB?usp=sharing

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group

Our community is nourished and strengthened by the diversity of its residents, especially when all citizens feel safe, play an equitable and active role in our community, and can bravely engage in healing dialogue.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work group creates a “brave space” in which people of diverse cultures can gather, learn together, and make forgivable mistakes as they gain a better understanding of each other and diverse cultures.

Each meeting, the group learns something new by researching and presenting a topic, followed by a discussion. 2021 topics and their presenters included:

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion 101 – André Elliott
- Racism and Trauma – Patti Kiger
- Identifying Race as a Public Health Crisis – Karen Downing and The Hon. Lashresce Aird, Delegate, Virginia General Assembly
- Cultural Humility – Charle Ricci
- Implicit Bias – Karen Hatch
- Why Gender Identity Justice Matters for Everyone – sj Miller/Patti Kiger
- Systemic Bias in Virginia Law – Karen Downing
- Restorative Justice – Karen Downing
- Critical Race Theory and the 1619 Project – André Elliott

Partners note at each meeting progress that has been made over the previous month. A summary of items noted in 2021 work group minutes included:

- Published Diversity Statements: Chamber of Commerce of the Eastern Shore, The Boys and Girls Club
- Virginia declared racism a public health crisis
- Provided employee diversity training: Eastern Shore Health District, Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital, Eastern Shore Rural Health System
- Hired a Vice President of Equity & Belonging: YMCA of South Hampton Roads
- André Elliott received national training that qualifies him to provide DEI trainings within the YMCA and other organizations
- The American Library Association added a Code of Ethics principle on racial and social justice
- The first ever female: to achieve CEO of national YMCA organization took office; to be Governor of New York took office; the first ever African American General Registrar/Director of Elections in Accomack County took office, Ms. Angel Shrieves
- The Robert E. Lee statue on Richmond’s Monument Avenue was removed

While nowhere near all the historic equity actions that took place in 2021, this summary gives a flavor of discussions in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group. Moving forward, partners will continue to research leadership positions throughout the Shore to encourage leadership diversity that matches the community our organizations serve.

André Elliott, Chair

Eastern Shore Family YMCAs

Joyce Amrien, RN, BSN

Eastern Shore Health District

Latasha Banks

Accomack County Social Services Department

Allison Bradshaw

Eastern Shore Health District

Marsha Bunting

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/Community Action Agency

Kathy Carmody, RM, SPHR, IPMA-SCP

Accomack County Administration

Minister Karen Downing

Jerusalem Baptist Church

Karen Hatch

Boys and Girls Club of the Eastern Shore

Marvin Giddens

Virginia Organizing

Stephanie Jackson

Eastern Shore Post

Patti Kiger

Eastern Virginia Medical School

Kathy Lewis, RN, BSRN

Eastern Shore Health District

Betty Martin

Freelance Writer

Margaret Moore BSN, RN

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/Community Action Agency

Fiameta “Mette” Pellicer

Writer/Biographer

Charle Ricci, MLIS

Eastern Shore Public Library System

Marcus Riley

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Angela Scheib, RN, BSN, CLC

Eastern Shore Health District

Rudy Zavala

Accomack & Northampton Social Services Departments



A festive parade kicked off the 2021 Juneteenth celebration in Exmore where children and adults of every culture celebrated the country's "second Independence Day." Juneteenth commemorates the day, June 19, 1865, when Union Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger and his troops arrived at Galveston with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. That was more than two months after Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant in Virginia. President Joe Biden signed a bill on June 17, 2021 that was passed by Congress to set aside Juneteenth, or June 19th, as a federal holiday.

Food Access & Equity Work Group

In a community where about 12 percent of the population is estimated to be food insecure (Feeding America, 2019 data, latest data available), Eastern Shore Healthy Communities Food Access and Equity Work Group focuses on reducing or eliminating food insecurity among Eastern Shore of Virginia residents. The purpose of the Work Group is to insure all food insecurity needs are addressed.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the first economic recession in the U.S. since the Great Recession of 2007. Many lost jobs or saw hours worked decline. Claims for unemployment increased as did the national food insecurity rate.

Work Group partners focus on ways to create a system of affordable, healthy, and nutritious food and they help residents understand how to access food within this system either by their own financial means or with assistance. They identify and eliminate barriers to food system access either by sharing knowledge about food access points and processes, expanding food access options, or advocating for needed policy change.

All initiatives are planned through a health-equity lens, considering the unique needs among population segments.

As a rural area with acres of farmland and nautical miles of ocean and bay teeming with seafood, Eastern Shore of Virginia residents live in an environment of abundant natural food resources in addition to its commercial and philanthropic food access points. No resident should go hungry or be ashamed of seeking help when they need it.

Highlights of 2021 Food Access & Equity Workgroup accomplishments include:

- Creation of a purpose statement that provides a work group shared vision
- Completion of the Food Access & Equity Strategy Action Plan for the Eastern Shore of Virginia Plan for Well-Being 2021-2023
- Updated and distributed “Need Help with Food?” brochure that provides information on all places where food pantries, food programs, or congregate meals are served
- Began development of social marketing campaign to encourage community members to create an emergency pantry, grow their own food, barter or share food with a neighbor, and access SNAP, WIC and Senior Vouchers when needed
- Began a collaboration with members of the local food distribution system, emergency planners, social service agencies and others to initiate a plan for emergency food access drawing on pandemic experiences with food shortages, illness and quarantining, and government-directed stay-at-home orders. The plan will also consider geological as well as man-made emergencies.

Charmin Horton, Chair

Foodbank of South Hampton Roads and the Eastern Shore of Virginia and Eastern Shore Community Services Board

Janice Felker, Vice Chair

Mattawoman Creek Farm

Tanya Adams-Justice

Wal-Mart – Only

Richard Barnes

Food Lion Exmore

Patrick Coady

Shore Delivery Service

Sarah Dickey

Accomack County Emergency Management

Tiffany Flores, MILS

Eastern Shore Public Library System

Meghan Gaffney

Accomack County Social Services Department

Kelly Honeycutt

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital

J.J. Justis

Eastern Shore Health District

Annette Kellam

Northampton County Public Schools

Patti Kiger

Eastern Virginia Medical School

Bertrille Lomax

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Barbara O’Hare

Consultant Demographer

Charles R. Pruitt

Eastern Shore Emergency Management Services

Donna Smith

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/Community Action Agency

Kamesha Watson

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Need help with food?

When you fear that you won't have enough money to put food on the table for yourself and your family, resources exist.

This brochure will help you navigate those resources.



Eastern Shore
**HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES**



Eastern Shore Healthy Communities is a community coalition that supports Eastern Shore resident health, self-sufficiency, and well-being. Many of our partners serve as resource hubs for community needs. This brochure will help you understand and connect with SNAP, WIC, Foodbank, Virginia Cooperative Extension and Eastern Shore Area on Aging/Community Action Agency resources.



To prevent food insecurity, Food Access and Equity Work Group partners suggest four strategies: Start with one grow bag and try growing your own fruits and vegetables; slowly add to an emergency food pantry, purchasing a few extra items during each grocery visit; make a big pot of stew or chili and share with a neighbor, who in turn will do the same for you – plan to do that regularly.. And finally understand and seek the help that is available to you and your family, like WIC, SNAP, Senior Vouchers and food pantries. The Work Group updates and reprints the “Need Help with Food?” brochure each year that lists contact information for all available food help. The Foodbank has copies to share. Information on how to create an emergency food pantry can be found on eshealthycommunities.org

Life-Long Wellness Work Group

One in four Eastern Shore of Virginia residents is 65 years or older. This Work Group is dedicated to changing policies, systems and environments to support the well-being of our seniors.

Current life expectancy from 2020 CDC tables is about 84 years, with women living longer than men and Hispanics living longer than whites and Blacks. While no one escapes death, it is important to insure that all our senior years are lived with the most vibrancy possible.

Chronic diseases, obesity, and poverty rob seniors of well-being and much of the preceding experience that leads to these conditions is not repairable. However, getting regular medical, dental and behavioral health check-ups, along with regularly scheduled immunizations helps. Also helpful is having a support network of family, friends, and neighbors and a spiritual belief. Getting exercise, especially outdoors, and eating three nutritious meals a day are key to mental and physical health, no matter what age.

Also helpful is being prepared for the inevitable, by appointing a responsible person, a friend or a family member, to serve as medical power of attorney to act when a person can no longer make decision for themselves, and having an advanced directive or living will to insure that previously made wishes for end of life care are respected and followed.

Work Group accomplishments for 2021 included:

- Completing a three-year strategy action planner to guide the Work Group's scope of responsibilities, including timelines and leaders for each initiative
- Writing and approving a purpose statement
- Six social media messages which will be used throughout the three years of the current strategic plan cycle
- Adoption of the Poverty Work Group universal broadband coverage advocacy statement asking for affordable internet service provider rates, and rental or low-cost purchase of computer equipment for all Eastern Shore of Virginia residents
- Many activities and accomplishments discussed at Work Group meetings were actually the work responsibility of the Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/Community Action Agency and it is important to note their many contributions to the community with regard to life-long wellness. Here are just a few ESAAA/CAA items that were discussed in coalition work group meetings: home-delivered meals, ombudsman services for seniors in nursing homes and assisted living arrangements; computer literacy training; helping seniors with assigning a medical power of attorney and writing a living will; incentives to boost COVID-19 vaccination; computer literacy training with a computer awarded at the end of the training. These are just a small portion of the contributions that ESAAA/CAA makes to our community and we acknowledged them here with great appreciation.

Donna Smith, Chair

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Linda Arvidson

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Marsha Bunting

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Ry/Shieka Bunting

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Doreen Capers

Eastern Shore Center for Independent
Living

Jane Cabarrus

Northampton County NAACP

Nadine Greenley

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Patti Kiger

Eastern Virginia Medical School

Beth McGlothlin

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Estrella Medina-Whitfield

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Rev. Gary Miller

St. John's United Methodist Church

Felicia Moore

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Margaret Moore, BSN, RN

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Loretta Pettit

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Briana Ricks

American Heart Association

Iris Smith

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Tiffany Smith

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

Tina Stratton-Taylor

Eastern Shore Community College

Will Weeks

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency

“

Here's another great idea from Eastern Shore Healthy Communities!

Do you have a nearby senior relative, neighbor or friend? Check on them with a regular telephone call. Offer to get their groceries, medications, or take care of a chore or two.



EASTERN SHORE WELL-BEING BEGINS WITH YOU. PASS IT ON.

eshealthycommunities.org



I've Got My 4-Part Emergency Action Plan In Place Do You?

1. Emergency contact list with names & numbers
2. Medication list with Rx names, dosage, pharmacy name & phone number
3. Packed bag with 2 changes of clothing
4. Emergency cash



eshealthycommunities.org



Here's another great idea from Eastern Shore Healthy Communities

Seniors: Keep Your Appointments

Doctors, Therapists & Dentists Keep You Ticking

Eastern Shore well-being begins with you. Pass it on.



Life-Long Wellness Work Group
eshealthycommunities.org



Save Your Family Heartache With Three Simple Acts

1. Appoint a medical power of attorney.
2. Make an advance directive or living will
3. Tell your family your religious preferences.



Life-Long Wellness Work Group
eshealthycommunities.org



These are a sample of messages created by the Life-Long Wellness Work Group. They are available on ESHC's shared Google drive and we encourage partners and friends to share them in their social media.
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wZo0WT_UHSqitMyn_ISS3xDrB7hQ1ISB?usp=sharing

Poverty Work Group

Communities are strengthened by the self-sufficiency and well-being of all residents. The Poverty Work Group contributes to Eastern Shore well-being by focusing on factors that reduce poverty and restore self-sufficiency using the population-level sustainable tools: policies, systems and environmental change.

This Work Group's purpose is to hold our communities accountable for developing human and social capital, reducing exploitation, and having political and economic structures that lift all residents. The Work Group provides information to our community about those things that cause poverty and can lift individuals from poverty; promote poverty-preventing agendas for our school boards, county boards of supervisors and town councils; and provide poverty-related data annually to shine a light on our challenge, strategies we believe will improve our circumstance as a community, and successes achieved.

This year those successes included

- Crafting and approving a purpose statement
- Developing and refining a Strategy Action Planner, organizing strategies by sub-committee, leaders and action deadlines
- Participating in the September Housing Summit
- The Broadband Sub-committee joined Virginia Organizing, CBES, Eastern Shore Diverse Coalition of Preachers and the Regional Housing Coalition to advocate for ESVA universal broadband coverage
- Transportation Sub-committee crafted an issue brief outlining the relationship between transportation and poverty and the need for funding pedestrian, mass transit and personal transportation
- Media Environment Sub-committee crafted three social media messages for use by ESHC partners, encouraging an understanding of poverty and its impacts on the whole community
- Open Table Sub-committee explored bringing a franchise of this evidence-based poverty prevention program to the Eastern Shore but was delayed due to a lack of initial start-up funding
- Childcare Sub-committee reported on multiple government-initiated funding initiatives to improve childcare access and affordability and wrote a Letter of Support for Children's Harbor's new facility to the Accomack County Board of Supervisors
- Financial Literacy Sub-committee met to itemize all training opportunities available within the community and will move forward with future promotion of these opportunities
- Vocational Policies and Support Systems Sub-Committee has reviewed opportunities available for teens and adults in the community and will begin on promotion of adult opportunities in the New Year

Charlena Jones, Co-Chair

Business Consultant and Evangelist

Vicki J. Weakley, MSW, Co-Chair

Accomack County Social Services Department

Joyce Amrien, RN, BSN

Eastern Shore Health District

Cora Bailey

First Horizon Bank, Cheriton

Latasha Banks

Accomack County Social Services

Allison Bradshaw

Eastern Shore Health District

Selina Coulbourne

Accomack County Social Services

Keva Davis

Accomack County Social Services

Saadia Davis

Eastern Shore Health District

Minister Karen Downing

Jerusalem Baptist Church

Mozella Francis

Northampton County Social Services

Meghan Gaffney

Accomack County Social Services

April Graham

Accomack County Social Services

Nadine Greenley

Accomack County Social Services

Paul Grossman

Cape Charles Town Council

Sheryl Hinmon-Kellam

Northampton County Social Services

Charmin Horton

Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore

Kerrie Jensen

Accomack County Social Services

Gar Kellam

Accomack County Social Services

Patti Kiger

Eastern Virginia Medical School

Sarah Meyer

Accomack County Social Services

Nanette "Malaika" Mitchell

Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia

Rev. Gary Miller

St. John's United Methodist Church



Stable families. Strong communities.

Financial stability for all households builds stronger communities. Households can build their credit scores, avoid late fees, predatory lending, and higher interest rates. They can reduce risks, stay healthy, save and invest.

Communities enjoy greater economic activity, greater tax revenue, lower levels of crime, and fewer demands on the social safety net, allowing more investment in vital infrastructure, schools, and healthcare. Learn more here.




eshealthycommunities.org

Poverty Work Group partners are sharing messaging about low wealth. One person or family's low wealth impacts the entire community. Most people in poverty can move out of it with simple assistance. ALICE families, people who work but don't make enough to make ends meet, result from too many low wage jobs in a community. The means to fix it exists. Community well-being requires we address it.

Continued from previous page

- Loretta Rhodes**
Accomack County Social Services
- Marcus Riley**
Northampton County Cooperative
Extension 4-H
- Angela Scheib, RN, BSN, CLC**
Eastern Shore Health District
- Donna Smith**
Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/
Community Action Agency
- Iris Smith**
Accomack Interfaith Crisis Services
- Tina Stratton-Taylor**
Eastern Shore Community College
- Robert Taylor**
- Sabrina Taylor**
Atlantic Union Bank
- Jodi Urban**
Accomack County Social Services
- Rev. Bart Weakley**
Accomack Interfaith Crisis Services
- Tikeshia Wilson**
Accomack County Social Services
- Tonya Young**
Atlantic Union Bank
- Rudy Zavala**
Accomack & Northampton Counties Social
Services




Stable families. Strong communities.

17% of Eastern Shore households have incomes below the federal poverty line (\$26,500 for a family of 4). Some are poor briefly (7%). Some are chronically poor (14%). Others move in and out of poverty (about 61%).

People move out of poverty with close family ties, friendships across income levels, excellent child care & education, living wage jobs, excellent physical, mental & public health care, affordable housing, transportation, technology & temporary state & federal support.

Play a role. Lend a hand, advocate & engage.



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Stable families. Strong communities

Meet A.L.I.C.E.

It stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed.

It's a new way of defining and understanding the struggles of households that earn above the Federal poverty level, but not enough to afford a bare-bones household budget. That represents about 34% of ESVA families. They work but struggle to meet their most basic needs. The future success of our community is directly tied to the financial stability of these fragile ALICE households. Learn more [here](#). Then join us to advocate for living wage jobs, affordable housing, child care, transportation, excellent education and more.



eshealthycommunities.org

Help us share these messages on your social media. They are available on ESHC's shared Google drive https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wZo0WT_UHSqitMyn_ISS3xDrB7hQ1ISB?usp=sharing

Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group

The Resilient and Trauma-informed Work Group is a brave space where partners are preparing themselves to tell the story of trauma broadly across ESVA. Soon they will ask you and your organization to do the same.

The goal is to grow the number of trauma-informed and trauma-sensitive individuals and organizations so that all of ESVA can experience the well-being that understanding and working hard to break the cycle of trauma can bring.

This will require understanding resiliency, regulation and how to recover from events in the past that have caused our brains to be stuck in a fight, flight or freeze response – the involuntary physiological changes that happen in the body and mind when a person feels threatened. An estimated 81 percent of us have been impacted by trauma. More now since the events of COVID-19

Trauma-sensitive individuals understand the four *Rs* of Trauma: *realize* the pervasiveness of trauma; *recognize* the signs of trauma; *respond* appropriately; and *resist* retraumatization. This requires respect and relationship.

When engaged with someone in whom we recognize the signs of trauma, we learn to ask “*What happened to him/her?*” rather than, “*What’s wrong with that person?*” We trade judgement for empathy.

Trauma-informed organizations are marked by six important characteristics: a feeling of safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment: people have a voice and a choice; and a sensitivity to cultural, historical and gender trauma issues.

A critical mass of trauma-informed organizations, knitted together, will create a trauma-informed community. This is not easy or safe work; rather it is brave. We will make mistakes, but we err on the side of kindness. Here is what the Work Group accomplished in 2021:

- Adopted a purpose statement and created a 3-year strategy action plan
- Held four community-wide workshops electronically with 50 people enrolled. Melissa McGinn, the statewide trauma coordinator, presented
 - April 28, *What Does Being Trauma-Informed Really Mean?*
 - May 13, *What Does It Mean to Become a Trauma-Informed Organization?*
 - May 25, *What does it Mean to Become a Trauma-Informed Community?*
 - June 23, a “Train the Trainer” Workshop to teach partners how to deliver these presentations throughout the community.
- Held monthly meetings for partners to gain “micro-doses” of new information and share experiences with trauma-informed responses. Presentations (presenters) included:
 - May 11. *Unfreezing the Brain* (Rudy Zavala)
 - June 8. *Burnout and Overload* (Charlena Jones)
 - July 13. *Trauma and the Brain* (Patti Kiger)
 - August 10. *Resiliency* (Charlena Jones)
 - September 14. *Compassion Fatigue* (Karen Emerson)
 - October 12. *Secondary Traumatic Stress* (Amy Wilcox)

Patti Kiger, *Acting Chair*

Eastern Virginia Medical School

Tiffany Bloom

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital

Deborah Brown, MBA, BS, BSN, RN

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital

Leigh Campbell

Eastern Shore Community Services

Board

Tracey Dedicatoria

Eastern Shore Health District

Karen Downing

Jerusalem Baptist Church

Karen Emerson

Consultant

Charlena Jones

Business Consultant and Evangelist

Linda Kellam, RN, BSRN

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital

Kathy Lewis, RN, BSRN

Eastern Shore Health District

Beth McGlothlin

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/

Community Action Agency

Rev. Gary Miller

St. John’s United Methodist Church

Nanette “Malaika” Mitchell

Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia

Margaret Moore, BSN, RN

Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/

Community Action Agency

Angela Scheib, RN, BSN, CLC

Eastern Shore Health District

Chris Stodgehill

National Counseling Group

Jesse Wingate, Ph.D.

Eastern Shore Rural Health System,

Inc.

Amy Wilcox, MSW

Accomack County Social Services

Department

Rudy Zavala

Accomack and Northampton Counties

Social Services Departments

Building **RESILIENT AND TRAUMA-INFORMED** communities is essential to improving public health and well-being. Communities can be places where traumatic events occur, and they can also help keep us safe. They can be a source of trauma, or buffer us against the negative effects of adversity. Communities can collectively experience trauma much like individuals do, and they can be a resource for healing.

SAMHSA

Eastern Shore Healthy Communities
Presents a Trio of Trauma-Informed Presentations

CREATING A TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNITY



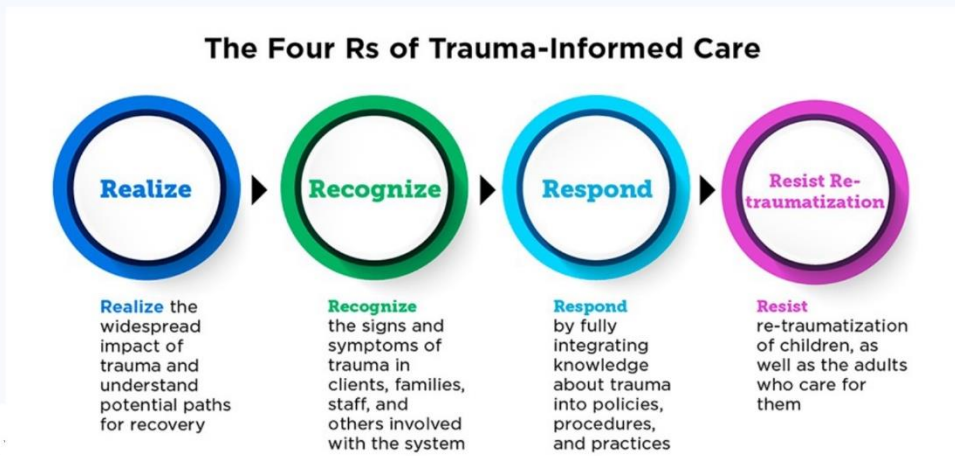
<p>Wednesday, April 28 10 - 11:30 am What's It Mean to Be a Trauma-Informed Person?</p>	<p>Thursday, May 13 10 - 11:30 am What's It Mean to Be a Trauma-Informed Organization?</p>	<p>Tuesday, May 25 10 - 11:30 am What Does It Mean to Be a Trauma-Informed Community?</p>
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Free & open to public. Register at kigerpq@evms.edu



WHAT IS A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH?

A trauma-informed approach begins with understanding the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on an individual, as well as on the professionals who help them. It incorporates four elements:



Building a trauma-sensitive community is healing, restores empathy and begins with each of us and each of our organizations. Making a commitment to being a trauma-informed organization is like any commitment, it takes practice and adherence to principles. It results in more trustworthy and efficient organizations that engender more loyalty and investment and it is essential to well-being.

Message from the Executive Director

When we first started this coalition, we focused on obesity. The obesity rate in our health district exceeded all health districts in VA. How was that possible, I wondered? Produce, seafood, and wide open spaces ought to equal healthy diet and physical activity – that was my logic.

Rural areas typically have a poorer health profile than their more urban counterparts. Research supports this and many scholars tell us that poor health is fueled by lower incomes, poorer schools, fewer health services, transportation barriers and poor housing stock. All of this also fuels crime and reduces ambition.

We've learned so much over our 12 years together. For one, obesity, as well as most chronic diseases, can be symptomatic of other larger pieces of the health puzzle – the social determinants of health.

That's why this coalition now focuses on well-being: health and wealth, and the social determinants that support them. We currently advocate for maternal care, equity, nutrition, senior health, wealth and resiliency.

I am still awaiting the great Eastern Shore of Virginia miracle. Just like Charlie Brown, I look up at the sky and imagine. We're a small, cloistered community. We've got great assets. Sure we're rural, but look at our unusually excellent health facilities and our social capital - the way we stick together as a community.

Could we promise each other that we would never pay less than a living wage anywhere on the Shore and that we would all (people and organizations) become trauma-sensitive? Say "yes" and our essential workers could afford to invest in decent homes and automobiles. We would attract medical personnel and teachers. Families could begin to invest more time in family, community, savings and taxes.

Nothing is simple and well-being requires a thousand brave and strategic actions. One big action in 2022 was our top-rated response to COVID-19 immunization. We led Virginia in having the most people immunized.

That shows me that we can generate the greatest well-being of all rural and non-rural areas in not just Virginia, but the United States. As I take my leave from this coalition, I leave you with that thought.

The steps required aren't safe; they are brave. We have everything we need to make it happen. Do we have the will?

All the best,



Patti G. Kiger
Executive Director



2022 Meetings

We welcome new partners! Email kigerpg@evms.edu to be added to the mailing list.

Meetings are held according to the schedules below and announced in the ESHC *News & Updates* electronic newsletter. If a meeting is cancelled, an announcement will be made in *News & Updates*.

Full Coalition Meetings

Dr. James Shaeffer, Chair & Cara Burton, Vice Chair
The full coalition meets quarterly on the second Thursday, 3:00 – 4:30 pm

February 10
May 12
August 11
November 10

Executive Committee Meetings

Dr. James Shaeffer, Chair & Cara Burton, Vice Chair
The Executive Committee meets quarterly on the second Thursday, 1:00 – 2:30 pm, except in July*.

January 13
April 14
July 15* Friday Annual Retreat 9 am – 2 pm
October 13

Better Birth Outcomes Work Group

Kathy Lewis, Chair
The Better Birth Outcomes Work Group meets monthly on the second Tuesday, 8:15 – 10:30 am

January 11	July <i>no meeting</i>
February 8	August 9
March 8	September 13
April 12	October 11
May 10	November 8
June 14	December <i>no meeting</i>

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group

Andre Elliott, Chair
The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group meets monthly on the second Wednesday, 4:00 – 5:30 pm

January 12	July 13
February 9	August 10
March 9	September 14
April 13	October 12
May 11	November 9
June 8	December <i>no meeting</i>

Food Access and Equity Work Group

Charmin Horton, Chair
The Food Access and Equity Work Group meets monthly, the third Monday, except when Monday is a holiday, * the meetings are moved to Tuesday, 10:00 – 11:30 am

January 18* (Tuesday)	July 18
February 22* (Tuesday)	August 15
March 21	September 19
April 18	October 17
May 16	November 21
June 20	December <i>no meeting</i>

Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group

Patti Kiger, Acting Chair
The Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group meets monthly, the second Tuesday, 1:00 – 2:30 pm.

January 11	July <i>no meeting</i>
February 8	August 9
March 8	September 13
April 12	October 11
May 10	November 8
June 14	December <i>no meeting</i>

Life-Long Wellness Work Group

Donna Smith, Chair
The Life-Long Wellness Work Group meets every other month, the third Wednesday, 1:00 – 2:00 pm.

January 19	July 20
March 16	September 21
May 18	November 16

Poverty Work Group

Charlena Jones and Vicki Weakley, Co-chairs
The Poverty Work Group meets every other month on the third Wednesday, 10:00 – 11:30 am

January 19	July 20
March 16	September 21
May 18	November 16



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