



Virginia Cooperative Extension

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Situation Analysis Report



City of Newport News

2013

City of Newport News Extension Staff

Lanette Kelly, Unit Coordinator, Extension Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS)
Mary Wright, Program Associate, Agriculture/ Natural Resources
Stewart Sale, Program Associate, 4-H Youth Development
Tammy Coker, Program Assistant, FNP Youth
Janet Hutchins, Program Assistant, FNP Adult
Jacqueline Simmons, Program Assistant, FNP Youth
Lishka Banda, Unit Administrative Assistant

City of Newport News Extension Leadership Council

Renee Carter
Seth Fisher
Tanisha Harper
Wendy Harrison
Valerie Fashion
Shawn Okeefe
Kelvin Rountree
Pamela Parham
Ebbie Samuels
Nicole Talton

Sylvia Watford
Shelly Hackworth
Jackie Linder
Anita Taylor
Gwen Meharg
Sherry Massie
James Wright
Katherine G. Stewart
Minnie Alston
Fred Watson

Introduction

Newport News Extension Staff, Extension Leadership Council members (ELC), and key community stakeholders participated in a comprehensive Situation Analysis during the calendar year 2013. This collaborative effort was designed to aid in the development of the most current unit profile using both statistical information and collecting input from community participants on perceived issues. Data was compiled and examined. Results obtained from this process was used to identifying key issues facing the community- providing a roadmap for the expansion and development of Extension programs in the community.

After this report has been submitted, the total list of priority issues will be examined by an Issues Identification Task Force of informed Virginia Cooperative Extension program personnel who will categorize each issue for further consideration.

As noted above the goals of this project were two-fold:

1. To conduct interviews and survey's with community leaders to gather information on fundamental issues facing local residents, uncover barriers and challenges which threaten quality of life, and outline additional concerns local residents would like to see addressed.
2. To use the findings of the situation analysis to determine which issues reflect local priorities and identifying which can be addressed by utilizing Extension resources.

This situation analysis is the first component of the Extension Programming Model. It helps the organizations provide needs-based programming which proactively evolves as community needs change.

The process was led by the ELC in adherence to guidelines and procedures outlined through a series of training sessions provided by Virginia Cooperative Extension personnel from Virginia Tech. Both quantitative data (which led to the development of a Unit Profile) and qualitative data gathered from community leaders, members, and residents provided the foundation for the delineated outcome in this report.

ELC members and Extension staff collected data from the general public primarily through the use of online and printed surveys. Survey format and questions were developed at VT and provided participants a large degree of autonomy in identifying areas of top priority. ELC members and Extension staff developed an extensive email and mailing list of individuals, community partners and organizations to participate in the survey. This list included the communities in which we serve such as 4-H leaders and members, Master Gardeners, Community Minority groups, public and private organizations, ELC members, and program participants. The survey was available on social media sites and the city wide-email distribution server. Thirty days was allotted to survey participants.

During the month of November, Extension staff compiled participant comments and survey results. Data was formatted and analyzed using an online system. Additional data was gathered from existing sources such as the US Census Bureau's statistics, local government resources, VCE Situation Analysis Resource website, and the Planning and Development Council. Several ELC members were asked to review all the data. As members met to discuss and review the data they generated a list of the top community priorities.

Key priorities identified include:

1. Health
2. Parenting
3. Youth Violence
4. Community Services
5. Child Development
6. Youth Activities
7. Obesity
8. Before and After School Issues
9. Housing/Home; Leadership; Life Skills/Decision Making for Youth

As we conclude the 2013 Situation Analysis it's certain the process of understanding our community needs continue. Priorities identified within this document only outline some of the key issues our community is facing. As emerging issues become more apparent and our communities continue to grow and diversify, new priorities will arise. Understanding community is a dynamic process. Accordingly, Extension programs are poised to address new challenges with eagerness, commitment, and innovation.

Unit Profile

Basic Demographics

The city of Newport News can best be described as a diverse, thriving population in the heart of a sound metropolitan area. It ranks as the fourth largest city in the Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News MSA—Hampton Roads; and is the sixth largest city in Virginia with a 2011 population estimated at 181,009. Newport News sits on the southern end of the Virginia Peninsula formed by the James River and the York River. The city has 68.3 square miles of land with a population density of 2646 people per square mile. Newport News is an independent city, which means it is not affiliated with a county.

Demographically, Newport News is in many ways typical of metropolitan America. It contains within its boundaries an urban core, a ring of older, settled neighborhoods and booming suburban development. Its citizens' age, educational, occupational and socioeconomic characteristics by and large reflect the typical American demographic profile.

Age distribution data for Newport News show the greatest population increases in young adults (20-34 years of age) and seniors citizen groups (60-64 years of age). The median age of residents is 32.3 years, which is quite a bit lower than the Virginia median age of 43.4 years. Furthermore, 10.8 percent of the residents of Newport News were 65 years of age or older, compared to 12.5 percent of the population of Virginia as a whole.

Regarding gender, 2011 data reports a relatively balanced ratio of males and females. Reportedly, 48.19 percent (87,228) of the residents are males with 51.81 percent reported females (93,781).

The racial makeup (Race/ethnicity) of the city based on 2011 data was as follows:

White: 50.80%

Black or African American: 40.69%

Asian/ Pacific Islander: 2.90%

American Indian or Alaskan Native: .33%

Hispanic: 5.50%

Two or more races: 3.36%

Other: 1.73%

The largest percentage of growth for a specific race was in the number of resident that reported being two or more races increasing from 2.62 percent in 2007 to 3.36 percent in 2011. The data indicated the Hispanic population remained reasonably consistent- while the number is still relatively small as a percent of the total population, this is a population with specific needs addressing language barriers that should be investigated.

Residents in the City of Newport News have the following education level reported for the population 25 years and over:

High school or higher: 89.2%

Bachelor's degree or higher: 23.5%

Graduate or professional degree: 8%

Data on household composition indicates a significant number of one parent families with children. The city of Newport News has 42.0 percent of all households as single family homes this exceeds both statewide and national averages of 30.0 percent and 20.0 percent respectively.

Since 2000, teenage pregnancy rates have declined in parallel with rates statewide. In 2004, there were 536 teenage pregnancies or 85 pregnancies per 1,000 women 15-19 years old in Newport News—a 9 percent decrease from the rate in 2000. Newport News, however, had a teen pregnancy rate 1.6 times that of Virginia and 1.25 times that for all jurisdictions in Hampton Roads.

Between 1990 and 2000, Newport News' population below the poverty line reduced slightly from 14 percent to 13.8 percent. According to the 2000 Census, 10.4 percent of all households in Newport News had an income less than \$10,000, and 12 percent of all households had an income less than \$15,000, compared to 16 and 25 percent in 1990. About 11.3 percent of the City's families had incomes below the poverty level. One factor contributing to the decrease in poverty was the decrease in families having female heads of households (with no husband present). This portion of the population has traditionally been the lowest income group. In

1990, 9,534 families were female head of household (14.9 percent) compared to 8,414 female head of household families (12.1 percent) in 2000.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of families with female heads of household below the poverty line decreased. In 1990, 43.8 percent of the female head of household families were below the poverty line, compared to 39.9 percent a decade later. In 2000, one in six children under the age of 18 was below the poverty line (17 percent). The poverty rate was higher for children living in female head of household families (39.9 percent).

In 2000, the Census reported that Newport News' per capita income was \$17,843 while the per capita income in Virginia was \$23,975. In 2000, the Census reports 15.6 percent of the City's population was uninsured and 13.5 percent of children were uninsured. For 2003 the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that the City had over 25,148 people, including 10,363 children (ages 0 to 17) in poverty. This 2003 estimate would put 14 percent of the population and 19.9 percent of its children in poverty. In 2006, approximately 2.5 percent of the City's population received assistance from TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and 12.2 percent received food stamps. There are more Medicaid recipients in the City than there are in other Peninsula jurisdictions. As of December 2005, approximately 18 percent of Newport News population received Medicaid. Data indicates an increase in the percent of student's continuing education after high school. 89.2 percent of graduates are continuing education post high school.

The unemployment rate is slightly higher than the state and national average. Blue-collar workers comprised the highest percentage of employed civilian. A look at industries indicates that layoffs have been common in recent years, frequently leading to unemployment. Working with the City economic development office may offer some options on some entrepreneurial opportunities for some of these workers. Further investigation is needed. Type of workers:

- Private wage or salary: 75%
- Government: 21%
- Self-employed, not incorporated: 4%
- Unpaid family work: 0%

Even with the increase in unemployment, the adjusted gross income (AGI) per capita for the City of Newport News is higher than the state average. City of Newport News residents AGI 13.71% Virginia average AGI 11.06%

Community and Resident Perspectives

Issues identified in the City of Newport News VCE Situation Analysis were identified using primarily citywide online and written surveys. Based on issue areas identified in the unit profile, VCE staff and the ELC identified a diverse group of community residents, community stakeholders, local government, and private and public partners to participate in the survey. Forty-nine participants responded to the survey. Key issues identified were: Health, Parenting, Youth Violence, Community Services, Child Development, Youth Activities, Obesity, Before and After School Issues, and-rated equally- Housing/Home, Leadership, and Life Skills/Decision Making for Youth.

Priority Issues

Based on the unit profile and resident perspective data, the following top priority issues were identified for the City of Newport News. Many of these issues can be addressed through Virginia Cooperative Extension resources. Others are outside the scope of VCE programming and should be referred to the appropriate government agencies. The following key priorities are listed in rank and order.

Issue 1: Health was identified as the top issue in the City of Newport News.

Not surprisingly local residents have ranked health as the top priority. Chronic illness, poor nutrition, declining levels of physical activity, and seemingly a lack of low- cost community resources leave residents desperately seeking guidance. Health concerns were not limited to physical ailments but also include financial health, economic stability, and mental health. Survey responses questioned the high cost of medical care and the limited resources available to lower income families when trying to access medical care.

On some levels, this issue can be addressed with existing VCE programs and resources. Virginia Cooperative Extension has the potential to be a leader in health and nutrition education. Through Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) nutrition educational programs, residents can receive basic education on ways to create healthier lifestyles.

These programs address physical activity, nutrition, and ways to address emotional (stress) challenges. Additionally, FCS programming is strengthened with the partnership of the Food Nutrition Program (FNP) youth and adult educators. These paraprofessionals serve hundreds of local citizens per year in a variety of settings such as Newport News schools, resident homes, and community social settings such as group homes and homeless shelters. Financial education is provided through monthly workshops and weekly individual education sessions. In order for Extension to expand or reach additional effort should be devoted to exploring ways to better address this issue. Extension should also consider acquiring a VCE Financial Specialist that can provide advance research in effective financial education techniques.

Issue 2: Parenting was identified as the second most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

Successful parent education programs build upon families strengths and help to create an environment where children can thrive personally, socially, and academically. The city of Newport News offers parenting education to a target population. Survey results show a desire to have a more expansive reach.

Extension programs, through Family and Consumer Sciences (Human Development and parent education programs) address this priority with science and evidence based instructional workshops. The goal in these community workshops is to educate and supports parents to do the best job they can to raise their children to become confident, caring, responsible and productive. Community education takes place in the format of educational workshops, parent/child activities, and personal parenting coaching as requested. Zero to Three, Better Kid Care, Teen Relationships, and Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect workshops can be

delivered as need within the community. Additionally, with the addition of a Human Development Specialist, Dr. Karen DeBord, Extension is well positioned to address this subject. 4-H Youth Development can also play an active role through collaboration with Family and Consumer Sciences.

As noted, Virginia Cooperative Extension has numerous resources and expertise in teaching parenting skills, training child care providers, and helping clientele understand the child development process. However, these programs suffer from low enrollment when offered voluntarily. Additional efforts are needed to understand how to engage a broader audience.

Issue 3: Youth Violence was identified as the third most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

The city of Newport News has placed youth violence as a top priority. The city has received a federal grant to help reduce youth violence and gang activity in approximately 225 at-risk youth through services and case management. However, there are many more youth in need of prevention and early intervention services. Survey participants are seeking support in deterring youth that are considered at-risk, and providing support to families of youth who are delinquent, violent, have gang-related behavior, truancy, suspensions/expulsions from school, and substance use.

Youth violence prevention is a serious concern and should be addressed using an interdisciplinary approach. Extension programs, through 4-H Youth Development offers several educational opportunities aimed at equipping youth with tools, resources, and skill needed to influence a positive outcome as an adult. These programs such as Character Counts, Guide to Bully preventions, and Citizenship target the underlying issues of good decision making, problem solving, and conflict resolution. VCE can better address and collaborate on this issue by hiring a 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent in the City of Newport News who can expand core programs, until then other community partners are better positioned to address this issue on a larger scale.

Issue 4: Community Services was identified as the fourth most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

Residents are often faced with new and unique situations that require guidance and support from local government, profit and not-for profit agencies. Residents are seeking more education on these services and their availability. Equally there is a need for supplementary resources that are free and low-cost to residents. Residents feel there is a gap or inadequate services available to meet their needs.

Many organizations host community resource fairs and “open house” events to inform residents of the diversity of services available to them. While Extension offices provide many distinctive services we also offer services that fill the gap in what is available from local agencies. Our role is to market these services and collaborate with other organizations to meet community needs. If residents find there is inadequate resources to meet their needs additional efforts may be needed to explore how to address these issues. The ELC can take a leadership role in uncovering these needs and linking individuals with existing resources.

Issue 5: Child Development was identified as the fifth most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

Child development is a multi-faceted area of focus. In general child development involves looking at the child as a whole, and at all the areas effecting development. Development is usually categorized using the following areas: physical, intellectual (known as cognitive), language, emotional, and social. Recognizing the importance of this topic, residents are seeking resources that educate them on the development process. They are also seeking resources that make them better caregivers. Knowing that all children go through the same sequences of development, but the way they do will differ, according to their environment, developmental norms (milestones) is critical. Incorrectly gauging developmental milestones can be misleading and cause parents and caregivers to compare children with each other, which may result in labeling children, affecting their self-esteem and self-concept.

Parenting Courses and Child Care Provider trainings are two educational opportunities available in the Newport News community that seeks to address these issues. Extension has

bountiful resources that deal with child development. In addition, the City of Newport News- Prevention Services Bureau- has a parenting educator that works with targeted parents to provide resources. In order to expand our reach Extension should see to create a stronger collaboration with like organizations and other applicable partners.

Issue 6: Youth Activities was identified as the sixth most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

Youth have long been regarded as our future. Ensuring they have enriching educational experiences and an environment that is conducive to their development are essential. This survey identified several areas of concern; primarily, the need for affordable before and after-school activities in a safe, supervised environment. Secondly, resident noted the desire to ensure youth activities enhanced social skills, address youth risky behavior such as bullying, and offer leadership development opportunities.

Through Extension programs such as 4-H Youth Development and FCS youth programs many of these concerns are addressed. 4-H'ers engages in hands-on learning activities in the areas of science, healthy living, and food security, leadership and character development. These activities are available through many modes which include 4-H clubs, FCS financial workshops and real-world simulations, Master Gardner in-school activities, and much more. Extension seeks to create and reinforce positive change. The recommendation is that VCE continue its existing programming in these areas and expand that programming where possible through stronger collaborations with other youth organizations. Extension can also impact this area of concern by employing a 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent that will have far more reach that currently possible without this position being filled.

Issue 7: Obesity was identified as the seventh most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

The obesity epidemic represents a critical public health issue that has the potential to incur major healthcare costs because of the substantial risks associated with excess body fat. Whereas many recognize the significant risk of heart disease and diabetes, a myriad of other health problems can accompany overweight and obesity, potentially leading to early morbidity

and mortality. Fortunately Newport News resident's recognition of obesity as an important area of concern, and not simply a matter of cosmetics or lifestyle choice, is clearly a step in the right direction to addressing this issue head-on.

Extension resources greatly impact citizen knowledge and behavior regarding this topic. FCS Health, Nutrition, and Wellness programs seek adult audiences to education on nutrition guidelines. While the FNP Program Associates work with the youth in schools, community centers, and other social settings to education them on ways to make better food choices. Extension nutrition programs also fill the gap in participant knowledge and behavior by hosting food demonstration- leaving adult and youth participants with the practical knowledge of on how to apply principles learned in the classroom. Extension resources are addressing this issue to the fullest extent that funding will allow. In order to expand to a broader audience additional effort should be given to collaborate with other community organizations.

Issue 8: Before and After School Issues was identified as the eighth most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

Many residents surveyed in this process noted the desire for more before and after school options for youth. Youth that are not actively engaged in positive activities potentially lend their time to unproductive activities. The Department of Parks and Rec does offer a series of before and after school programs as do many elementary and high schools within the city.

Extension offers educational programs at the above mentioned locations and does not currently independently host any before or after school programs at the Extension Office. Extension does offer summer day camps and a weeklong 4-H Jr. Camp. While there is Extension before and after school curriculum and programs available implementing them would be a challenge without a 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent in Newport News. Extension should consider hiring a 4-H Agent for the Newport News office. In the meantime, the Unit Coordinator, 4-H Program Assistant, 4-H Volunteers, and other office staff should seek to collaborate with other community organizations to address this issue.

The following three issues ranked equally as key priorities uncovered during the Situation Analysis. They have been outlined as 9, 9A, 9B but do not represent any rank and order beyond being identified as the ninth most pressing issue.

Issue 9: Housing/Home was identified as the ninth most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

The issue of Housing/ Home was identified as a top priority. The cost of obtaining and maintaining affordable housing can be a challenge for many. Citizens desire to reside in safe, clean, healthy neighborhoods- a major factor in quality of life. Both, rental housing and pathways to homeownership were cited as a barrier for economic growth and stability. There is an increased demand for housing incentive program which support homeownership. Consequently, potential homeowners need education on the home-buying process, home maintenance and home energy conservation. Additionally, Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) programs are needed to address those families that do not have primary residents and live in mobile situations.

Although Virginia Cooperative Extension cannot make homes more affordable, or provide funding for rapid re-housing, we can provide educational programs to help homeowners and renters with budgeting and maintenance. We are currently addressing this issue by providing Housing Counseling to residents and support homeownership education by teaching the financial education (spending plan) during VHDA Homebuyer workshops and clubs. Opportunities exist for further partnerships with VHDA, the City Housing Office and other like organizations.

Issue 9A: Leadership was identified as the ninth most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

Every community in Virginia seeks great leadership whether elected, appointed, or volunteered; the city of Newport News is no different. Leadership is a process involving influencing a group to achieve a goal or accomplish a task. Leadership skills are not developed in a day, but require a lifetime of learning and practice. Having exceptional adult and youth leadership in Newport News can create an environment where people are not afraid to take risks, involve individuals in creating a shared vision, views challenges as opportunities, and understands the value and potential of every person.

Virginia Cooperative Extension is committed to developing innovative leaders through training programs and strong community partnerships available from through VCE Community Viability State Specialist. Currently the local Extension office has not marketed Adult leadership workshops; however we do offer youth leadership opportunities and educational trainings. Extension does have sufficient resources to address this issue; however continued collaboration with community partners can result in a broader reach.

Issue 9B: Life Skills/Decision Making for Youth was identified as the ninth most pressing issue in the City of Newport News.

For many youth, adolescence is a time of increased pressure for problem solving and personal decision. They are called upon to make many difficult decisions including decisions regarding career, school involvement, and risky behaviors. Choices made at this time have the power to influence many aspects of their future. Therefore, it is essential that they're well aware of the potential impact of their decisions and learn effective decision making skills. Learning life skills is equally as important. Life skills are the essential abilities individuals can learn that will help them to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life. Survey participants are looking to engage youth with skill needed to ensure the continued growth and success of our community.

Extension is addressing this issue with 4-H Programming. Developing life skills is a key element of Extension 4-H programming and has been shown to have measurable impacts. The goal of 4-H Youth programming is to provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for young people to experience life skills, to practice them until they are learned, and be able to use them as necessary throughout a lifetime. Through the experiential learning process, youth internalize the knowledge and gain the ability to apply the skills appropriately. As mentioned above this program is limited without the having a 4-H Extension Agent in Newport News. However, staple 4-H programs reinforce good decision making skills for our youth. In order to expand our reach community collaborations should be explored.