



YMCA of South Hampton Roads

We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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YMCA Community Services Honored for Successful Work with Families

Annie E. Casey Foundation award recognizes YMCA's exemplary work in community

Norfolk – A branch of the YMCA of South Hampton Roads has been named a recipient of the 2008 YMCA of the USA/Annie E. Casey Foundation Families Count: Family Strengthening Award in recognition of its exemplary work strengthening families and children in low-income and at-risk neighborhoods in South Hampton Roads. The YMCA's Community Services branch was one of only five YMCAs across the United States to receive the prestigious award.

This is the third year that YMCA of the USA, with the support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, has presented the award to the nation's best YMCAs to acknowledge and reward their outstanding work in supporting the development of strong, capable and economically successful families. Winners receive \$15,000 each in recognition of their success and serve as models for YMCA family strengthening programs throughout the United States. Locally the funds will be used to enhance parenting programs, the InnerActive Mobile Learning Center and KidsPriorityOne, an online resource for families.

"The Families Count: Family Strengthening Awards honor the people and programs working every day to improve the prospects of children and families living in tough neighborhoods," said Miriam Shark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. "Effective family strengthening programs are relationship-based, family-focused and neighborhood-driven, and the YMCAs being recognized this year show the rest of us how this is done. Their outstanding work creates hope and opens the doors to real opportunities for families."

The five YMCAs were chosen for the award from submissions from local YMCAs across the country that serve low-income, disadvantaged families and provide intentional family services that improve outcomes for children. The expert panel of reviewers noted that Community Services' programs were highly effective but simple enough to be easily replicable.

"Research confirms that children and families do better when they live in supportive communities," said Chuck Harris, YMCA of South Hampton Roads CEO and President. "We are very grateful to the Annie E. Casey Foundation for supporting family strengthening programs that help us make transformational change in the lives of children and families in South Hampton Roads."

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YMCA Receives Annie E. Casey Award – Page 2

The YMCA's Community Services branch creates a support network for families to help them rise above challenges. The YMCA works not just to provide safe havens and educational opportunities for at-risk children during out of school time, but to help children and families lead healthier and more responsible lives. Through programs such as Positive Parenting, KidsPriorityOne and the InnerActive Mobile Learning Center, Community Services brings much needed resources and skills to the doorsteps of our community's most at-risk neighborhoods.

The Community Services branch also provides family support through a broad array of services and partnerships in the community, including:

- Afterschool Tutorial and Homework Assistance funded by the City of Norfolk's Community Development Department and the JCPenney Afterschool Fund.
- Escape to the Arts Summer Day Camp and Broadcreek Community Outreach programs funded by Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority.
- Tobacco Use Prevention Education Programs funded by the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Foundation.

For more information about YMCA Community Services programs, call 962-2112 or visit www.ymcashr.org and www.kidspriorityone.org.

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About The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Since 1948, the Annie E. Casey Foundation has worked to build better futures for disadvantaged children and their families in the United States. The primary mission of the Foundation is to foster public policies, human service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. The YMCA of the USA/Annie E. Casey Foundation Families Count: Family Strengthening Awards program recognizes YMCAs whose programs support the development of strong, capable and economically successful families. Award recipients receive \$15,000 in recognition for their outstanding efforts and serve as role models for YMCA family-strengthening programs throughout the U.S.

About the YMCA of South Hampton Roads

The YMCA of South Hampton Roads is a nonprofit, community-based health and human services organization that serves over 160,000 children and families each year in coastal Virginia and Northeastern North Carolina. More than 14% of those families receive financial assistance through the Open Doors program, helping them achieve their full potential in spirit, mind and body. The YMCA's doors are open to people of all ages, backgrounds, abilities and incomes.

About KidsPriorityOne

KidsPriorityOne hosts an extensive database of services available on the Southside and Peninsula at www.KidsPriorityOne.org, along with information on healthy child development, youth development, parent education, services for children with disabilities, teacher planning, professional training opportunities and more. KPO can also be accessed by phone at 757-CHILDREN.