



Quarterly Report

VOLUME 4: ISSUE 3

OCTOBER 2003

Homework tops list of after-school activities

In May 2003, CCF staff conducted a mini-survey of 51 children and 44 adults at a City Services Fair on the downtown mall regarding children's involvement in after-school activities.

The three activities that students visiting the fair said they most wanted to do after school were: play sports; play outside; and play video games.

Parents surveyed wanted their children to be involved in "developmental and fun tasks" attend a community or school center after school, or participate in sports. Other activities that scored high marks with parents included music, arts and crafts, and playing outdoors.

Homework topped the chart for the activity that the greatest number of children reported doing after school; not surprisingly, it slipped several ranks when children were asked to report what they most would *like* to do after school.

When parents visiting the fair were asked about barriers to their child's participation in after school activities, many parents reported that they lacked knowledge about which programs were available.

They also reported that programs were too expensive, or that there was no available transportation. Other barriers included too much homework, an uncertainty about the quality of available programs, inappropriateness of available programs, or lack of interest on the part of their children.

CCF plans to share this information with an emerging work group on youth assets. For information contact Saphira Baker at 970-3550.

Stepping Stones identifies trends in critical areas of child & family well-being

CCF has issued the **fourth** edition of *Stepping Stones*, its annual report on trends documenting the well-being of local children and families. *Stepping Stones* was created as a tool to identify and raise awareness of community needs, provide the localities with information to guide local child and family strategies, and identify areas for improvement. The 4th edition includes sufficient longitudinal data to identify positive and negative trends on a growing percentage of the 67 indicators chosen to measure child and family well-being. 2003 trends include:

- Both City and County SOL scores improved in the following areas: 3rd grade English; 5th grade English, math, history, and science. County students also showed an increase in 3rd grade math, history, and science SOL scores. On the Grade 4 Stanford 9 test, students in both localities showed steady improvement, and on the Grade 6 Stanford 9 test, students in the City showed steady improvement.
- The percentage of students with limited English proficiency has increased steadily; the percentage of adults registered to vote in the County has increased;
- There has been an increase in bus ridership for both City and County.
- The Albemarle teen birth rate decreased 44% for 1999-2001; and the Charlottesville teen birth rate experienced a 60% decrease for 1999-2001.

Continued on page 2

Community Needs Assessment reveals resources, concerns of local families

CCF recently released a wide-ranging study of the needs of local children and families, completed by the Needs Assessment work group. The study, "*Comprehensive Needs Assessment of Charlottesville/Albemarle Children and their Families, 2003*", is based on the results of telephone interviews with 847 local families with children and a series of focus groups. An accompanying document, "*Summary of Findings and Recommendations*" suggests action steps that residents, service providers, and elected officials may follow in order to better conditions for local families.

Among the survey findings is that, despite the fact that over 98% of adults in the survey population worked either full or part-time, household income emerged as the single most important factor in predicting unmet needs locally. "What we found," says Gretchen Ellis, Planner/Analyst at CCF, "is that lower income, 'working poor' families are more likely to have unmet needs for medical and dental care, mental health services, or emergency financial services than higher income residents."

Continued on page 2

CHARLOTTESVILLE /ALBEMARLE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Stepping Stones *(cont. from page 1)*

- The combined Charlottesville/Albemarle rate of Sexually Transmitted Diseases has decreased by 23% in 2002.
- Between 1994 and 2001, Comprehensive Services Act cases have increased from 6.6 per 1,000 to 29.6 per 1,000 in Albemarle (an increase of almost 350%), and from 37.1/1,000 to 87.2/1,000 in Charlottesville (a 135% increase). However, the numbers decreased slightly in 2002 to 74.6 per 1,000 in the City and 23.6 per 1,000 in the County.
- The Albemarle foster care rate has remained steady but the Charlottesville rate has increased 46% between 1997 and 2001.
- In Albemarle County, the three-year average monthly rate of children receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) has

decreased 74% between 1991-1993 and 2000-2002.

- The three-year average monthly rate of Charlottesville children receiving TANF has decreased 59% from 1993-1995 to 2000-2002.
- The three-year average rate for women receiving first trimester prenatal care has declined in both the County and City over the last five triennial measuring periods.

Stepping Stones is intended to stimulate community dialogue and action regarding regional trends in the Charlottesville/ Albemarle community. The report was prepared by Gretchen Ellis, CCF Planner/Analyst, and CCF's Data Management work group. For more information on Stepping Stones call Gretchen Ellis or Saphira Baker at 970-3550. The full report may be viewed on-line at www.ccfinfo.org.

WELCOME!

New Commissioners:

Sade Ridley, County Youth Rep.
Noah Schwartz, MACAA, Private Provider Representative
Danielle Wilcox, City Citizen Rep.
Jessica Rafter, City Youth Rep.
Shirley Copeland, County Citizen Rep.

New CCF Staff:

Linda Rahman, Program Assistant

SEARCH THE GUIDE

CCF's popular [Guide to Youth Services](#) is now searchable online! The search engine may be found at: www.ccfinfo.org/NewPages/guidetoyouthservices.html

Needs Assessment *(cont. from page 1)*

Residents report that they turn to medical professionals, family, and friends when they need assistance for their families and are less likely to utilize "traditional" human services to obtain information. Focus group participants indicated that a knowledgeable neighborhood leader would be a preferred source of information, in addition to friends and family. Among its recommendations, the report calls for the development of neighborhood lay-leaders, increased alliances with health professionals, and one-on-one outreach to residents.

A positive finding in the report is that the needs of a high proportion of local children and families are reported as being met (although at a lower rate for "working poor" families). Residents were asked to identify household needs in a variety of areas, including early childhood, child and adolescent intervention, education, health, family life, and crisis situations, and most said these needs were met. This may be attributed to a high level of effective prevention and intervention resources available to residents in the schools and in the community.

In addition, while there is a high level of extracurricular involvement generally, children in lower income homes were less likely than those in higher income homes to participate in productive activities, such as sports and recreation, music/arts programs, or volunteer activities.

This information will be used by CCF to develop an action plan in concert with community partners. Call CCF at 970-3550 to get involved.

The complete report as well as findings & recommendations may be found online at www.ccfinfo.org.

CHARLOTTESVILLE /ALBEMARLE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Quarterly Report

P.O. Box 911
Charlottesville, VA
22902

COME JOIN US!

CCF meets the first Wednesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. at the Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Room 235.

Nov 5th, Dec 3rd, Jan 7th

4:30-5:00 p.m., refreshments

5:00-6:30 p.m., public meeting