



An Ounce of Prevention

Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services
Prevention Unit

Issue 7
April/May 2016

john a. powell: “If everyone thrives, our community is stronger.”

Karen Shaban, Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services

Late in February, a variety of audiences in several venues had a unique opportunity to more deeply explore what is required to **Achieve Social Equity in Fairfax County**. john a. powell inspired, challenged, and engaged the County and Schools workforce; members of the Senior Management Team; community members; and leaders from business, faith, nonprofit, philanthropy, education, and government sectors with his message, “If everyone thrives, our community is stronger.”

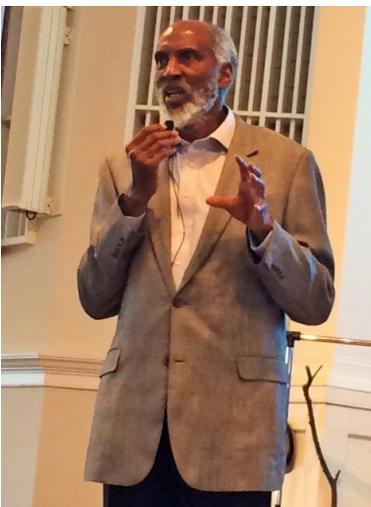
We all think that seeing is believing – but the reality is, *believing is seeing*. The unconscious part of our brain is created and molded by society. We can’t turn it off – it works hard and fast processing everything we see, we think, we hear, and so on. This is where all of our implicit biases live. We all have them – while the word ‘bias’ sounds bad, it’s really not. Implicit bias is just something that is.

We are all situated in structures – cultural structures, physical structures, social structures – and these structures interact in ways that produce a differential in outcomes. Structures are not neutral and are largely invisible. Opportunity structures are the web of influences beyond our individual control that enhance and constrain our ability to succeed and excel. Life changes are shaped by opportunity structures, and those structures are just as important, if not more so, than the choices that individuals make.

Structures don’t treat people the same – the unconscious doesn’t treat anyone the same. We are primed to see what we expect to see. Here’s a quick awareness test to illustrate this point: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KB_ITKZm1Ts.

Given these conditions, Professor powell explored the ques-

tion, “What is the role of government?” He then introduced the construct of ‘targeted universalism,’ which simply means setting universal goals while targeting the means and processes to achieve these goals by focusing on identified populations. This approach supports the needs of the individual, while reminding us that each and every one of us are part of the same social fabric. Policies and practices need to be **universal**, applicable to everyone no matter where or how they are situated, yet **inclusive**, targeting those who are most marginalized.



john a. powell is the Director of the Hass Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and Professor of Law, African-American and Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He is an internationally recognized expert in the areas of civil rights and civil liberties and on a wide range of issues including race, structural racism, ethnicity, housing, poverty, and democracy. His visit to Fairfax County was supported by the Reston Community Center, in association with the Equitable Growth Profile Advisory Group, Annandale United Methodist Church, Office of Hunter Mill District Supervisor, Catherine M. Hudgins, Leadership Fairfax, and the Fairfax County Government.

As evidenced by the Board of Supervisors-adopted **Strategic Plan to Facilitate Economic Success**, Fairfax recognizes that social equity—or the lack of it—can either help or hurt economic performance. Unlike many economic development plans, County officials are **emphasizing social equity**, ensuring residents have access to education, housing, employment, and other opportunities.

“One of the unique elements of our plan is the inclusion of social equity as a primary component,” says Deputy County Executive Rob Stalzer. “We’re broadening our understanding of why social equity is so important in terms of future economic success.”

Social equity boosts growth because it means investing in what economists call human capital—people’s education, training and skills. In today’s knowledge economy, this investment leads to

greater productivity and innovation that benefits everyone. It is essential to ensure that our systems and structures indeed benefit everyone.

Inside this Edition:

- Suicide Prevention Alliance of No. Virginia
- Supporting Transgender Children
- FCPS Parent Resource Center
- Messaging Tools: NCS Summer Programs
- Youth Sleep Behaviors



Reach Out. Find Hope. — The New Suicide Prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia

From a SPAN Press Release

Joining forces in the effort to prevent suicide in Northern Virginia, the region’s five community services boards (CSBs) have launched a new website and a coordinated suicide prevention campaign – Reach Out. Find Hope. – led by the new Suicide Prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia (SPAN).

“We felt it was important to provide a web-based resource that anyone in our region can use,” said SPAN Chair Jane Woods, “State funding provides support for the region to launch the campaign and website. The new site www.SuicidePreventionnva.org provides a quick, user-friendly connection to critical resources and services for Northern Virginians who may be in crisis. It also provides links to information and tools for families, friends and anyone in the community who wants to know more about suicide prevention.” The new website compiles resources from each CSB to provide a single point of entry for any community member who may be struggling with mental health issues or contemplating suicide.

“Mental health and suicide are issues that many of our neighbors, family members, friends and coworkers have experience with,” said Woods. “It’s important for all of us to know that support is available, that many people get better with treatment and that suicide is preventable.”

Northern Virginia officials say it is important to break down the stigma surrounding suicide and mental health issues, which can prevent people from getting the help they need. “Suicide is preventable, but we have to be willing to talk about it,” says Heather Martinsen with the Prince William CSB. “It can be very difficult for someone in crisis to know where to turn for support. We can be a strong network of support for one another. Working together, we can make a real difference and save lives.”

To learn more about SPAN and its suicide prevention efforts, visit the website at www.SuicidePreventionnva.org or contact the Fairfax-Falls Church CSB at 571-722-9091.

Research Update: Supporting Transgender Children Promotes Their Mental Health

In the first study of its kind, researchers examined the mental health of 73 transgender children ages 3 to 12 whose identities were supported by their families and had socially transitioned to their identified gender. A great deal of evidence has shown transgender (as well as other LGBTQ) youth to be at increased risk of depression, anxiety, suicidality, and other mental health problems. When compared to non-transgender children matched for age and gender identity, however, the transgender children in the study experienced no difference in symptoms of depression than the control group. The transgender children had slightly higher levels of anxiety than the population average, but these levels did not rise to the clinical (or even pre-clinical) range. There were no differences in either depression or anxiety based on gender.

allow their children to socially transition, may be associated with better mental health outcomes among transgender children. In particular, allowing children to present in everyday life as their gender identity rather than their natal sex is associated with developmentally normative levels of depression and anxiety.”

These results help signal the call for additional research into the healthy development and mental health of transgender children and youth. The power of healthy relationships, especially with parents and other adults, and the feeling of being supported are further emphasized by this study as critical protective factors for children’s well-being.

According to the researchers, “these findings suggest that familial support in general, or specifically via the decision to

Olson, K.R., et al. (2016). Mental health of transgender children who are supported in their identities. *Pediatrics*, 137(3):e20153223.

Things You Should Know About: FCPS Parent Resource Center

The Fairfax County Public Schools Parent Resource Center (PRC) provides parents, educators, and the community access to information, resources, and training related to the education of students with learning challenges, special needs, and disabilities. In addition to the Special Education Conference hosted each spring, the PRC publishes a monthly newsletter, shares local and national resources, and conducts dozens of workshops each year. Many workshops are

of interest to all parents. Topics range from “Autism and Safety” to “Summer Mindfulness,” and include an ongoing series based on the Mind in the Making approach to teaching children life skills. See the PRC website, <http://bit.ly/FCPSprc>, for more information and resources.





Messaging Tools

Every issue, we feature messaging that you can use to share prevention resources available in Fairfax County. Feel free to, without attribution, use these messages in your outreach efforts.

This Month's Resource: Neighborhood and Community Services Summer Programs

Newsletter Article

NCS Offers a Variety of Summertime Fun & Support for Kids, Teens

Are you looking for fun, engaging and fulfilling experiences for your child once school lets out? Don't miss out on a wide variety of summertime programs offered by Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS). For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/NCSsummer16> or call 703-324-4600, TTY 711.

- [RecQuest](#)

June 27 – September 2: Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Rising 1st – Rising 6th graders

- [Teens in Action](#)

June 27 – September 2: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Youth ages 12-18

If school is not in session, RecQuest & Teens in Action are! When school is out for the summer, spring, or winter breaks, RecQuest and Teens in Action provide a variety of activities and field trips to keep kids and teens engaged and allow them to grow in a supervised, structured, and enjoyable environment.

- [Value in Prevention \(V.I.P.\) Camp](#)

July 5 to August 4: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Middle school students

V.I.P. Camp is designed to encourage teens to develop healthy and positive recreation interests and features a wide variety of leisure activities and programs.

- [Therapeutic Recreation Summer Camps – English, Spanish](#)

July 6 to August 12: Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Individuals with disabilities ages 5 – 22

Therapeutic Recreation Services offers a variety of summer programming – including Summer Leisure, Adventure, and Explorer programs for individuals of all ages.

- [Culmore Soccer Camp – English, Spanish](#)

June 27 to August 19: Monday – Friday, 1 to 4 p.m., Youth ages 6-16

Soccer players of all skill levels can develop their talents and love of the sport with Coach Sergio Guzman at this free camp at Bailey's Elementary School.

- [Free Summer Meals for Kids Program](#)

School-age children (up to 18 years old)

Nutritious meals served to school-age children who qualify for free or reduced price school meals.



Facebook Post

School's out...so what are your kids doing this summer? Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services offers a number of programs for kids of all ages and abilities. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/NCSsummer16>

Tweet

Fairfax Neighborhood & Community Services summer programs offer fun & support for kids/teens of all ages & abilities – <http://bit.ly/NCSsummer16>.



Contact Us:

Prevention Unit
Fairfax County Neighborhood &
Community Services

Email:

ncs-prevention@fairfaxcounty.gov

Website:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention

Twitter:

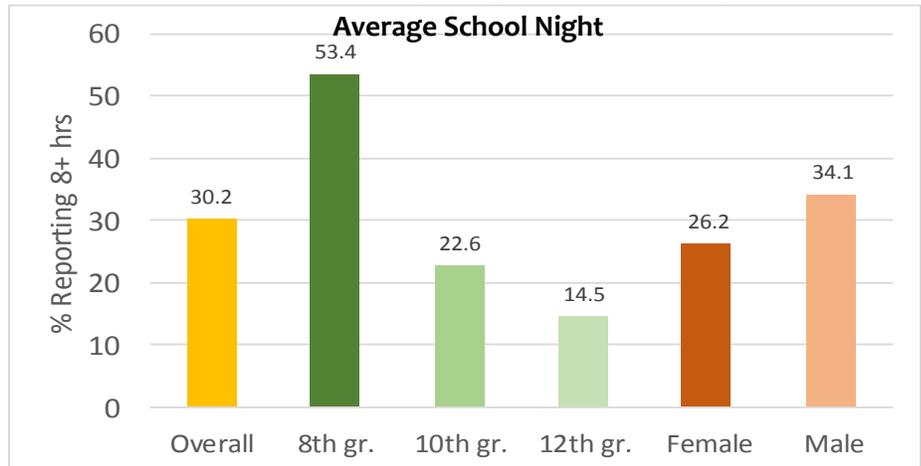
[@ffxyouththrive](https://twitter.com/ffxyouththrive)

Subscribe to, and access past issues of, An Ounce of Prevention at:

bit.ly/ozofprev

Youth Survey Spotlight

Percent of Students Reporting 8+ Hours of Sleep on an



While individual needs may vary, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute recommends teens get 9 to 10 hours of sleep per day. Per the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “insufficient sleep has been linked to the development and management of a number of chronic diseases and conditions, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and depression.” Three in 10 Fairfax County students participating in the 2014 Youth Survey (administered in Fall 2014) reported getting at least 8 hours of sleep on an average school night. To allow students to sleep later, Fairfax County Public Schools adjusted school start times for the 2015-2016 school year, with high schools starting at 8 am or later. 2015 Youth Survey data, to be released this fall, will provide a first glimpse into the impact of the schedule changes. For more information on the Fairfax County Youth Survey, see www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey.

It’s Supper Time at the Community Center!

In partnership with the Capital Area Food Bank, local Neighborhood and Community Services community centers are participating in the **Kids Café Program** that provides children and teens with a free after-school nutritional supper.

Monday—Friday between 4:30 and 5:30 p.m.

After school nutritional suppers are provided to all registered after school participants (18 and under) at:

Bailey’s Community Center

5920 Summers Lane, Falls Church, VA 22041
703-931-7027, TTY 711

Gum Springs Community Center

8100 Fordson Road, Alexandria, VA 22306
703-360-6088, TTY 711

Huntington Community Center

5751 Liberty Drive, Alexandria, VA 22303
703-960-1917, TTY 711

James Lee Community Center & Teen Center

2855-A Annandale Road, Falls Church, VA 22042
703-534-3387, TTY 711

Sacramento Neighborhood Center

8792-E Sacramento Drive, Alexandria, VA 22309
703-619-2964, TTY 711

South County Teen Center

8350 Richmond Highway, Room 309, Alexandria, VA 22309
703-704-6234, TTY 711

Southgate Community Center

12125 Pinecrest Road, Reston, VA 20191
703-860-0676, TTY 711

Willston Multicultural Center

6131 Willston Drive, Falls Church, VA 22044
703-536-8943, TTY 711



Please contact the center near you for details. The Kids Café Program will run until June 23, 2016.

The Capital Area Food Bank is an equal opportunity provider.



Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. For more information, call 703-324-4600, TTY 711.

