


City of Alexandria, Virginia

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9-23-08

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 9, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE VIRGINIA TOBACCO SETTLEMENT FOUNDATION FOR FUNDS TO CONTINUE THE "AL'S PALS KIDS MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES" TOBACCO PREVENTION PROGRAM

ISSUE: Consideration of a grant application from the Alexandria Community Services Board (ACSB) to the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation (VTSF) for funds to continue a tobacco prevention program.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the grant application which is due on October 8, 2008 to VTSF, in the amount of \$75,000 annually for FY 2010 through FY 2012, to continue the *Al's Pals: Kids Making Healthy Choices* program.

BACKGROUND: The VTSF was created in 1999 by the General Assembly to distribute monies from the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Fund for the purpose of restricting the use of tobacco products by minors. Since FY 2005 the CSB has received consecutive grants from VTSF to support a full-time bilingual prevention therapist II position in the Preschool Prevention Team (PPT). The funding made it possible for the team to serve 359 children in 31 classrooms in FY 2008. Outcome data over the past five years shows that 68 percent of children who completed the *Al's Pals* curriculum demonstrated improvement in their social skills and 53 percent showed a decline in antisocial behaviors. In FY 2009 PPT expects to serve 570 children in 33 classrooms with *Al's Pals*.

Al's Pals is a science-based program designed to increase social skills and decrease antisocial behavior. Research shows that *Al's Pals* is effective in reducing the risk of future substance abuse including tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has certified *Al's Pals* as an effective model program.

ACSB prevention staff will continue to implement *Al's Pals* for all students in 33 preschool classrooms that serve the highest ratio of at-risk children, including Headstart. One full-time prevention therapist II will continue to monitor implementation, facilitate groups, and provide education and behavioral consultation to parents and teachers.

The VTSF will award contracts to those grants selected in a competitive process covering three-year periods. The annual amount requested cannot exceed \$75,000. The Alexandria Community Services Board approved the grant application at its September 4, 2008, meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT: The grant proposal is for \$75,000 annually over a three-year period and is to be used by June 30, 2012. No City match is required.

STAFF:

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