“Working together is at the heart of making meaningful change. Every community is different, and as a result, efforts to improve health will vary. However, there is one constant we know: when people work together with a shared vision and commitment to improve health, it can yield better results than working alone.”

Robert Wood Johnson Foundations/Community Health Rankings
A Letter from the Co-Chairs

Community Members, Funders and Partners:

It is with the greatest respect for each of you that Eastern Shore Healthy Communities reports annually on its accomplishments and contributions to our community. In this 2019 Annual Report we are pleased to do just that yet one more time.

In this report we hope you will see how seriously we take creating a culture of well-being on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. That is our vision and it will become our reality as you share it with us, support our multiple initiatives and truly accept Eastern Shore well-being as possible. Visions are transformed into reality as they are shared. We invite you to share this vision with us.

In 2020 we turn the reins over to new leadership, Scott after six years and Roberta after three years as chairs. It has been our honor to have served our community in this way. Mozella Frances, Northampton County Social Services Department Director is also stepping down after three years as vice chair. She has done a wonderful job and we thank her. We also want to extend a heartfelt “thank you” to Patti Kiger, ESHC Executive Director, for her supportive leadership and relentless commitment to improving the well-being of all Eastern Shore citizens through ESHC. Her knowledge and expertise empowered and inspired us in our roles as Co-Chairs.

We hope that as you read this year’s Report, you will find your fit in the coalition. We hope you will adopt our policies, systems and environmental change framework because it is a sustainable change pathway. We’ve been at this since July 29, 2009 and we’ve made some remarkable progress. We send our very best wishes to Jim Shaeffer, ESHC’s new chair-elect and Cara Burton, vice chair-elect.

Thank you for your support and for all of your contributions to Eastern Shore well-being.

Best wishes,

Scott Chandler
Co-Chair

Roberta Newman
Co-Chair
The Copper Cricket Farm crew at Cape Charles Farmers Market – part of our Culture of Well-Being.
Table of Contents

Vision, Mission, Values, Framework ................................................................. 1
2019 Coalition Meetings .................................................................................... 3
Executive Committee ......................................................................................... 4
Work Group Accomplishments ......................................................................... 6
  Better Birth Outcomes ....................................................................................... 6
  Food Access and Equity ..................................................................................... 8
  Life-Long Wellness .......................................................................................... 9
  Livable Communities ......................................................................................... 12
  Poverty Work Group ......................................................................................... 14
  Resilient & Trauma-Informed Communities .................................................. 16
A Word from the Executive Director ................................................................. 19
Thank You to Our Funders ................................................................................ 20
A Decade of Accomplishment ........................................................................... 21
2020 Full Coalition Meeting Schedule ........................................................... back cover

Work Group meeting schedules are included in each work group report.
Eastern Shore Healthy Communities

Vision
By 2020 all residents of the Eastern Shore of Virginia report a growing, positive sense of health, well-being, and self-empowerment.

Mission
As a volunteer multi-sector partnership, Eastern Shore Healthy Communities’ mission is to develop an accountable care community using policies, systems, and environmental change strategies to improve the health and success of the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Values
Teamwork. We are a group of diverse people working together toward a clearly defined, shared vision.

Effective Decision Making. We support a process in which all opinions are respected and considered. All participants are equally important and working towards a common goal.

Duty/Commitment. We have a duty and commitment to work towards achieving our shared mission and vision.

Proactive. We use a “root cause” approach to community well-being issues; looking at ways to address the source of the concern to reduce or prevent the occurrence of that concern.

Systemic Equity. We believe that all persons have the right to full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to be healthy and enjoy well-being.

Creativity/Innovation. We use creative and innovative approaches to moving towards well-being.
Framework

Eastern Shore Healthy Communities is a partnership of businesses, organizations, faith communities, and individuals of all ages, representing a diversity of community sectors and professions, engaged in addressing and improving **policies, systems and environments** to support a healthy Eastern Shore. We work together for **collective impact**.

The health burden in the U.S. and the Eastern Shore has shifted from infectious diseases to chronic, non-communicable diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. These are primarily lifestyle-related diseases. That’s why we say that **health begins long before we ever need to see a doctor or go to a hospital. It begins where we live, learn, work, worship and play**.

When we create **policies**, for example, worksite wellness policies that promote improved diet, increased physical activity, and tobacco-free air, we impact hundreds of people in multiple organizations. When **system** improvements occur, like eliminating soda and introducing activity-based learning in the education system, thousands of children, adolescents and adults are affected. And when alter **environments**, to create livable communities where roads and sidewalks safely support walking and bicycling, as well as automobiles, we make active living possible for all ages.

The spectrum of health care includes preventive and sick care that our doctors and hospitals provide. It also includes health education. But today, we must go further upstream, to create places where people are prompted to and supported in healthy behavior and this requires businesses, police, educators, clergy, government, health and medical professionals -- every sector, and people of all ages. That is why we created Eastern Shore Healthy Communities, a multi-sector health and well-being coalition. It is a place to put down political boundaries, share talents, insights and resources to work together towards the vision of well-being for all.

Health is the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. All people on the Eastern Shore of Virginia deserve to flourish. When we create healthful places, where all residents flourish, then education flourishes and businesses thrive – because all sectors are connected. We hope you “get” this concept, own it, and are inspired to become part of this movement. Your effort in this partnership might just be the tipping point to achieving the vision.
2019 Coalition Meetings

We meet quarterly as a full Coalition to gain perspective on work group progress and to learn something new about Eastern Shore well-being. In 2019 we held the following meetings:

February 14, 2019. Annual Meeting: Resilience and Well-Being. To hold ourselves accountable to ourselves and our community, each year we hold an Annual Meeting to outline accomplishments from the past year, celebrate and thank all individuals who contributed to those accomplishments, and look ahead to the work that remains to accomplish our strategic plan. Resilience and Well-Being headlined our 2018 Annual Report and became the theme of our meeting. Twenty partners were on hand to share in the celebration.

May 9, 2019. County Health Rankings. The Robert Wood Johnson County Annual Health Rankings were released just in time for this meeting. Patti Kiger, ESHC Executive Director and Eastern Virginia Medical School Pediatrics Instructor, presented the data, explained data sources and how they were calculated, and pointed out the highlights and challenges that remain for the Eastern Shore. Eleven partners gathered to learn about the updated rankings. Highlights of the meeting were featured in the Eastern Shore News.

August 9, 2019. Economics of Well-Being. Focused on Executive Committee Annual Retreat outcomes, this meeting emphasized poverty as an important indicator of community well-being. Patti Kiger presented the Economics of Well-Being, announcing that a new workgroup to that effect will be headed by Vicki Weakley, Accomack County Social Services Department Director. She also reported on the United Way’s new ALICE acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed individuals. The topic attracted 13 current and prospective partners. Highlights of the meeting were featured in the Eastern Shore News.

November 14, 2019. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. André Elliott, Eastern Shore Family YMCA Executive Director, facilitated community discussion on all the “isms” like racism, genderism, and sexism. Attesting to community interest in the topic, this meeting attracted 25 community partners. At the meeting, Andre announced that in 2020 he will lead an ESHC workgroup on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and use ESHC’s policies, systems and environmental change framework to initiate sustainable community action to improve community wellness in this regard.
Executive Committee

The Executive Committee, ESHC’s governing body, is comprised of Eastern Shore employer organization chief executives because achieving a community culture change requires seasoned leaders. This is the only committee for which membership is selected by nomination and vote. They meet quarterly, the third Thursdays of January, April, July and November. The July meeting is a day-long retreat to create or update our strategic plan and other structural policies and documents.

Scott Chandler 
Roberta Newman 
Mozella Francis

Committee leadership, Co-chairs Scott Chandler and Roberta Newman with Vice Chair Mozella Francis completed their terms and will step down from office at the February 2020 Annual Meeting. They will remain on the Executive Committee.

Our dear friend Rev. Gary Miller stepped down from the Executive Committee in 2019 due to other pressing obligations. Gary has been an ESHC force over the years and we will miss his inspiration and deep understanding of Eastern Shore culture. He will remain an ESHC partner.

During the past three years, the Committee launched and enacted the Eastern Shore Plan for Well-Being 2017-2020, ESHC’s strategic plan. As we enter the final year of its enactment, this Committee will begin work on Eastern Shore Plan for Well-Being 2021-2024. Additionally, in 2019 the Committee proposed Bylaws improvements that were adopted by the full coalition.

After several years of study and consideration, the Executive Committee agreed to launch two new work groups: Bridges out of Poverty and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Bridges, led by Vicki Weakley, Director of Accomack County Department of Social Services, is planning two Bridges out of Poverty Trainings in 2020 as well as a Community Strategy Session to devise multiple initiatives to assist individuals who need support moving forward from poverty to self-sufficiency.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Group, to be led by André Elliott, Executive Director of the Eastern Shore Family YMCA, will launch in 2020 with the goal of creating greater understanding, humility, and sensitivity around living within a diverse culture. The Work
Group will develop ways to create policies, systems and environmental changes that lift the unconscious biases that keep our diverse populations from reaching their full potential.

Plans remain underway for launching an Education Work Group that includes key education leaders from both counties who support the whole child, not just the “in school” child, and the family. We envision that working across counties will stimulate equity across systems for implementation of innovative concepts and ideas.

Thank you for your hard work, Executive Committee members:

Cara Burton, Eastern Shore Public Libraries Executive Director
Deb Brown, Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital Nurse Executive
Kathy Carmody, Accomack County Chief Human Resources Officer
Scott Chandler, Co-Chair, Eastern Shore Health District Administrative Manager
Mozella Francis, Vice Chair, Northampton County Department of Social Services Director
Chris Holland, Accomack County Public Schools Superintendent
Patti Kiger, Executive Director, Eastern Virginia Medical School Pediatrics Instructor
T.J. Johnson, past Eastern Shore Community College Director of Workforce Development
Charles Kolakowski, Northampton County Manager

Eddie Lawrence, Northampton County Public School District Superintendent
Erica Lawson, 2A District Court Service Unit, Accomack County Director
Robert Newman, Co-Chair, CEO, New Roads Consulting, a division of Cape Charles Development Co., Inc.
James Shaeffer, Eastern Shore Community College President
Lisa “MiMi” Sedjat, Eastern Shore Community Services Board Executive Director
Donna Smith, Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/Community Action Agency Chief Executive Officer
Nancy Stern, Eastern Shore Rural Health System, Inc. Chief Executive Officer
Danny Vestal, YMCA Camp Silver Beach Executive Director
Vicki Weakley, Accomack County Department of Social Services Director
Work Group Accomplishments

Better Birth Outcomes Work Group meets in the Riverside Hospital conference rooms monthly on the second Monday, February 10, March 9, April 13, May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 21, October 19, and December 14. Dates are subject to change. Contact Kathy.Lewis@vdh.virginia.com to be added to the mailing list.

Better Birth Outcomes Work Group

Thanks to the leadership of Kathy Lewis and 23 individuals who attended seven Work Group meetings, this group accomplished the following:

- Delivered a “Lunch and Learn” session on sexually transmitted infections to Eastern Shore Community College students.
- Collaboratively increased capacity within Eastern Shore Rural Health, Riverside Ob/Gyn Specialists, and the Eastern Shore Health District for women to be seen for birth control, prenatal and post-natal care. Eastern Shore women, regardless of income or insured status can access care within professional standards to meet their individualized needs.
- Noting the 40 to 50 teen pregnancies that occur annually on the Shore and the precipitous rise in sexually transmitted diseases, partners agreed that an urgent need exists for Family Life Education in the public schools. Work Group members approached Accomack County Public Schools to ask them to begin implementing the Virginia Department of Education-approved curriculum. They shared the Virginia League for Planned Parenthood’s Sexual Health Assessment for Accomack and Northampton Counties. Dr. Gabby Richardson agreed to support teachers with training. The Accomack County Public Schools Superintendent has agreed that schools will begin teaching Family Life Education. Northampton County Public Schools is currently teaching the curriculum.
• Eastern Shore Public Libraries is supporting Work Group goals to provide greater educational support for the community on sexual health education, fathering, and birth control options with in-library displays. They are also offering a Stork Story Time for pregnant moms and promoting “A Thousand Things before Kindergarten” a program that offers a checklist for preparing a child for kindergarten. After 100 items are checked off, a parent gets a book for the child.

• Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital and Eastern Shore Rural Health System, Inc. have increased support for the Eastern Shore Health District’s evidence-based, early intervention home visiting program for first-time mothers, Nurse Family Partnership. By streamlining the referral processes with both care delivery systems, Riverside and Rural Health have enhanced client referrals and enrollment. Through Advisory Board participation, as well as grassroots advocacy, these organizations are bringing essential components to early intervention to improve outcomes for mothers and children.

We acknowledge the partnership of the following individuals and organizations:

Cooperative Extension
Kamesha Watson
Eastern Shore Rural Health
Sandra Balmoria, MD
Marissa Blair
Meghan Neville
Gabby Richardson, MD
Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital
Ann Pruitt, RN, BSN
Elizabeth Warring, MD
Eastern Shore Public Libraries
Janice Felker
Eastern Shore Community Services Board
Barbara Mulligan

Eastern Virginia Medical School
Patti Kiger
Nelson Reed
Eastern Shore Health District
Mikendia Etienne
Tanya Forlevil, BSN, RN
Cheyene Gobel
Kathy Lewis, RN, BSN, Chair
Veronica Lundy
Julie Mabolot
Angela Scheib, RN, BSN
Lorraine Strand
Truus Thomas-Wyatt
Cheryl Reville
Smart Beginnings Eastern Shore
Linda Schulz, Ph.D.
Food Access and Equity Work Group meetings are held at Eastern Shore Community College in the Workforce Development Building Conference Room monthly on the third Mondays from 10:00 am to 11:30 am. Meeting dates are subject to change. Contact Janice Felker at youthservices@espl.org or Charmin Horton at chorton@foodbankonline.org to be placed on the Work Group mailing list.

**Food Access and Equity Work Group**

Food insecurity can happen to anyone at any time. A sudden job loss, an illness or divorce can place someone in the position of worrying whether or not they can put food on the table. For others, those in generational poverty, some of our elderly neighbors, those who live alone, a single parent, or someone who is chronically ill and without a support system, food insecurity is a fact of life. One thing we know for sure, in the cycle of well-being, children can’t be hungry to learn in school if they are just plain hungry. Neighbors can’t be productive, contributing citizens if they are undernourished. Charmin Horton, Foodbank of Southeastern VA’s Eastern Shore Branch Manager, and Janice Felker, Eastern Shore Public Libraries Youth Librarian, co-chair this Work Group using coalition principles with creativity, persistence, and empathy. Work Group partners were productive in 2019.

- Congratulations to Accomack and Northampton Public Schools for adopting Grab-and-Go breakfasts, providing a cart of breakfast choices for students in the lobby as they arrive at school. The Work Group invested persistent behind-the-scenes advocacy with the state-level No Kids Hungry organization to offer information, encouragement, and assistance to insure a successful launch at Northampton Middle/High School and Arcadia High.

- The Community Eligibility Provision, or CEP, allows all students, rather than just some, to enjoy free school meals. Accomack Public Schools was awarded the CEP this year. Northampton applied late and will apply again. Persistent work group advocacy contributed to protecting children from hunger.
• Eastern Shore Farmers Markets and their vendors in Cape Charles and Onancock accept SNAP and Senior Vouchers to help low income families and individuals add nutritious fruits and vegetables to their diet. Representatives of these markets serve on this Work Group and help with preparation of a flyer to guide low-income families and seniors on where to find these healthy bargains.

• When school is out many students don’t get regular meals. Work Group partners worked tirelessly to expand Summer Feeding opportunities at the public libraries, some public schools, vacation Bible schools, and through both counties’ Parks and Recreation programs.

• Foodbank programs are the centerpiece of feeding Eastern Shore food-insecure neighbors and we are pleased to list their latest accomplishments here: Kids Cafe Program at the Boys and Girls Club provides a hot meal and snacks to all enrolled children. Seven backpack programs provide weekend food to 435 students in both counties. Healthy School Markets began in September and provide 25 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to families who attend Parent/Teacher meeting nights.

The following organizations and individuals have been essential to these accomplishments:

**Accomack County Social Services Department**  
Meghan Gaffney

**Cape Charles Farmers Market**  
Barbara O’Hare

**Cooperative Extension**  
Bertrille Lomax, Accomack  
Kamesha Watson, Northampton

**Eastern Shore Health District**  
Kathy Lewis, RN, BSN

**Eastern Shore Public Libraries**  
Janice Felker

**Eastern Virginia Medical School**  
Patti Kiger

**Foodbank of Southeastern VA and the Eastern Shore**  
Charmin Horton, Chair

**Historic Onancock School**  
Joani Donohoe

**Northampton County Social Services Department**  
Mozella Francis

**Northampton County Parks and Recreation Department**  
Laura Jenrette

**O’Hare Data & Demographic Services**  
Bill O’Hare, Ph.D.
Life-Long Wellness Work Group meetings are held at the call of the Chair. Contact Patti Kiger at kigerpg@evms.edu to be placed on the Work Group mailing list.

**Life-Long Wellness Work Group**

Well-being extends over the life course. The entire community is needed to support seniors and those with disabilities. Life-long wellness requires more than routine medical care, it also requires safe congregate and retirement housing for the aging population. In addition, increased access to and facility with internet use keeps our seniors and those with disabilities connected. Fitness and falls prevention support is important. Seniors must have access to and take advantage of a community-wide value-neutral program to support planning in advance for future healthcare choices. And of course, life-long wellness includes life-long learning to keep minds engaged and stimulated with personal interaction.

Who is better to lead this effort than Donna Smith, Chief Executive Officer of the Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging and Community Action Agency? Taking a coalition approach, Donna has engaged people in her immediate and state-wide communities to discuss, analyze and actualize policies, systems and environmental changes that will improve well-being for our seniors and those with disabilities. In 2019 the Work Group achieved the following:

- A meeting convened at the Hare Valley ESAAA provided insights into grants for housing, housing rehabilitation and community development that can be advanced in future years. Even when seniors have housing, a failed septic system, a roof leak, or a fallen tree in the yard impeding entrance and exit from the house, require costly repairs that are often beyond reach. How do we help them?
- ESAAA/CAA staff have trained for and are offering classes in Fall Prevention. They have also offered Master Training to insure others can deliver this important program as well.
- Staff is also offering Chronic Disease Self-Management programs to seniors and those with disabilities, making sure seniors are well-equipped for self-sufficiency in this regard.
Advance Directives enable seniors to make their own choice for end-of-life care. ESAAA staff are providing workshops to educate seniors and those with disabilities and providing handouts so that they can complete their own Advance Directives. So far, they have received nine completed Advanced Directives.

Hare Valley Senior Center participants enjoy fellowship and physical activity.

Thanks to this diverse group of partners and organizations for their accomplishments:

Alzheimer’s Association
Douglas Panto
Center for Community and Family Development
Brenda Holden
Eastern Shore Community College
Tina Stratton-Taylor
Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/Community Action Agency
Marsha Bunting
Loretta Pettit
Donna Smith, Chair
Tiffany Smith
Will Weeks

Eastern Shore Center for Independent Living
Althea Pittman
Vision Community Services
Michelle Cribb
Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development/Virginia Employment Commission
Jay Grant
Alex Hightower
Pamela Kester
Zach Ponds, chair  
Livable Communities Work Group

Livable Communities Work Group meets at Eastern Shore Community College in the Workforce Development Building Classroom 160 monthly on the second Thursdays from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. 2020 meeting dates are: January 9, February 13, March 12, April 9, May 14, June 11, July 9, August 13, September 10, October 8 and November 12. Work Group meetings are subject to change. Contact Zach Ponds at zach.ponds@capecharles.org to be placed on the mailing list.

Livable Communities Work Group

Creating a culture of well-being includes designing communities for well-being. Livable Communities offer four components: 1) Begins with towns where infrastructure currently exists; 2) Offers multiple housing options, like apartments, townhouses, condominiums and free-standing houses that are affordable across all income levels; 2) Features essential stores and services, like a pharmacy, library, or food market near housing; 3) Insures multiple transportation options with an emphasis on pedestrian, like sidewalks, bike lanes, and mass transit, like busses. Park once, walk a little, and you have all you need without getting in your car. You may not even need a car at all, giving livable communities cleaner air. Chincoteague, Parksley, Onley, Onancock, Exmore and Parksley are good examples of Livable Communities or emerging livability.

In 2019, ESHC’s Livable Communities Work Group has been working hard to promote, embed in policy, and expand livability principles throughout the Shore. Led by Kelley Parks and Zach Ponds, the group has accomplished the following:

- Reviewed town and county comprehensive plans to insure livability concepts are a matter of policy.
- Applied and received the Virginia Department of Health “Virginia Walkability Action Institute” grant, which provided training and an opportunity to create a livability initiative. The ambitious Eastern Shore team brought three initiatives to the table: Shore-wide Rails to Trails, a Parksley Safe Routes to Schools, and a Cape Charles Walking Trails Improvement.
The Cape Charles initiative won and brought Town improvements along its walking trail: 48 Willow Oaks and 7 benches.

- In addition to existing ESHC Walking Trails in Cape Charles, Melfa, Nassawadox, Onley (outside of the YMCA), Onancock and Wachapreague, new Walking Trails were added in Parksley, Eastville and at Accomack County’s Sawmill Point Park. Free and always available, these trails are now marked with signs identifying them as, for example, “Cape Charles Walks”, Eastern Shore Healthy Communities, and they now also have smaller “talker” signs that give fun facts about walking. Try them out!
- A collaboration between Town of Parksley and the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission Work Group partners resulted in a Safe Routes to School initiative funded by the Virginia Department of Transportation.
- A social media campaign using Twitter, Instagram and Facebook is encouraging residents with clever motivational messages to “Walk the Shore.”

Thanks to these organizations and individuals for helping to create a culture of well-being:

**Accomack-Northampton Planning District**
- Commission
  - Clara Vaughn

**Consultant**
- Karen Emerson

**Eastern Shore Health District**
- Tracey Dedicatoria

**Eastern Virginia Medical School**
- Patti Kiger

**Northampton County**
- Kelley Lewis, Past Chair

**Town of Cape Charles**
- Zach Ponds, Chair

**Town of Exmore**
- Taylor Dukes

**Town of Onancock**
- Bill Kerbin

**Town of Parksley**
- Julie Nash, Ph.D.

---

*Walkers enjoy the 0.3 mile Onley Walking Trail behind the Eastern Shore Family YMCA. Three and a third trips around makes a mile.*

*The Cape Charles Walking Trail provides residents and visitors alike with a 1.5 stroll through town.*
Bridges out of Poverty Work Group currently meets at the Accomack County Social Services Department at the call of the Chair. Contact Vicki Weakley at vicki.j.weakley@dss.virginia.gov to be placed on the mailing list. Plan now to attend one of two day-long Bridges out of Poverty seminars, Tuesday, March 24 or Wednesday, April 22, and the day-long Community Strategy Session to create bridges out of poverty on Thursday, April 23. Contact Vicki Weakley to reserve your place.

Bridges out of Poverty Work Group

The culture of poverty is not a culture of well-being. Poverty is one of the Eastern Shore’s greatest barriers to well-being. After several years of consideration, Eastern Shore Healthy Communities has decided to apply our sustainable policies, systems and environmental change framework to poverty.

Many theories and opinions exist about why people are in poverty and the barriers that keep people living in poverty. The group has done much research and has learned that poverty impacts more than the pocketbook. It affects self-esteem, expectations, exposure, behavior, and the soul. Some who live in poverty are discouraged from improvement by the very family and friends that they treasure. They admonish them from “getting above their raisings.” We need to offer a hand.

The current estimated poverty rate is 18% for Accomack and 23% for Northampton counties. Some say that the official calculation used to measure poverty is arbitrary and artificially low. In 2016 at least 70% of Eastern Shore of VA children qualified for free or reduced priced lunches.

A new term, ALICE, or Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, as defined by the United Way, casts a wider net for people who are not quite making it. These are individuals and families who work hard and earn more than the official Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living. ALICE struggles to afford the basic necessities, including housing, food, child care, health care, and transportation. 32% of Accomack County and 31% of Northampton
County qualify as ALICE households. That means that just 50% of Accomack County and 46% of Northampton County households are not struggling.

We need to learn more. The major accomplishment of this Work Group is their planning of two day-long community “Bridges out of Poverty” seminars and one day-long Community Strategic Planning Session to develop sustainable bridges out of poverty. As usual, Eastern Shore Healthy Communities will use its policies, systems and environmental change framework in formulating sustainable strategies. Anyone reading this Annual Report is invited to join us at Eastern Shore Community College in the Workforce Development Building Great Hall on Tuesday, March 24 or Wednesday, April 22 for the training and Thursday, April 23 for the strategy session. Contact Vicki Weakley to reserve.

Thanks to the following Work group partners for their contributions.

**ANEC**
Cara Rolander

**Accomack County Administration**
Kathy Carmody

**Accomack County Social Services Department**
Meghan Gaffney
Jodi Urban
Vicki Weakley, Chair

**Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia**
Nanette “Malaika” Mitchell

**Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce**
Robbie Marsh

**Eastern Shore Community College**
Tina Stratton-Taylor

**Eastern Shore Health District**
Kathy Lewis
Saadia Davis

**Eastern Virginia Medical School**
Patti Kiger

**ESTACI**
Gerald Boyd

**Northampton County Jail Re-entry Program**
Deputy Clark Lovelady

**Northampton Social Services Department**
Reneta Major

**United Methodist Church/AICC**
Rev. Bart Weakley
The Resilient and Trauma-Informed Work Group meets monthly on the second Wednesday from 1:00 – 2:30 pm at Eastern Shore Community College in Workforce Development Building Classroom 160. Meetings are subject to change. Contact kigerpg@evms.edu to be placed on the mailing list for updated meeting announcements.

**Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities Work Group**

Trauma can be caused by an event or experience that creates so much stress, it overwhelms a person’s ability to cope. It is more common than you think. For example, we know from studies that greater than half the population has suffered at least one trauma. One in six have suffered at least three or four different traumas. And even most sadly, for children, one in four will experience trauma by the age of four. As if the experience of trauma isn’t tragic enough, we know that when people experience three or four different traumas, they are more likely to suffer medical, emotional or behavioral consequences.

Much of our information on trauma comes from The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Study that found a direct link between childhood trauma and adult onset of chronic disease, mental illness, doing time in prison, and work issues, such as absenteeism. They also found that about two-thirds of the adults in the study had experienced one or more types of ACEs. Of those, 87 percent had experienced two or more types. Finally, they found that more adverse childhood experiences resulted in a higher risk of medical, mental, and social problems as an adult. This study used just 10 commonly reported childhood traumas: neglect – physical or mental; abuse--sexual, verbal and physical; and family dysfunction – a mentally ill parent or alcoholic, a domestically abused mother, an incarcerated family member, and loss of a parent through divorce or abandonment.

The ACEs study launched many U.S. communities into action, and we are among them. We understand that many more traumas than the 10 identified in the ACEs study exist, for example, experiencing a traffic accident, being in war, or being bullied. That means that the data for incidence rates underestimates the problem.
Trauma physically impacts the brain and the body. Children who are living in abusive situations experience many difficulties in school and their behavior may provide clues to teachers and other adults that they need special help. Adults may act out at work, not be able to keep friends, or may choose partners poorly. Instead of reacting to these individuals with anger, we need to employ a culture of wellness, by responding with empathy, asking silently, “What happened to them?” instead of “What’s wrong with you?”

Not everyone who has experienced a trauma experiences physical and behavioral symptoms. Resilience, it turns out, is protective. The good news is that resilience skills can be learned and strong, resilient environments can be created in communities—in homes, schools, workplaces, healthcare organizations, churches, courts and jails – everywhere really.

Our goal is for every Eastern Shore resident and employer organization to know about trauma and the resulting loss to well-being. We are partnering with the Eastern Shore Community Services Board and Community Partners of the Eastern Shore to provide workshops on “Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities.” We are encouraging employers to provide trauma training in employee orientation, develop trauma-informed policies, and resilient and trauma-informed workplace environments.

In 2019 we made progress towards that goal:

- In five sessions, we worked with ChildSavers consultant John Richardson-Lauve to provide introductory and “training-of- trainers” (TOT) training to Accomack County Public Schools Central Office leaders, principals, vice principals, guidance counselors, and all elementary, middle and high school teachers directly impacting 451 employees and indirectly, the children they serve.
- Patti Kiger addressed nearly 200 clergy and leaders of the Regional Conference of African American Baptist Churches, inviting them to attend a workshop on Resilient and Trauma-Informed Community, and then John Richardson-Lauve addressed 7 local ministers and lay leaders.
- Thanks to the promotional and administrative efforts of Nancy Proto and Kevin Schwenk, and the generosity of the Friends of the Roseland Theater who offered the theater for free, and our Co- Chair, Scott Chandler, who ran the theater, we screened the movie “Paper Tigers” that tells the story of one high school designed for students with multiple traumas
and demonstrates the empathic and resilience-based approaches teachers took to help move children and teens to self-sufficiency and resiliency and onto pathways leading to well-being. Nearly 100 people attended the screening, took home literature and participated in a brief question and answer session afterward.

- We provided TOT and overview in Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities two sessions, engaging 11 other interested residents.
- 28 Eastern Shore individuals are trained to provide “Resilient and Trauma-Informed Communities” workshops in their workplace.

Thanks to these organizations and individuals for their many contributions:

2A District Court Services Unit, Accomac
Erica Lawson
Accomack County Social Services Department
Vicki Weakley
Eastern Shore Area Agency on Aging/Community Action Agency
Marsha Bunting
Donna Smith
Tiffany Smith
Eastern Shore Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Peaches Dodge
Eastern Shore Community Services Board
Kelly Bulin, Past Chair
Barbara Mulligan
Eastern Shore Health District
Tracey Dедакtoria

Eastern Shore Public Libraries
Cara Burton
Eastern Shore Rural Health System, Inc.
Megan Neville
Eastern Virginia Medical School
Patti Kiger, Acting Chair
ESTACI
Gerald Boyd
Northampton County Public Schools Board
Nancy Proto
Northampton County Social Services Department
Mozella Francis
Peacewerks Center for Well-Being, LLC
Polly Boyd
Smart Beginnings Eastern Shore
Linda Schulz, Ph.D.
Engaged citizen: Kevin Schwenk
A Word from the Executive Director

Eastern Virginia Medical School, my employer, is a remarkable place to work.

A new organizational improvement initiative, called “cultural humility,” asks us to become “other-oriented,” and to apply these three principles: lifelong learning and critical self-reflection; recognize and change power imbalances; and accountability. It is a communal effort to analyze the root causes of suffering and create a broader, more inclusive view of the world.

This initiative follows a 7-year emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion, correcting our unconscious biases and learning to be more culturally competent. Cultural humility doesn’t emphasize achieving knowledge or awareness, rather it focuses on self-humility.

In the process of creating a culture of well-being here on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, perhaps we should consider this idea of cultural humility.

ESHC originally convened over a shared vision to reduce and prevent obesity. The latest data tells us that we are once again the health district with the greatest VA adult obesity rate. While I’m not surprised, I am encouraged that we have now corrected our focus with the lens of well-being. It is a more complete and connected vision. It connects obesity and trauma, obesity and discrimination, obesity and poverty. Discrimination and poverty are traumas. Trauma results in medical, mental and behavioral conditions—even shortened lives. Resilience is key, empathy is essential and both rely on being surrounded by humble, “other-oriented” individuals.

Thank you, my fellow partners, for a productive 2019. As we anticipate 2020, I ask you to consider this: To effectively create a culture of well-being, might we need to become culturally humble? Will you take a minute to consider how that feels and what that looks like for you?
Thank You to our Funders

A community coalition relies on the support of its partner organizations and individuals to contribute time, in-kind resources, and money to sustain its initiatives. Thank you to every individual and each organization listed in this Report for the many hours that you have given, the conference rooms, food, great ideas, endurance that you have contributed. Thank you especially to Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital for conference rooms and funding our Executive Committee Retreat. Thank you to Eastern Shore Community College for providing meeting rooms and logistics for so many of our gatherings.

The majority of our financial resources come from grant funding organizations.

Thank you to the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth for extending a special six-month grant this year. This grant supports administrative and promotional activities, mileage, the costs of keeping a web site updated, protected, and safe, and the cost of our electronic newsletter and Annual Meeting. This year VFHY also supported signage for the implementation of two new walking trails. They also funded small “talker signage” with walking facts that are now displayed on all ESHC walking trail signs throughout Parksley, Onancock, Onley, Wachapreague, Melfa, Nassawadox, Eastville and Cape Charles. They also supported our social marketing campaign to “Walk the Shore.” Their support over the past decade has made a difference in our outcomes.

The Virginia Department of Health Office of Rural Health responded to our grant application with funding to conduct three Resilient and Trauma-Informed Community presentations using John Richardson-Lauve as our trainer. John was able to complete training with all Accomack County teachers, principals and assistant principals. We were also able to purchase copies of the documentaries “Paper Tigers” and “Resilience” which we are happy to share with any organization. This grant will fund our Bridges out of Poverty training and community strategy session planned for May and April 2020. Finally the grant funds the time and travel needed for planning, administering and promoting these efforts. We are indeed grateful for this funding.

Thank you also to three individuals who have donated consultation services behind the scenes for ten years: Jay Dooling, a magnificent artist and designer, who designed our logo and the cover of this Annual Report. Richard Dooling, an artist, woodworker, and web designer, who designed our web site and continues to generously offer advice. Leigh Farmer, a marketing communications consultant with extraordinary talent for social media, who designs and maintains our social media “Walk the Shore” campaign. Bette Midler was right when she sang You’ve got to have friends…. Where would we be without them?
A Decade of Accomplishment

Over the past decade Eastern Shore Healthy Communities partners have made sustainable changes contributing to Eastern Shore well-being.

- 10 faith communities and employers have adopted Wellness Policies and one organization has experienced a health insurance premium reduction.
- 12 restaurants have earned the honor of displaying the Eastern Shore Healthy Communities “Healthy Options” brand for offering two menu items meeting strict nutrient and caloric requirements.
- 8 communities have now created a system of walking trails on existing sidewalks, thus encouraging the best ever form of exercise that sometimes also allows for window shopping.
- A series of 6 “walkability/livability” conferences and a technical manual provided guidance to local communities on designing safer streets and healthier towns.
- 36 ESVA youth graduated from ESHC’s Youth Leadership Academy, a six-week program that teaches leadership skills, research, and policy, systems and environmental change skills to impact community well-being.
- 81 individuals participated in our 2016 Food Summit, keynoted by Virginia’s First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe, designed to highlight the fact that 15% of ESVA households are food insecure, including 21% of our children, launch partnership resolutions between counties, school districts and ESHC to end food insecurity on the Shore, and begin a work group to accomplish that mission.
- In 2018, 26 partners attended a Coalition meeting focused on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Building a Resilient and Trauma-Informed Community. A Work Group to undertake this issue launched in June of 2018, and to date hundreds of Eastern Shore community members have learned about trauma and its impacts. We are building a resilient and trauma-informed community.
- ESHC has partnered with Smart Beginnings Eastern Shore on three “Kids Count on the Eastern Shore” conferences to focus on a data report highlighting economic, education, health, and family and community indicators impacting child well-being. The conference raises community awareness about our challenges and about the organizations that are dedicated to addressing them.
- ESHC has adopted and is enacting the 2020 Eastern Shore Plan for Well-Being, which mirrors the Virginia Plan for Well-Being, and is a strategy to lift Eastern Shore resident health, wealth and well-being.
Notes

As you read this annual report, use this page to jot a few notes: ideas for future improvements; accomplishments we may have omitted; or a reflection on leadership you see contained in these pages. Share these ideas at the next Eastern Shore Healthy Communities meeting.
2020
Full Coalition Meetings

Thursdays, 3:00 – 5:00 pm
Eastern Shore Community College, Workforce Development Building
Conference Room

February 13
May 14
August 13
November 12

Contact kigerpg@evms.edu
to be added to the mailing list