



Virginia Cooperative Extension

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Situation Analysis Report

Henrico County

2018

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Introduction

In order to identify the key characteristics that define Henrico County and the key issues facing its citizens, the Henrico County unit of Virginia Cooperative Extension conducted a situation analysis from February to November 2018. The Henrico Extension Leadership Council (ELC), comprised of volunteers and unit staff, took responsibility for implementing the three basic steps of the process: development of the Henrico County unit profile, assessment of needs from community and resident perspectives, and analysis of data collected to determine program direction.

The ELC held three general membership meetings to plan for and complete the situation analysis.

Meeting	Agenda Items
February 20	Organize for Action Identify Available Resources
May 22	Review data sources for Unit Profile Review and revise community survey
November 15	Issues Prioritization

A community survey developed by FCS Extension Agent Kim Edmonds was administered on-line and via hard copy at various community events and Extension programs. Key informant interviews conducted by volunteers and staff using a template developed by 4-H Agent Kendra Young. A 2017 Community Health Assessment and the United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg's Indicators of Community Strength were also used as data points.

Unit Profile

Overview

Henrico County is located in the central portion of the Commonwealth of Virginia and is comprised of 156,238 acres, or 244 square miles. The County is bordered to the south/southeast by the City of Richmond and the James River, which separates Henrico from Chesterfield County. New Kent and Charles City Counties lie to the east. To the west, Tuckahoe Creek defines Henrico's boundary with Goochland County, and the Chickahominy River to the north forms the boundary with Hanover County.

The Fall Line divides the county east and west, with the eastern section in the Atlantic Coastal Plain and the western section in the Piedmont Plateau. Interstate 95 is a commonly used dividing line when reference is made to the county's western and eastern halves. The topography is gently rolling and elevations vary from sea level to 350 feet.

Demographics

The total population reported by the 2016 5-year American Community Survey was 321,921—a 4.9% increase from the 2010 Census population total of 306,935. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS), this ranks Henrico County sixth among all of Virginia's cities and counties (behind Fairfax County, City of Virginia Beach, Prince William County, Loudoun County and Chesterfield County).

The population growth rate of 4.9% is higher than the state's growth rate of 3.9% and is significantly higher than the national average rate of 3.2%. Henrico County is ranked #2 out of 133 localities in Virginia in terms of growth rate. The county has sustained a period of steady population growth for over 30 years, with an average population increase of about two percent (2%) per year.

The population density is approximately 1,319 people per square mile, which is much higher than the state average density of 194 people per square mile.

The most prevalent race in Henrico County is White, representing 58.0% of the total population. As of the 2010 Census, the County had two minority-majority districts. Fairfield and Varina, with Black or African American being the prevalent race. The Three Chopt district had the largest Asian population and the Brookland district had the largest Hispanic or Latino population. According to the 2012-2016 ACS, the numbers for the districts have not changed.

Population by Race and Ethnicity

	2010 Census		2016 5-year ACS		Change
Total Population	306,935		321,921		4.88%
Population by Race & Ethnicity					
White	181,719	59.20%	188,820	58.65%	3.91%
Black or African American	90,669	29.54%	95,259	29.59%	5.06%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,012	0.33%	671	0.21%	-33.70%
Asian	20,052	6.53%	24,655	7.66%	22.96%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	127	0.04%	172	0.05%	35.43%
Some Other Race	6,157	2.01%	4,921	1.53%	-20.07%
Two or More Races	7,199	2.35%	9,423	2.93%	30.89%
Hispanic or Latino	15,001	4.89%	16,853	5.24%	12.35%

Population by Race and Ethnicity Across Magisterial Districts

	Henrico County	Brookland	Fairfield	Three Chopt	Tuckahoe	Varina
Total Population	321,921	66,506	61,424	67,139	66,201	60,651
Race & Ethnicity						
White	188,820	41,871	18,086	43,616	49,112	24,141
Black or African American	95,259	11,391	37,596	5,896	6,178	33,001
American Indian or Alaskan Native	671	42	15	247	8	324
Asian	24,655	4,667	1,508	13,107	4,999	221
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	172	101	8	32	20	0
Some Other Race	4,921	49	309	8	117	79
Two or More Races	9,423	2,220	1,433	1,505	1,848	1,313
Hispanic or Latino	16,853	6,165	2,469	2,728	3,919	1,572

Population by Age

	2011 Henrico	Percent	Description	Total/Percent
Total Population	321,921	100%		
Population by Age				
0-4	20,504	6.37%	Pre-school children	20,504 / 6.37%
5-9	20,697	6.43%	School-aged children	62,136 / 19.30%
10-14	21,594	6.71%		
15-19	19,845	6.16%		
20-24	19,089	5.93%	Younger adults	108,810 / 33.80%
25-34	45,874	14.25%		
35-44	43,847	13.62%		
45-54	45,685	14.19%	Adults	80,609 / 26.74%
55-59	20,968	6.51%		
60-64	19,416	4.95%		
65-74	24,774	7.70%	Seniors	34,402 / 13.79%
75-84	12,323	3.83%		
85+	7,305	2.27%		

The median age in Henrico County varied over the last 20 years. Between 2000 and 2010, the average median age declined from 39.7 to 37.3 years. Between 2010 and 2016, the average median age increased from 37.3 to 38.1.

Henrico school-age population, children aged 5-19 years, totals 62,145 individuals and comprises 19.3% of the total population.

The largest age contingent in Henrico's population is made up of adults aged 25-54 years. This group represents 135,406 individuals, or 42.0% of the total population. While that is the largest group, Henrico County planners anticipate that it is the Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, that will have the largest impact on the County's resources in the next decade. Gerontologist Ken Dychtwald created the concept of the "Age Wave" to describe the influence of the Baby Boomer generation on society throughout their life spans. As the Baby Boomers grow older, Dychtwald postulates that they will "put unprecedented pressure on families, communities, and governments as [they] strain entitlements, elder care, health care delivery, and pensions."¹

Henrico Households

The ACS reported that the median family income is \$80,400. Of the estimated 125,478 households in Henrico, the 2012-2016 ACS also reported 10,885 of them (8.7%) received Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the prior twelve months. Approximately 10.6% of Henrico County citizens and 7.8% of Henrico families live below the poverty level. Both of these measures is lower than the state averages of 11.4% and 8.1%.

The 2016 ACS shows there were 125,478 households in Henrico County and the average household size was 2.44 people. Families made up 64% of these households. This figure includes both married-couple families (45%) and other families (19%). Among those other families, 8% of all householders were female householders with no husband present and living with their own children who were younger than 18 years old. Non-family households made up 36% of all households in Henrico. Most of the non-family households were people living alone, but some were composed of people living in households in which no one was related to the householder. Thirty-four percent (34%) of all households had one or more people under the age of 18, and 22% of all households had one or more people 65 years old and over. These households also included 6,779 grandparents who lived with their grandchildren under 18 years old. Of those grandparents, 31% of them had financial responsibility for their grandchildren.

Henrico's Health

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 69.2% of American adults aged 20 years and over are overweight, including those classified as obese (2009-2010). Among

¹ "Ken Dychtwald." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 29 Nov. 2013. Web. 03 Dec. 2013.

Virginia's adults aged 18 and over, 60.4% were overweight and 27.3% were obese. Henrico County's obesity rate is 29%, which is higher than the state rate. Excess weight and obesity have been linked to a variety of diseases including heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women nationally. According to data reported by the Virginia Department of Health for 2006-2010, the cancer death rate for Henrico County was 173.7 (per 100,000 deaths), which is below the Virginia annual death rate from cancer of 179.3 (per 100,000 deaths). Both of these rates are trending downward for the period covered.

Diabetes affects an estimated 25.8 million Americans (8.3% of the population) according to the CDC. The Virginia Department of Health reports that 9% of Henrico's population (20 years and older) are living with diabetes.

The average Henrico County education level is higher than both the state and national averages. The average education index for Henrico is 14.10, ranking the county #19 in a list of the top 30 localities in Virginia (based on ACS 2010 data) with #1 being the lowest ranking and #30 the highest. Only 12 localities have a higher average education index in Virginia.

Henrico's Agriculture

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, farmland in Henrico County totaled 12,891 acres, covering only 8.25% of the county's land area. This is a 35.87% decrease in farmland acreage from that reported in the 2007 Census of Agriculture (20,096 acres).

There were a total of 117 farms and the average farm size was 110 acres (a 34.27% and 2.65% reduction from 2007, respectively.) However, the market value of products sold increased 10% from 2007 to a total of \$9,371,000. The vast majority of these sales were attributable to crops (\$9,218,000) with only 2% from livestock sales.

Forty-nine of 117 principal operators reported their primary occupation to be farming. Of these principal operators, 95 were male and 22 were female. Of all farm operators, 158 were White and 15 were Black or African American. There were no operators of Asian, Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino origin.

The market value of all agricultural products produced in Henrico totaled more than \$9.371 million in 2012. Crops accounted for 98% of these receipts (\$9.2 million). Grain sales accounted for the largest percentage of these crop receipts (\$5.137 million, 55.7% of total), ranking it the leading source of agricultural income in the county. Top crops included soybeans for beans, corn for grain, wheat for grain, and forages, totaling 8,702 acres (67.5% of total farm acreage.) Nursery and greenhouse products ranked second, accounting for \$3.6 million, 38.8% of the value of crops sold. This is a reversal of the rankings from the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

Ninety-six farms reported their market value of production at less than \$20,000. Thirteen farms reported market value of production at \$100,000 or more, with four of these reporting \$500,000 or more.

Traditional agricultural production in Henrico has been and will continue to be impacted by encroaching urban development.

An increase from the 2007 to 2012 census was in the value of agriculture products sold directly to individuals for human consumption. There was an increase in farms from 3 to 8 with a value of \$158,000 in 2012. The direct sales to individuals market has most likely continued to increase with the addition of a new market stand operation in the Fairfield area and a new farmers market opening in the Varina area in the last few years.

Land Use

The Henrico County Planning Department annually prepares an assessment of population and housing growth in the *Continuing, Comprehensive and Coordinated Transportation Data Report (3-C Report)*. The *2017 3-C Report* estimates the land use by acreage in the county in 2017 was 28% residential, 26% commercial/industrial/public/miscellaneous and 46% undeveloped (includes agricultural land use and water). This mix of residential and commercial land use is within the parameters outlined in the Henrico County 2026 Comprehensive Plan.²

The 2026 Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the Henrico County Board of Supervisors in August of 2009, has several goals, objectives and policies that support agriculture and conservation in the county including the following:

Economic Objective 17: Support the viability, operational efficiency, and productivity of the county's agricultural resources for current and future generations.

General Development Policy 12: Encourage the preservation of private open space by supporting the use of conservation and open space easements to preserve land use in each Land Use Group/Classification, provided such easements do not adversely impact planned infrastructure or the pattern of development in the area.

Rural Keystone Policy 4: Promote the idea of agriculture as a desirable use, subject to potential change and transition to other more intense uses. While the open nature of agriculture is enjoyed by many, and the open space is a valued community amenity, discourage the view of agriculture as permanent open space, and do not expect farmers to carry the burden of providing this amenity.

Rural Keystone Policy 5: Encourage creative, unique and niche forms of agriculture such farmers' markets, agri-tourism and value-added opportunities.

² The Henrico County 2026 Comprehensive Plan includes an economic objective that maintains an approximate ratio of non-residential and residential land uses that supports a tax base ratio of at least 65% residential to 35% commercial (non-residential).

Rural Keystone Policy 6: Encourage the use of agricultural science-based Best Management Practices to minimize erosion and groundwater and surface water contamination.

Rural Keystone Policy 7: Encourage low density, rural residential development to area that minimize conflicts between residential and agricultural land uses and maintain rural character of the county.

Community and Resident Perspectives

Community Survey

The Henrico County Unit developed a survey to identify community issues. The survey was posted to the Henrico County website, distributed at educational programs, and shared through list serves. In addition, a flyer was created with the link to the survey and distributed at countywide events. Eight-two respondents completed the survey. Respondents were asked to rank topics under four broad areas: Positive Youth Development; Agriculture and Natural Resources; Health and Wellness; and Family and Community Economics.

Based on the survey results, the top five Positive Youth Development issues identified as **extremely important** were:

- Youth Health and Wellness
- Workforce Prep and Job Skills
- More STEAM programs
- Teen Leadership Opportunities
- Positive Youth Activities

Based on the survey results the top five Agriculture and Natural Resources issues identified as **extremely important** were:

- Safe Use of Pesticides
- Efforts to Improve and Protect Water Quality
- Availability of an Affordable Food Supply
- Availability of a Safe Food Supply
- Early Detection, identification and management of invasive species

Based on the survey results the top five Health and Wellness issues identified as **extremely important** were:

- Substance Abuse Prevention and Access to Safe Drinking from Well Water (tie)
- Affordable Health and Dental Services
- Access to Safe Healthy Food
- Obesity Prevention

Based on the survey results the top five Family and Community Economic issues identified as **extremely important** were:

- Reducing frauds, scams and identity theft and Managing credit and debt (tie)
- Planning for retirement
- Handling personal and family finances
- Paying for college

When asked to rank the top three issues most important to them, respondents indicated: education; environmental quality; and health and wellness.

Priority Issues

Issue 1: Environmental and Natural Resources

Water quality, safe use of pesticides and a safe and affordable food supply were identified as priority environmental and natural resources issues in the community surveys.

Water Quality and Pesticide Use

Henrico County is bordered in part by two rivers. The Chickahominy River borders the northern portion of the county and the James River borders portions of the south. Approximately half of the land area of Henrico County drains directly into the Chickahominy River or its tributaries, and eventually into the James River, while the southern half of the county drains directly into the James River or its tributaries. Large segments of the James River and the Chickahominy River, including their tributaries in Henrico County, have been identified as having impairments (bacterial and sediment) according to the Virginia list of impaired stream segments.

The James River Association's *2017 State of the James Report* contends that, "Nutrient pollution is one of the most significant threats to the health of the James River." While the report indicates an increase in general stream health up to 59%, the long-term average sediment level in the James has not improved; nitrogen continues to exceed limits set for the river; and phosphorus reductions have stalled. Additionally the 2017 is now reporting on Bacterial Pollution. The report points out that "The score of this indicator has remained steady since 2009."

The Chesapeake Bay TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) was established in December of 2010 creating a "pollution diet" to work toward restoring clean waters in the Chesapeake Bay and its contributing lakes and rivers. As part of the "pollution diet", TMDL reports are required for the impaired segments in Henrico County.

Because of the large amount of residential development in Henrico, homeowners and green industry service personnel make critical decisions regarding the application of fertilizers and pesticides that have an impact on environmental quality. Improper decisions can exacerbate existing impairments and/or lead to new impairments in local rivers and tributaries, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

Status:

Henrico Extension currently offers programming, which addresses the needs of both the homeowner and the green industry. Programs that are currently in place which focus on nutrient management and water quality for the homeowner include the SMART Lawns program, Speaker's Bureau programs, Horticulture Helpline, Plant Clinics, and Special Event Information Booths. All include the promotion of soil testing. Henrico County citizens are eligible to receive two free soil tests per household per year, thanks to a grant-funded effort coordinated by the Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Master Gardeners in Henrico County are instrumental in providing the support for these educational programs in cooperation with a part-time horticulture technician and one horticulture extension agents.

Programs in both pesticide and fertilizer applicator certification and recertification educate the green industry on the safe use of pesticides and fertilizers, leading to reduced impairment of tributaries, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay.

Additionally the Henrico Extension Office advocates that homeowners and green industry professionals properly identify any pest before applying a pesticide. Proper identification of a pest can allow the pesticide applicator to use the most effect controls for that pest. The choice of control may be a more specific pesticide versus a general pesticide to limit harm to non-target species, a less toxic pesticide or some other non-chemical option such as cultural or mechanical control. To promote safe use of pesticides the Henrico Extension Office offers plant disease and insect or weed identification services in the office diagnostic lab or through labs of Virginia Tech.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

A Safe and Affordable Food Supply

Based on information received in the key informant interviews, the community surveys, and the issues forum, support for urban agriculture has been identified as a priority issue, specifically noting: changing land use; rural/urban interface conflicts, movement from producer focus to consumer focus, and increased demand for local foods.

Based on statistics compiled for the Unit Profile, it is clear that while the population of Henrico County continues to grow, farmland acreage continues to decrease. Land previously in crop and livestock production is becoming high-density residential and commercial development. Henrico County's continued reduction in farmland reinforces the trend from a producer-focused agricultural community to a consumer-focused one.

Residential development intermingled with currently farmed property creates rural and urban interface conflicts. Homeowners who move into residences in close proximity to farming operations can have problems with dust, odor, late-night farming operations due to harvest deadlines, and slow-moving farm vehicles on roads. Farmers must cope with vehicles moving

too fast—creating safety issues with their farm vehicles— and increased complaints from homeowners over pesticide use and other farming activities perceived as interfering with the suburban lifestyle.

Henrico County has an increased interest in local foods that can be obtained through many sources: farmers' markets, farm and roadside stands, community-supported agriculture (CSA's), co-ops, niche and specialty producers, pick-your-own farm operations, grocery stores highlighting local foods, and those other resources. In addition to purchasing local foods, community gardens provide residents the opportunity to grow their own foods. The sheer number and diversity of opportunities consumers have for obtaining local foods is a clear reflection of the increased demand for the same.

Status:

Henrico Extension currently offers programming which addresses the needs of both the consumer and the producer. The Henrico office currently offers three specific conferences for local farmers each year in addition to making them aware of program offerings presented by other extension offices, VCE Agricultural Research Extension Centers, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. The Henrico office has also consulted with the Cornerstone Community Collaborative Farm in Fairfield and the Dorey Park Farmer's market in Varina as these projects were developing. Henrico Master Gardeners volunteer numerous hours to activities such as the Horticulture Helpline, Plant Clinics, Speakers' Bureau presentations and an annual vegetable gardening series to help educate Henrico residents on home food production and preservation.

In addition to Henrico Extension educational programs for the increasing number of residential consumers, there are many local foods opportunities in Henrico County. The farmers' markets in Henrico County (West End Farmers' Market, Dorey Park Farmer's Market and Lakeside Farmers' Market) provide an excellent opportunity for educational outreach to residents who may need information on growing their own food, nutrition, and food safety. A consistent Extension presence at the local farmers' markets would provide an excellent means of outreach to local producers. Programs designed to educate the producer can include resources for the production of specialty crops. As farm sizes decline, the opportunities exist to have smaller niche crops produced in the county.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

Issue 2: Health and Wellness

Henrico County is an aging population. The number of people ages 65 and higher had the largest increase from 2010 – 2016. In the community survey conducted by the Henrico Extension Office, health and wellness was identified as very important. In 2017, a study was conducted by the Virginia Health Department in Henrico County. Many of the top issues were repeated in both

surveys. The five topics that were of most concern were nutrition and exercise; disease prevention and management; mental health & stress; substance abuse; and bullying.

Improving Nutrition and Physical Activity

Obesity, inactivity, and unhealthy food options increase the burden of chronic disease on Henrico residents. Being overweight is growing at epidemic rates among U.S. children, adolescents and adults. Proper nutrition, physical activity, and positive body image are all important to achieve and maintain healthy weights. Obesity and being overweight are major contributors to many preventable causes of death, and on average, higher body-weights are associated with higher death rates. 68% of Henrico residents report they are either overweight or obese. Good nutrition substantially contributes to the burden of preventable illnesses and premature death. Of primary concern is the under- consumption of vegetables, fruits, and grain products that are high in vitamins and minerals that are important to good health. Adults and youth both need to have the same information outlining a healthy diet, correct portion sizes, and the appropriate amount of activity for their body types. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have dietary guidelines to provide advice about consuming fewer calories, making informed food choices, and being physically active to attain and maintain a healthy weight, reduce risk of chronic disease, and promote overall health.

Status:

Henrico Extension currently addresses this issue by offering community workshops, in-school and afterschool educational programs, and by having interactive displays at public events. During these events and hands-on activities 5 to 10 minutes of physical activity is often incorporated to reinforce the healthy lifestyle message. The best approach to a healthy lifestyle is through prevention of unhealthy habits. The Henrico Extension office uses the following adult- and youth-based curricula to teach nutrition and physical activity concepts: Youth - Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids, Teen Cuisine, Choose Health: Food, Fun & Fitness, STEPS to a Healthy Teen, Health Rocks, Food Friends, Organ Wise Guys; Adult- Balanced Living with Diabetes, Eat Healthy Be Active, Eat Smart Move More. Being physically active is one of the most important steps that Americans can take to improve their health. The 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that adults participate in at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity. In addition, at least two or more times a week of muscle-strengthening activities that involve all major muscle groups for health benefits. People who are physically active generally live longer and have a lower risk for heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, depression, some cancers, and obesity. Regular physical activity is associated with lower death rates for adults, even when only moderate levels are performed.

Disease Prevention and Management

According to vital statistics provided by the Virginia Department of Health, the leading causes of death in Henrico County during 2017 were cancer, heart disease, stroke and lower respiratory

disease. There is a need for educational programming on preventative health care related to chronic diseases. Regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to improve their health. Moving more and sitting less have tremendous benefits for everyone, regardless of age, sex, race, ethnicity, or current fitness level. Individuals with a chronic disease or a disability benefit from regular physical activity, as do women who are pregnant. The scientific evidence continues to build—physical activity is linked with even more positive health outcomes than we previously thought. And, even better, benefits can start accumulating with small amounts of, and immediately after doing, physical activity.

Today, about half of all American adults—117 million people—have one or more preventable chronic diseases. Seven of the ten most common chronic diseases are favorably influenced by regular physical activity. Yet nearly 80 percent of adults are not meeting the key guidelines for both aerobic and muscle-strengthening activity, while only about half meet the key guidelines for aerobic physical activity. This lack of physical activity is linked to approximately \$117 billion in annual health care costs and about 10 percent of premature mortality

Status:

Since the Henrico Extension Offices' educational programs are focused around a healthy lifestyle, many of the curriculums mentioned earlier are being used to address the prevention of these diseases within the community. The recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are promoted through multiple nutrition education programs offered. The 2015 – 2020 Dietary Guidelines encourage Americans to focus on eating a healthful diet — one that focuses on foods and beverages that help achieve and maintain a healthy body weight, support nutrient adequacy, and reduce the risk of chronic disease. Focus on variety, nutrient density and recommended amounts. Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake. Shift to healthier food and beverage choices and support healthy eating patterns for all from home to school to work to communities.

Many of the programs offered by Henrico Extension encourage at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity for adults and youth. The Balanced Living with Diabetes program provides education for individuals managing diabetes through portion control and healthy food choices.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

Mental Health & Stress

The US Department of Health and Human Services defines mental health as a state of successful performance of mental function that results in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and the ability to adapt to change and to cope with adversity. Residents rank mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress as one of their top areas of concern. Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide and is a major contributor to the global burden of disease (3). According to the 2014 BRFSS, 17.1% of adults in Henrico County were diagnosed with depression. Mental health issues impact families, friends, and the broader community.

Stress is also an important factor in an individual's overall health, but is often overlooked. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, continued strain on the body from routine stress over time may lead to serious health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and anxiety disorder. Regular exercise, a healthy diet, and stress coping techniques are recommended methods to help individuals manage unhealthy stress.

Suicide is a serious public health problem that can have lasting harmful effects on individuals, families, and communities. Its causes are complex and determined by multiple factors. The goal of suicide prevention is to reduce risk factors and increase resilience, or protective factors. Ideally, prevention addresses all levels of influence: individual, relationship, community, and societal. In the 10-year period from 2004 to 2014, the total number of suicides in Henrico County increased from 25 to 39.

Status:

Henrico Extension addresses some areas of this issue by offering community workshops and resources. Virginia Cooperative Extension has a 5 part dealing with stress video series called "Beating Stress: Introduction to Stress, Daily Living, Family and Business Relationships, Financial, and Wellness". There are also three resources VCE has produced that can be distributed: Beating Stress: Challenges, Choices, Changes; Stress After a Disaster; and Stress Solutions Viewing Guide. Additional extension resources have been shared to deal with financial stress and stress around the holidays. Henrico County Prevention Services offers an 8-hour training that teaches participants how to help a person developing a mental health problem or crisis called "**Mental Health First Aid**". It is a recommendation to have Extension Agents and interested VCE volunteers attend this session to become more aware of the impact of mental illness and substance use disorders, signs and symptoms of a mental health problem or crisis, a 5-step action plan to offer assistance, and local resources that can help. There are two versions of the course; one focused on adults and the other focused on assisting youth.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

Substance abuse

Drug overdose deaths are the leading cause of injury death in the U.S., with over 100 drug overdose deaths occurring every day. Drug overdose deaths are the third most leading cause of injury death in Henrico. According to VDH Virginia Health Information data, from 2014 to 2015 drug overdose deaths had the sharpest increase in death rate than any type of injury death. Henrico exceeds the state rate for overdose deaths.

The number of drug overdose related deaths in Henrico County increased by more than 300% from 2006 to 2015. Opioid related deaths, specifically from heroin and/or fentanyl more than tripled from 2011 to 2015

Ninety-one Americans die every day from an opioid overdose. According to the CDC, there were 33,091 opioid overdose deaths in 2015, a 16% increase from 2014. This is likely driven by heroin and illicitly manufactured fentanyl. Rates of overdose deaths involving heroin and fentanyl have been increasing across all demographics, particularly highest among 25 to 44 year old white non-Hispanic males. In 2016, 47 opioid overdose deaths occurred in Henrico County, a 27% increase from 2015. Nearly one person dies each week from an opioid overdose (*VDH Division of Health Statistics*).

In Henrico, from 2007 to 2016, the number of deaths involving opioids increased from 15 to 47, or 213%. From 2010, when fentanyl was first noted in Henrico Office of Chief Medical Examiner (*Virginia Department of Health. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner*) data, to 2016, deaths due to fentanyl and heroin increased by about 600%. Although the number of deaths due to prescription opioids was relatively stable in the last 10 years, between 2015 and 2016 there was a 44% increase. The 27% increase from 2015 to 2016 is driven largely by increased in deaths involving fentanyl. The number of deaths from fentanyl increased by 91%. From 2010 to 2016, the number of deaths involving heroin increased from 4 to 27, or 575%.

Status:

Henrico Extension addresses limited areas of this issue by participating in various educational coalitions such as TooSmart2Start, and Henrico Prevention. The 4-H Health Rocks curriculum specifically addresses life skills that lead to healthy lifestyle choices with an emphasis on youth smoking and tobacco use prevention. This program helps youth understand the peer influences and health consequences of tobacco, drug, and alcohol use. It engages youth and adults in partnership to develop and implement community strategies that promote healthy lifestyle choices. In 2019, Henrico Extension is participating and multi-county multi-year Children, Youth and Families at Risk (CYFAR) grant to focus efforts in the 6th and 7th grade to help youth PROSPER (PROMoting School Partnerships to Enhance Resilience) and avoid Opioid misuses in Virginia.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

Bullying

Youth violence and bullying is a public health issues for individuals, families, and communities. According to the 2018 report from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) on incidents of discipline, crime, and violence (DCV), the most frequent discipline violation in Virginia's school divisions is classified as "defiance" (13.98% or 20,576 violations) which is a decrease from 15.4.59% (22,388 violations from two years ago). Other common types of juvenile incidents that occurred in Virginia's schools are fighting (7,356 violations, 5%- a slight increase from two years ago of 4.04% or 5, 877 incidents) and bullying (2,540 violations, 1.73%- a slight decrease of 1.89% or 2,754 incidents from two years ago). Bullying can be prevented, especially when the power of a community is brought together. Community-wide strategies can help identify and support children who are bullied, redirect the behavior of children who bully, and change the

attitudes of adults and youth who tolerate bullying behaviors in peer groups, schools, and communities.

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Bullying can be both physical harm and emotional harm. A newer form of bullying is through “cyberbullying” using high-tech devices to spread rumors or to send hurtful messages or pictures. Bullying is a serious problem for all involved. People who are bullied are more likely to feel bad about themselves and be depressed. They may fear or lose interest in going to school, work or outings. Sometimes they take extreme measures, which can lead to tragic results. They may carry weapons, use violence to get revenge, or try to harm themselves. Youth who bully others are more likely to drop out of school, have drug and alcohol problems, and break the law.

Status:

Bullying and youth violence solutions require widespread, sustained efforts in families, schools, and communities. State law (Code of Virginia [§ 22.1-208.01 Character education required.](#)) requires local school boards to establish character education programs that include addressing the inappropriateness of bullying. The best way to address bullying is to stop it before it starts. Parents can keep the lines of communication open, encourage kids to do what they love, and model how to treat others with kindness and respect. Parents can help their child get involved in new hobbies or groups/clubs. Being part of a group can help reduce bullying. Having friends can help a child have a better self-image. Entire families can get involved in the Henrico 4-H Youth Development program. 4-H has positive character development programs such as Character Counts. There are 4-H clubs that offer leadership and life skills development, community service projects, and opportunities for personal achievement. The time and energy spent together can help strengthen family unity in a fun and educational hands-on learning setting. Research shows that a youth’s relationship with a consistent, stable, and caring adult in the early years is associated in later life with better academic grades, healthier behaviors, more positive peer interactions, and an increased ability to cope with stress. When parents spend time and energy discovering and paying attention to their children’s needs, no matter what age, they are rewarded with positive, open, and trusting relationships with their children and will find parenting easier and more enjoyable.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

Issue 3: Educating and Strengthening Families

Results of the community survey conducted by the Henrico Extension Office identified several topics related to educating and strengthening families. Trends in the County and ELC input narrowed these topics to workforce preparation and development; life skills, use of technology; parenting; human development; and family finances and consumer education.

Children live within families, which are located within communities. When we invest in children, we are investing in community and economic development. Likewise, when we support communities, we support the families that live in them. In addition, when families are supported, children are more likely to grow up happy and healthy, free from the risk of maltreatment and violence. By recognizing and building on existing strengths within communities and families, we can support all families in providing a healthy, safe, and loving environment for their children. Encouraging responsible parenting and adult mentoring produces strong, resilient families.

Workforce development & life skills

There are certain life skills that every adult must have to be independent, but those skills are not something that people just know as they mature. The skills must be learned. Many young adults enter the world with no idea of how to navigate it. They lose their confidence, and then either move back home or struggle unnecessarily. 4-H offers youth opportunities to develop and practice these skills including, responsibility and communication skills through all delivery modes. 4-H desires to develop responsible adults who can express themselves both orally and in writing. Communication skills affect other life skills such as teamwork, critical thinking (need to be able to share their thoughts and ideas with others), and getting along with others. College may not be the path of all students. Appropriate workforce development can provide needed alternatives.

Status:

Henrico 4-H offers opportunities to develop life skills through community and SPIN clubs, curriculum such as CHARACTER COUNTS!™ program, and through activities such as community service, record keeping, leadership opportunities, camp, decision making, and communication and expressive arts contests. Additionally, VCE presents opportunities for youth to serve as club officers and work in groups, as well as adhere to standards set in the 4-H Code of Conduct. Life skills development occurs in all Virginia 4-H delivery modes. Additionally, as part of a multi-county multi-year Children, Youth and Families at Risk (CYFAR) grant to focus efforts in the 6th and 7th grade to help youth PROSPER (PROmoting School Partnerships to Enhance Resilience), the Botvin LifeSkills Curriculum will be implemented in 7th grade classes throughout the County. The Capital Region Workforce Development Board provides workforce development services for youth and adults in Henrico.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

Technology, human development and parenting

Today's parents face demands from various areas. Technology provides parents great opportunity and flexibility to manage their lives. It also causes challenges the can have long standing consequences. Too much technology can result in missing personal connection, individuals who are disconnected from the physical environment and even delayed development in children. This new phenomenon referred to as distracted parenting or device distraction is just emerging in research. Distracted parenting can also be associated with unintentional injuries to children. There is the need for more research to determine any direct causality. However, general observations at a playground or across a dinner table show that many times children are competing with devices for parental attention. Parents are not the only guilty parties. As children get older, they are more likely to have their own devices they are attached to. Phone ownership for Americans 13 and older has increased from 9 million to 114 million in 2017. According to a 2018 Pew Research Center Report, 72 % of parents feel their teen is sometimes distracted by their cell phone when they are trying to hold a conversation. When asked the same question about their parent's behavior, 51% of teens reported their parent being distracted by their cell phone at least sometimes during conversations.

Status:

Henrico Extension has early childhood development and parenting resources to better educate and instruct individuals on being nurturing parents and caregivers for children's physical and emotional development. When parents and children have strong, positive feelings for one another, children develop trust that their parents will provide what they need to thrive, including love, acceptance, guidance, and protection. Parents need to know the various stages they go through at different ages, which is covered in the VCE Ages & Stages educational material and the LIFT (Learning in Families Together) curriculum. The Human Development Program Team has developed lessons on early childhood development topics for childcare professionals and parents. As part of a multi-county multi-year Children, Youth and Families at Risk (CYFAR) grant to focus efforts in the 6th and 7th grade to help youth PROSPER (PROMoting School Partnerships to Enhance Resilience), the Strengthening Families Program will be implemented in Eastern part to the County.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

Family finances and consumer education

According to *Financial Capability in the United States 2016*, conducted by the FINRA Foundation (Financial Industry Regulation Authority), Americans demonstrate relatively low levels of financial literacy and have difficulty applying financial decision-making skills to real life situations. Study participants were asked five questions covering aspects of economics and finance encountered in everyday life. Sixty-five percent of Virginians are unable to answer more than three of the five questions correctly. Also, most Americans do not comparison shop for credit

cards, with 55% saying that in obtaining their most recent credit card they did not collect and compare information about cards from more than one company. Individuals need at least a fundamental level of financial understanding. This knowledge, paired with financial decision-making skills, can best ensure an individual's financial capability.

Virginia is among the top ten for highest levels of debt. At the national level, the 2018 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey prepared by Harris Poll found that 79% of adults would benefit from advice and answers to everyday financial questions and 73% are currently worried about their personal finances. This same survey revealed that 24% reported finding it difficult to reduce debt due to unexpected financial emergencies.

In addition to adults, teens were also identified to have a need for financial education. Teens are eager to take on adult obligations such as earning money and managing credit cards, but many lack the financial education to effectively fulfill them. A survey of high school students conducted by Americans for Consumer Education and Competition found that 82% of the students failed a basic quiz on financial concepts and consumer spending.

Status:

Financial education courses are currently being offered for Henrico County citizens to teach critical thinking skills related to consumers' goals, needs, and wants. This type of education helps local citizens understand their rights and become consumers that are more informed. Educational workshops are offered to teach a range of basic financial concepts including spending plans, understanding credit and financial institutions, and recordkeeping. Tax preparation assistance is provided on an annual basis to those who meet income guidelines, with a special focus on reaching taxpayers who qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit.

Simulations such as the Reality Store, Real Money Real World and Kids Marketplace provide youth hands on experiences with making financial decisions. The Henrico Office partners with schools and community based organizations to conduct these simulations. Henrico VCE offers and fully supports the youth focused consumer education program called LifeSmarts, sponsored by the National Consumers League. LifeSmarts is an innovative competition that tests students on their knowledge of personal finance, health and safety, the environment, technology, and consumer rights and responsibilities. LifeSmarts is designed to encourage middle and high school students to think seriously about important consumer issues through a challenging, quiz style how format. Henrico County 4-H and FCS Agents have made special efforts to increase local and regional participation in this national program by collaborating with several public school systems throughout Virginia.

Broad-based partnerships are necessary to create lasting change in how communities think about supporting families. Networking with other organizations provides greater opportunities to identify strategies for ensuring that all parents in our community have the skills, support, and resources they need to care for their children. The Henrico Extension Office currently partners with some organizations but could explore additional partnerships with faith-based communities,

courts, media, parents and caregivers, child development centers, and schools to further our common mission to strengthen the family and community.

This issue is being addressed to some extent by VCE resources. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.