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Resolutions commend children’s advocacy groups

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Resolutions commending Greater Richmond Fit4Kids and Children’s Home Society of Virginia were introduced to the House by Del. Jeff Bourne, D-Richmond.

The resolutions, introduced Feb. 17, applaud the work of these non-profit organizations that work to improve the lives of children in Richmond.

HR75 commends Greater Richmond Fit4Kids, a school-based non-profit organization dedicated to improving children’s health by specifically tackling childhood obesity in the greater Richmond region through physical activity and nutrition. They are celebrating their 10-year anniversary in April.

“We are very grateful to Del. Bourne for sponsoring a resolution to honor our anniversary,” Mary Dunne Stewart, CEO of Greater Richmond Fit4Kids, said in a phone interview. He has been a longtime supporter and a board member for several years, she said.

In 2019, Virginia ranked No. 22 in the country for obesity, Jenifer McCormick, communications director at the United Health Foundation, said in an email. In their most recent Health of Women and Children report, she said, Virginia ranks No. 13 for obesity among children ages 10 through 17.

“We reach about 10,000 children a year through our activity and nutrition programming,” Stewart said.

Greater Richmond Fit4Kids also does extensive work at the local level trying to influence policy that will improve physical activity and nutrition options for kids, Stewart said.

Active, well-nourished children learn more in school, Stewart said, and have greater self-esteem. It’s not just about avoiding weight and disease, she said, it’s about building brighter futures for kids.

HR76 commends the Children’s Home Society of Virginia, a non-profit organization and licensed child-placing agency working to find permanent homes for children in the foster care system. They are celebrating their 120-year anniversary on May 7. The identical senate resolution, SJ111 was introduced by Sen. Siobhan Dunnavant, R-Henrico, on Feb. 17.

“We are thrilled to have this house resolution,” Cassie Cunningham, policy director at the Children’s Home Society of Virginia, said in a phone interview. d.

Children’s Home Society of Virginia started as an infant adoption agency and has evolved to meet the community need of working with teenagers, Cunningham said.

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The Possibilities Program was created for youth who have aged out of foster care, ages 18 to 25, Cunningham said. Children’s Home Society of Virginia provides housing and general support for them when finding employment, education advancement, financial management, and more, to ensure they become secure as independent individuals.

Because the Children’s Home Society of Virginia is involved in a great amount of advocacy work, Cunningham said, “it’s great to have this honor to be commended by Del. Bourne and the General Assembly.”