



# The Healthy City Fall River CONNECTION

Healthy City Fall River  
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Center  
Fall River, MA 02722  
508-324-2405

Connecting the people of the Fall River to improve our quality of life and health  
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## 2004-2009 Healthy City Action Plan Released

### Participating Organizations

Bristol Workforce Investment Board  
Catholic Social Services  
City of Fall River  
Board of Park Commissioners  
Clean City Committee  
Clean & Green / Clean & Lien  
Combined Sewer Overflow  
Open Space Plan  
Street Tree Planting Proram  
Community Development Agency  
Community Development Recreation  
Corky Row Neighborhood Association  
Diabetes Association, Inc.  
Fall River Adult Literacy Partnership  
FR Health & Human Services Dept.  
Fall River Office Econ. Development  
Fall River Police Department  
Fall River Public Schools  
Family Service Association  
First Baptist Church  
Girls Scout Council of SE Mass.  
Gr. F.R. Chamber of Commerce  
Green Futures  
Health First Family Care Center  
Healthy Lifestyles Task force  
Katie Brown Educational Foundation  
Khmer Family Resource Center  
Maplewood Neighborhood Association  
Mass Community Water Watch & BCC  
Univ. of Mass. Extension Service  
Mayor's Child Nutrition Partnership  
Mayor's Office, City of Fall River  
Quaker Fabric Corporation  
Shepherd's Cener  
Southcoast Hospitals  
St. Anne's Hospital  
St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
Stanley Street Treatment & Resources  
The Trustees of Reservations  
Thomas Chew Mem.Boys & Girls Club  
Y.M.C.A. of Greater Fall River  
Youth Hip Hop Dance



What began as an initiative proposed by Mayor Edward M. Lambert, Jr., the Healthy City Fall River 2004-2009 Action Plan, was released at Government Center on September 13, 2004. The Plan represents a cooperative venture between Mayor Lambert and Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc, and is based on input received from at least 1,000 city residents during numerous visioning sessions and a Healthy City Summit. The release of the document represents the end of a process that began in early 2003 and the beginning of a new process, which is moving forward with the ideas and projects contained within.

The Action Plan identifies the challenges faced by the city, the assets available to make the city healthier, and a series of goals and objectives to realize the vision of a healthier future for all who live and/or work in Fall River.

Mayor Lambert said, "This document is the result of a very active community planning process. The people of the city have spoken. There are a number of factors that affect their quality of life and people wanted to know not only what the city was doing to address certain issues but they also offered a number of ideas and suggestions to help make Fall River a better place to live. This five-year action plan can be successful because throughout the development stage, efforts were made to link the public, private and non-profit sectors and now all of the participants in this process have a keen interest in the success

of what has been outlined in this report. There are many citizens of Fall River who deserve a great deal of praise for taking the time to participate and I hope that this activism will continue."

The Action Plan includes five Action Priority Areas:

- Safety and Substance Abuse, including goals for increased community policing and public safety; a drug-free community, including enforcement of tobacco laws, and reduction of gangs.
- Environment and Recreation, including goals for cleaner streets and parks; increased and improved recreational opportunities for youth and adults; and measures to ensure cleaner air and water.
- Health Education, including goals for increased nutrition and diabetes education; tobacco education; and physical fitness education.
- Adult Education, Job Training, and Employment, including goals for adult and out-of-school youth education; alternative programs, including tutoring and after-school programs; and youth and senior employment and volunteerism.
- Community Planning and Housing, including goals to increase affordable housing, waterfront access, and improvements in recreation facilities for youth and adults.

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*"Fall River is emerging as a leader in the state and nation in planning for its health and future."*

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Healthy City Fall River is aligned with the international Healthy Communities movement. The concept embraces the idea that people in any locality are the driving force that makes change happen. The Healthy Community process suggests that when citizens

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## Focus on Mary Ann Wordell



When it comes to trees, Mary Ann Wordell is the person you want to talk to. She first noticed the poor condition of many of the trees near the Truesdale and Charlton Hospitals, where she worked as a head nurse and nurse manager for 35 years before retiring in 1995. Working with the Fall River Garden Club, where she headed the conservation committee, Mary Ann contacted the City to see what could be done.

Mayor Lambert welcomed her interest and enthusiasm and put her in touch with Park Administrator Richard Kitchen. Thus began the Fall River Street Tree Planting Program. Through a series of grants, this program has been able to offer neighborhood-based education for volunteer tree stewards as well as free trees for citizen groups to plant in local parks.

A free course for volunteer tree stewards offered in September, 2004, at Bristol Community college taught the value and benefits of trees and how to care for them, including tree biology, tree identification, tree planting and tree pruning. The course was taught by Stephen Dempsey, Educator and Arborist from the Bristol Agricultural School.

According to Mary Ann Wordell, there is a possibility of a second conference being offered in the Spring. For more information, contact her at 508-679-8887 or by e-mail at [MACWROSE@AOL.COM](mailto:MACWROSE@AOL.COM).

## Heroin Prevention Grant Awarded to Fall River



Lt. Governor Healy  
announces the grant.

The City of Fall River was recently awarded a one-year \$80,000 implementation grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Department of Public Health to implement the Fall River Safety and Substance Abuse Action Project.

The Safety and Substance Abuse Action Project will adapt elements of the Healthy City Fall River Action Plan into a Comprehensive Community-wide plan to prevent Heroin use in Fall River. Four environmental strategies will be employed: 1) Enforcement, including community policing, youth violence prevention and the neighborhood crime watch; 2) Education, including the Citizens' Police Academy, education and training through the Family Service Association and P.Y.C.O.; 3) Communication, including the use of media and the creation of public service announcements; and 4) Collaboration, bringing together members of the Fall River Police Department, the Neighborhood Associations, and the Healthy Youth Task Force in a cooperative effort.

Work began on the **ESCAPE** (Environmental Strategies of the Community Action Plan) Project in early September, and a schedule has already been formulated for a Citizens' Police Academy **HELPP** (Heroin Education Leadership and Prevention Partnership) program. The series will run on seven consecutive Tuesdays, beginning on October 12<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Fall River Police Station. Several public service announcements (PSAs) will be crafted in the coming months for use in local print and non-print media and members of the Neighborhood Associations are already providing input to law enforcement officials.

"This project substantially addresses the Healthy City Action Plan Priority on Safety and Substance Abuse," noted Health and Human Services Director Michael Coughlin. "Once underway, this project will bring dozens of local citizens into the process of enforcement, increase treatment referrals and provide some basic prevention messages to the larger community," he added.

## Clean & Lien program puts teeth in City clean-up efforts

The Clean and Lien Program, established by Mayor Lambert in the Spring of 2004, is an initiative to circumvent the longstanding problem of absentee property owners who don't take responsibility for the security and maintenance of vacant land parcels that are currently overgrown and covered with debris and abandoned vehicles. Through the program, after proper procedure and notice is given, the city will enter onto a property and remove the nuisance or hazard and pass the cost on to the property owner. Proceeds from paying off liens or from the sale of property would go back into the revolving fund for the maintenance of other such properties.

Mayor Lambert said, "It is my hope that the Clean & Green and Clean & Lien programs that I established will serve as important tools that can go a long way toward improving our neighborhoods. Our citizens deserve a quality of life that is second to none, and these programs are meant to help develop cleaner and safer neighborhoods."

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*"Our citizens deserve a quality of life that is second to none, and these programs are meant to help develop cleaner and safer neighborhoods."*

*Mayor Lambert*

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The program is supported by a revolving fund in the Department of Health and Human Services, which is replenished from proceeds of the liens placed on vacant properties whose owners don't clean up on their own.

As of the end of the summer of 2004 the program was proving successful as an additional tool to ensure lots are cleaned up. Several property owners who received notice of an impending lien cleaned their property quickly to avoid the additional cost of the legal proceedings.

Michael Coughlin, Director of Health and Human Services commented, "The Clean and Lien Program provides the City Inspectors with additional leverage to ensure property owners fulfill their responsibilities. Thus far we have incurred expenses in cleaning only two lots. When property owners get the warning letter it seems to have the effect we want – to get them moving to clean up their property!"

## EPA grant promotes making Fall River homes smoke-free



Judith Coykendall of Partners for Clean Air shows a young smoker the level of carbon monoxide in his blood at one of this past summer's Neighborhood Festivals.

**P**artners for Clean Air, a program of the Center for Human Services, recently received a \$30,000 Healthy Communities Grant from the federal Environmental Protection Agency. The Healthy Communities Grant Program is EPA New England's main grant program to work directly with communities to reduce environmental risks to protect and improve human health and the quality of life. This was the only grant awarded in the six New England states for the prevention of second hand smoke.

The Partner's program will target parents and caregivers of children five years old and younger. Working through three partner agencies in Fall River (the Heath First WIC program, the Greater Fall River Early Intervention Program, and the YMCA Even Start program), Partners will train staff on conducting smoke free homes campaign.

Agency staff who have been trained will then ask any of their clients who smoke if they would make their home and car smoke free. If so, they will educate them on the health hazards of second hand smoke and work on ways to protect their children from exposure to a toxic environment.

"Though the main focus will not be on cessation," commented Program Director Judith Coykendall, "they will be provided referral information if they are interested."

Participants will get smoke-free kit with welcome stickers so that anyone that comes to their home will understand that it is smoke-free. The goal is to prevent ear infections, asthma attacks, bronchitis and AIDS, all of which have been related to the presence of second-hand smoke in the home. Anyone who would like to get more information about the project can contact Judith at 508-992-0367, Ext. 203 or by e-mail at Pcamn@hotmail.com.

## Action Plan (Continued from Page One)

participate in identifying the improvements that have to be made to reach a better quality of life, they are much more invested in reaching the outcome. And, while volunteers alone cannot do everything that needs to be done to improve health, having the support and involvement of citizens in directing the course of change ensures that the community will embrace the investment.

Healthy City Coordinator and Chairman of Partners for a Healthier Community Dr. David Weed commented, "Improvements in the health of a city do not happen by accident; they take planning. The Healthy City Fall River project is an effort to involve the entire community in a process that promotes deliberate actions designed to improve the health of those who live or work in Fall River."

Michael Coughlin, Director of Health & Human Services said, "Fall River is emerging as a leader in the state and nation in planning for its health and future. The Action Plan pulls together Fall River's many assets and resources in a coordinated way to chart a course toward a healthier future in the twenty-first century. It is exciting to be involved in this innovative process."

The process will continue with documentation of the identified Actions in this Plan and a preliminary evaluation of the result of these efforts over the first year. Adjustments to this plan will then be made at least annually over the next five years.



Young women from the Summer Youth Outreach program gather each week at St. Luke's Church on Warren Street to talk about a variety of topics such as relationships, peer pressure, substance abuse, violence and other topics. Vy Soeur (pictured, right), a recent graduate in criminal justice from Roger Williams University, leads the discussion. This program is one of seven Micro-Grant Programs funded by the 2004 Harvard-Pilgrim Healthcare Foundation Healthy Fall River grant.

## Upcoming Events

The next meeting of the **Healthy City Fall River Design Team** will take place on January 6, 2005 at the UMass Professional and Continuing Education Center, 139 South Main Street. Call 508-324-2405.

Dr. Bernie Sigel will present his "**Prescriptions for Living**" at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 28th, at Bristol Community College. Tickets are available for \$20 (\$25 for 2.4 CEUs) at Health First Family Care Center, 508-679-9376, Ext. 204 or through the Fall River Chamber of Commerce.

Family Services Association and the City of Fall River will hold a **Family Festival** at the Henry Lord Middle School from Noon to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 20, 2004. For further information, call 508-678-7542.

## Neighborhood Events

A **Fall Festival** will be held on October 23rd, from Noon to 3pm at the Maplewood-Niagara Senior Center, 10 Stafford Road

A **Community Supper** will be held at the Maplewood-Niagara Senior Center on November 15th, from 5:30-7:30 pm. Admission for a free spaghetti supper will be given in exchange for a can or box of food to be donated to the Food Bank. A Santa Registry and a food basket raffle will also take place.

The Salvation Army will hold a dinner and concert by the world renowned **New York Staff Band** on Saturday, Oct 30th, at the First Congregational Church, 282 Rock Street. Tickets are \$6 for the dinner and \$8 for the dinner and concert. Call 508-679-7900.

## Hoop Fest rounds summer of health activity for youth



Over 150 youth and 35 teams participated in the 2nd Annual Hip Hop Hoopfest at Britland Park on August 28th, the culmination of the summer-long Community Outreach Program. The seventh annual summer evening activities program kicked off the week of July 19 with a focus on positive youth development, an ongoing process that combines people, places, supports, opportunities and services to engage all youth in meeting their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued and be useful.

“The Community Outreach Program has been extremely successful. It provided the youth of Fall River with safe, positive activities to do right in their own neighborhood” said Mayor Ed Lambert. He added “The Hoopfest is a great way to wrap up the summer. It gives the youth a chance to get together before the school year starts and be involved in some friendly competition.”

## New space at the Diabetes Association will help families



The Diabetes Association dedicated their new, larger office space at 170 Pleasant Street, on September 29, 2004. Mayor Edward Lambert was on hand for the ribbon cutting

## Katie Brown Educational Foundation awarded funding

The Katie Brown Educational Program (KBEP) has received grants from the United Way of Greater Fall River, the Fall River Women’s Union, and the Pierce Foundation to continue its work with area students to prevent violence in dating and relationships. The Program – named in honor of the young Barrington woman who was murdered by her boyfriend in early 2001 – sends educators into area schools to work with students in developing the skills they need to keep violence from becoming a factor in their lives. Students in Fall River, Somerset, Taunton, Westport and Dartmouth, as well as in Barrington and Providence, Rhode Island participate in the five-session program throughout the school year.

“We’re so honored by the contributions we’ve received from the United Way of Greater Fall River, the Fall River Women’s Union, and the Pierce Foundation,” says Sara Whitney, KBEP Executive Director. “We’ll be working with every 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th grader in Fall River public schools this year,” she continues, “and it’s exciting to know that the community supports that work. We are very grateful.”

The 7th grade program is new this school year, and the United Way is supporting it through its Venture Grants Program. The Fall River Women’s Union and the Pierce Foundation have supported KBEP since its inception in 2001 and this year’s grants are directed toward ongoing programs in Fall River..

The Healthy City Fall River CONNECTION is published four times a year by Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc.

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Healthy City Fall River is a collaboration between the Office of Mayor Edward M. Lambert, Jr. and Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc., the local Community Health Network Area (CHNA) organized by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish a working partnership between DPH and area residents to improve the health status of all those who live or work in the CHNA

Funded in part by a grant from the Harvard-Pilgrim Healthcare Foundation

### 2004-2009

#### Action Priority Areas



Safety and Substance Abuse



Environment and Recreation



Health Education



Adult Education & Employment



Community Planning & Housing

for the space where the organization will be able to offer educational programs to equip the citizens of Fall River who are at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes with the knowledge need to avoid developing the disease.

One of the programs, a new Strength Training Class taught by Kate Tippins, will provide a no-charge fitness class on Mondays and Wednesday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. for only \$2 per session. The equipment for this program was funded by one of seven Micro-Grants provided by the 2004 Harvard-Pilgrim Healthcare Foundation Healthy Fall River grant. For more information, contact the Diabetes Association at 508-672-5671.