

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: AUGUST 28, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF THE ALEXANDRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD'S APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF AWARD OF A VIRGINIA FATHERHOOD CAMPAIGN COMMUNITY GRANT THROUGH THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ISSUE: Consideration of the Alexandria Community Services Board's (CSB) application and City Council authorization of acceptance of a Virginia Fatherhood Campaign Community Grant through the Virginia Department of Health in the amount of \$20,000.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize acceptance of the award of \$20,000 in a Virginia Fatherhood Campaign Community Grant through the Virginia Department of Health to provide for the provision of fatherhood services to at-risk young men released from the Juvenile and Adult Detention Centers and the two homeless shelters in the City, and to gather data regarding the longitudinal impact of the Fatherhood Program.

BACKGROUND: The Alexandria Community Services Board currently provides fatherhood services to at-risk young men housed at the Juvenile and Adult Detention Centers and the two homeless shelters in the City of Alexandria. This grant would provide additional funds to deliver services for these young fathers when they return to the community from these residential settings. Funds would support one part-time (0.5 FTE, 20 hours/week for nine months) temporary Therapist I who would provide continuing support for fathers, particularly teen fathers, and gather data regarding the longitudinal impact of the Fatherhood Program. It should be noted that there are no General Fund monies to support this activity after the grant runs out. The person hired for the part-time temporary position will be made aware of this condition of employment.

The Alexandria CSB Fatherhood Program began in 1992. The program originally targeted young teenage fathers residing at the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home, and focused on educating them about their critical importance and unique role in promoting the healthy growth and development of their children. Over the course of the last eleven years, the program evolved in response to community needs, positive outcome data, and the increased availability of education-based curriculum materials. The program expanded to serve fathers at the Alexandria

Detention Center and the two homeless shelters and has proven to be strongly successful within the confines of the three identified settings. Current services are provided by one part-time (0.5 FTE) Outreach Prevention Specialist.

In 2002, 112 fathers participated in the program. Most were incarcerated for substance abuse and substance abuse related crimes; 95% had no relationship with their fathers or a father figure and expressed anger and sorrow over this fact. The fact that they can play a crucial role in their own children's development is a profound revelation to them.

DISCUSSION: The grant would run from October 1, 2003, through June 30, 2004, and would serve approximately 115 fathers. The focus is on teenagers and young adults who are fathers of infants and toddlers. Young fathers are identified through the Detention Centers and shelters and participate in individual and group education activities, coaching, and supervised contact visits with children. Particular emphasis is given to educating these fathers regarding social/emotional development and appropriate parenting skills for children ages birth to three years. In addition to the education provided to fathers and coaching and supervision during child visits, two additional identified needs will be addressed during the grant period: 1) the need to provide ongoing and consistent support for all fathers, but particularly teen fathers, upon their return to the community; and 2) the need for a professional science-based evaluation program component that would gather data regarding the longitudinal impact of the Fatherhood Program.

The goals of the Fatherhood Program are consistent with Alexandria's Youth Policy, which the City Council adopted in February 2000. The City's Youth Policy emphasizes prevention and activities that are supportive of families.

FISCAL IMPACT: The grant award is \$20,000, which includes salary and benefits for one part-time (0.5 FTE), temporary Therapist I for nine months, and training, educational materials and supplies for the program. No matching funds are required. The Alexandria CSB will continue to absorb approximately \$12,500 per year in clinical and administrative costs for the program. At the end of the grant period, the temporary position will be eliminated.

ATTACHMENTS: None.

STAFF:

L. Michael Gilmore, Ph.D., Director, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse
Deborah Warren, DCSW, Director of Prevention Services, Mental Health, Mental Retardation
and Substance Abuse

Brenda Sauls, Director of Administration, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance
Abuse

Carol Moore, Acting Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget

Sandy Murphy, Budget Analyst, Office of Management and Budget