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Bacon Street Youth and Family Services Receives \$12,000 CVS Health Community Grant

Grant to help Bacon Street Youth and Family Services implement the Be The First initiative, part of CVS Health's commitment to helping people lead tobacco-free lives and to addressing and preventing the nation's opioid epidemic. It will also go towards starting a Mindful Schools Program in Hampton Roads.

Williamsburg, VA, January 14, 2019 – Bacon Street Youth and Family Services announced today that it has received a \$12,000 grant from CVS Health. The grant is part of *Be The First*, CVS Health's \$50 million, five-year initiative to help deliver the nation's first tobacco-free generation and extend the company's commitment to help people lead tobacco-free lives. The grant is also part of the company's commitment to addressing and preventing the nation's opioid epidemic.

The support from CVS Health will help Bacon Street Youth and Family Services will help implement *Be The First* in this area. *Be The First* is a five-year, \$50 million initiative to help deliver the nation's first tobacco-free generation. Through this initiative, which is funded through CVS Health and the CVS Health Foundation, the company is extending its commitment to help people lead tobacco-free lives. Recognizing that tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of disease and death in the United States and that youth use of some tobacco products is on the rise, *Be The First* comprises comprehensive education, advocacy, tobacco control and healthy behavior programming in partnership with organizations uniquely positioned to tackle this public health challenge.

Be The First is directed at youth and young adults who use tobacco or who are at risk of becoming regular tobacco users, as well as the country's 3 million elementary school children who, without early tobacco education, may become future tobacco users. It is also focused on continuing to support community-based cessation programs for adult smokers, who expose children to tobacco use in the home and other public venues that permit smoking.

Bacon Street hopes to implement *Be The First* initiatives in Williamsburg, James City County, York County, Poquoson, Hampton, Newport News, Gloucester, and Mathews communities. Bacon Street plans to provide match funding at \$3,000 to augment curriculum purchases to support the implementation of the *Be The First* programming.

The support from CVS Health will help Bacon Street Youth and Family Services implement the Mindful Schools Program. Mindfulness, or maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, emotions, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment with openness and curiosity, has a variety of research-backed impacts, including a reduction in stress, and improvements in job satisfaction, emotional regulation, and focus. Studies find that youth benefit from learning mindfulness in terms of improved cognitive outcomes, social-emotional skills, and well being. In turn, such benefits may lead to long-term improvements in life. For example, social skills in kindergarten predict improved education, employment, crime, substance abuse and mental health outcomes in adulthood. Mindfulness has been found to be an effective strategy in lowering substance use and mental health disorders rates with youth, in addition to

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reducing recidivism with incarcerated youth and increasing assets with youth who are presenting as having high-risk factors.

Bacon Street staff and interns will receive training in the Mindful Schools curriculum. Total served will be at least 240 youth annually. Bacon Street will begin communicating with interested schools/communities in the Spring of 2019.

“As a pharmacy innovation company, we are committed to building healthier communities and we believe that providing smoking cessation programs is one of the most effective ways to help people quit smoking and lead tobacco-free lives,” said Eileen Howard Boone, Senior Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility and Philanthropy, CVS Health. “We are pleased to support the work that Bacon Street Youth and Family Services does in the community and we look forward to working with them in fulfilling their program’s mission.”

In 2016, CVS Health announced *Be The First*, a five-year, \$50 million initiative to help deliver the first tobacco-free generation and extend the company's commitment to helping people lead tobacco-free lives. With support and funding through CVS Health and the CVS Health Foundation, *Be The First* supports comprehensive education, advocacy, tobacco control and healthy behavior programming delivered by a group of national partner organizations. For more information about *Be The First* and CVS Health's broader commitment to tobacco-free living, please visit www.cvshealth.com/bethefirst.

CVS Health’s support for Bacon Street Youth and Family Services also builds on the company’s overall commitment to helping communities address and prevent drug abuse, through safe disposal, education and prevention. In September 2017, CVS Health announced it would add safe medication disposal units to a total of 750 CVS Pharmacy locations across the U.S.

This work builds on ongoing programs the company operates including the Pharmacists Teach program, which brings CVS Pharmacists to local schools to talk to teens and parents about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs. More than 300,000 teens have already participated in the program since 2015. CVS Health has also worked to expand access to the opioid overdose-reversal drug naloxone in 46 states.

About Bacon Street Youth and Family Services

Founded in 1971, Bacon Street Youth and Family Services is a private, not-for-profit organization that provides services to young people and families affected by substance abuse and/or mental illness in the Hampton Road area. To learn more about their services and how to help, visit www.baconstreet.org or call at (757) 253-0111.

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