

Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth
Healthy Communities Action Team Grant
Grant Period: July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2018
Grant Award for July 1 – June 30, 2017: \$30,000



Background:

Richmond Healthy Start Initiative (RHSI), a division of the Richmond City Department of Social Services, was charged with organizing Mayor Dwight Jones' 2011 Breastfeeding Commission and carrying out its recommendations. RHSI subsequently won three consecutive two-year Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth – Healthy Community Action Team grant awards that incorporated Commission recommendations in 2012, 2014, and 2016. These grants created and support a Healthy Communities Action Team (HCAT) that seeks to reduce childhood obesity through policy, infrastructure, and environmental changes that promote a breastfeeding-friendly community, with an emphasis on impacting low-income African-American communities, which are at higher risk of having low breastfeeding rates. Current HCAT grant partners include Richmond Healthy Start Initiative, Richmond City WIC, Richmond City Health District, cBe Consulting, the Institute for Public Health Innovation, and Community Partner Shakeya Lewis. The first year of the current two-year grant cycle began July 1, 2016, and concludes June 30, 2017, with a grant award of \$30,000.

Major Accomplishments:

- In 2015 and 2016 the HCAT produced *#RVAbreastfeeds*, a public awareness campaign that has received national attention as a promising model for breastfeeding promotion.
- Produced the RVA Breastfeeding Symposium, which trained 110 care providers from 35 organizations in the use of a research-based prenatal breastfeeding education tool.
- Enacted a *Breastfeeding Welcome Here* outreach to local businesses to provide information about Virginia's public breastfeeding law and encourage adoption of breastfeeding friendly-practices. To date, 85 businesses have signed up.
- Created a *Guide to the Newborn Stomach* that has been endorsed by the three area hospitals systems and is included in their patient packets.

Current Grant Budget:

- **\$22,000** supports the salary of a part-time Breastfeeding Coordinator who oversees grant activities.
- **\$8,000** supports required grant activities, which expand upon the initiatives outlined above.