



Healthy City Fall River
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Fall River, MA 02722
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The Healthy City Fall River **CONNECTION**

Connecting the people of Fall River to improve the quality of life and health

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Participating Organizations

Bristol Community College
 Bristol County District Attorney
 Bristol Elder Services
 Bristol Workforce Investment Board
 Catholic Social Services
 City of Fall River
 Board of Park Commissioners
 Children In Balance
 Clean City Committee
 Department of Public Works
 Health & Human Services
 Street Tree Planting Program
 Community Development Agency
 Community Development Recreation
 Child Nutrition Partnership
 Community Foundation of SE Mass.
 Corky Row Neighborhood Association
 Corrigan Mental Health Center
 Diabetes Association, Inc.
 Fall River Adult Literacy Partnership
 Fall River Garden Club
 Fall River Housing Authority
 Fall River Office Econ. Development
 Fall River Police Department
 Fall River Public Schools
 Fall River Realtors Association
 Family Service Association
 First Baptist Church
 Gr. F.R. Chamber of Commerce
 Gr. F.R. Real Estate Board
 Green Futures
 Health First Family Care Center
 Healthy Lifestyles Task Force
 Katie Brown Educational Foundation
 Maplewood Neighborhood Association
 Mass Community Water Watch & BCC
 May Institute
 People, Inc.
 S.E. Mass. Visiting Nurse Assoc.
 Seven Hills Behavioral Health
 Shepherd's Center
 Southcoast Hospitals
 St. Anne's Hospital
 St. Luke's Episcopal Church
 Stanley Street Treatment & Resources
 The Trustees of Reservations
 Thomas Chew Memorial Boys & Girls Club
 Univ. of Mass. Extension Service
 Y.M.C.A. of Greater Fall River

Mass In Motion project invites systems, policy and environmental changes to improve health

For a look at what the “walk-ability” and “bike-ability” of Fall River could be, take a trip over to Meridian Street in the North End. Here Fall River officials gathered last week to announce the start of Mass In Motion, a two-year effort to encourage local leaders to create policies, systems and environmental changes that will invite and encourage Fall River residents to engage in healthy behavior.

New sidewalk on both sides of the two-mile-long Meridian Street and line striping defining a bicycle path, changed a street designed exclusively for automobiles into an inviting walking and cycling route for everyone living in that part of town.

“Making more of these kinds of changes, is what Mass In Motion strives to do”, said Julianne Kelly coordinator of the program. Mass In Motion grants, awarded by the MA Dept. of Public Health, and funded by the state’s largest health insurance carriers, were awarded to 10 communities in the Commonwealth, including Fall River.

Mass In Motion (www.mass.gov/massinmotion) is working to encourage more Massachusetts residents to lead healthier lifestyles.



Officials gather at the southern end of Meridian Street to announce the award of a Mass In Motion grant to the City to promote physical activity.

A large emphasis of the program is on structural changes that will make it easier and safer for those who live and work in Fall River to make walking and bicycling a routine part of the day. “We’re already engaged in a long-term effort to improve sidewalks throughout the City,” noted Planning director Jim Hartnett. “Over seven miles of improvements to streets and sidewalks have been completed in the past two years, and additional improvements will take place on an annual basis,” he added.

“Fall River has so many parks, water views, and the 13,000 acres of the Bioreserve, offering walking, biking and hiking options. We need to celebrate these resources, foster and promote and care for them”, urged Kelly. She has been collaborating with The Trustees of Reservations, Putnam Conservation Institute, to initiate an Urban Parks Advocate Network in Fall River. A public meeting to learn more about the Urban Parks Advocates Network will be held on Thursday, October 8, at 5 PM in the Atrium Lobby of Government Center. The Urban Parks Advocate Network is linked to the Boston

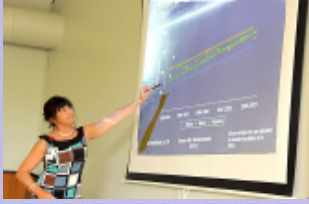


Mass In Motion coordinator Julianne Kelly describes some of the elements of the new Mass In Motion program as Silvia Elementary School students listen.

Visit us on the web at
www.HealthyCityFallRiver.org

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ACHIEVE begins plans for Southcoast



A cutting-edge partnership between the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the YMCA of the USA is working to develop and implement policy, systems, and environmental change strategies that can help prevent or manage health-risk factors for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, obesity, and arthritis.

The ACHIEVE program (Action Communities for Health, Innovation, and Environmental change) provides funds to selected organizations to strengthen community leadership, build capacity, and activate change.

The YMCA Southcoast was selected as one of 43 communities nationwide to develop specific activities directed toward reducing tobacco use and exposure, promoting physical activity and healthy eating, and improving access to consistent, high-quality preventive health services.

New Bedford YMCA director Nancy Bonell and Southcoast Hospitals Cardiovascular Prevention Program coordinator Donna Querim have organized a CHART Team who will work together over the next two years to review the health challenges for the region and to look at ways that schools, worksites, healthcare settings, community institutions and the community-at-large can develop strategies to create positive change. Contact Donna at 508-679-7187.

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Park Advocates.

In addition to increasing exercise, Mass In Motion is also dedicated to changing systems to help residents improve nutrition.

One system that affects access to healthy foods, is transportation. Efforts to improve access to farmers' markets and locally-grown produce are already under way. In terms of transportation, this might mean bringing the farmer's market to the customers. This is the case at the Lightolier factory in the City's Industrial Park. Lightolier has pioneered farm market sales to employees by bringing fresh produce from local farms to their employees throughout the summer months.

"This has been a very popular program," stated Mary Dunn, one of the coordinators of the program. "People enjoy being able to eat better food and save some money as the prices are basically set at the wholesale level," she added.

Kelly hopes to encourage more local employers to set up similar programs. Family Service Association has recently made available a farm stand set up on its Rock Street property to make it easier for their employees and the public to pick up local produce on Wednesday afternoons.

Kelly is also working with UMASS Extension Nutrition Program, Southcoast Nutrition Interns, and B.M.C. Durfee High School faculty and students who work in the Fall River Educational Television (FRED-TV) studio to create a local "Cooking and Nutrition Basics" program to air on public access channel 17.

"We're envisioning a series of shows that will feature everything from shopping skills, to completing healthy recipes that will produce a meal that will feed a family of four for under \$10.00, including some programs in Portuguese and Spanish," commented FRED-TV coordinator Rene Kochman. "Offering healthier foods from local markets is only half the battle in getting people to eat a healthier diet," he pointed out. "People today -- especially younger folks -- need to learn how to prepare the produce that they

should be eating. Most of them only know how to open a box and push a microwave button."

Mike Ramos, who coordinates the City's Healthy Lives wellness program, will be working with Kelly to promote a newly-created Guide to Healthy Meetings and Events authored by Pat Bebo, coordinator of the UMASS Extension Nutrition Education program.

"Pat has created an excellent resource that can help people who plan or provide refreshments or meals for gatherings of employees or public events," said Ramos. "Our job is to make sure not only that people have the Guide but are able to follow its recommendations." Ramos will be working with restaurants that are listed in the Healthy Restaurant guide that he published this summer to ensure that healthy food selections will be available to organizations who are following the meeting guide.

Working with more than a dozen agency representatives, Kelly has also been involved in the creation of a bookmark that will list locally-available smoking cessation resources. "Smoking is such a major contributor to poor health outcomes in Fall

River, affecting nearly a third of our residents," she said. Beginning with the Great American Smoke-Out in November, we want to be sure that as many people as possible know about the many available resources in our area that can assist people in the quitting process.

"This project has been looking at finding ways of reducing the barriers that people experience when they attempt to quit, such as lack of insurance coverage to pay for cessation medications or nicotine patches.

This is an excellent example of the various kinds of "systems change" that the Mass In Motion project will be focusing on over the next two years. Kelly will be working on creation of an Urban Parks Advocates Network to promote the development of walking and recreation spaces within Fall River. She will also be working with the newly-formed Southcoast Worksite Health Improvement group which will hold its first conference on January 12th (see Upcoming Events, next page).

More examples of Mass in Motion activities can be found on the HealthyCityFallRiver.org website. Ms. Kelly can be contacted at Government Center at 508-324-2405.

A large emphasis of the program is on structural changes that will make it easier and safer for those who live and work in Fall River to be healthier . . .



Tom Hannigan of Norcap Lodge, Roger Dextradeu of Habit Opco, Alvin McMahon of MRC, Bob Hitt of SSTAR, Sarah Parmenter, and Jenna Legasse meet.

Power2Save Coalition addresses overdoses

A three-year project funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's (MDPH) Massachusetts Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS) has formed a coalition, "Power 2 Save Lives", to provide interventions, prevention strategies and education to reduce opioid overdoses in Fall River.

A meeting held at Stanley Street Treatment and Resources (SSTAR) on September 16, 2009, brought together SSTAR Clinical Director Erica Sahliln, Habit OPCO representatives Roger Dextradeu and Susan Penacho, Norcap Lodge representative Tom Hannigan, Sarah Parmenter of Southeastern Healthy Communities, Celia Porche of the Bristol County District Attorney's office, Karen Fischeer of the BOLD Coalition, Bob Hitt of Project Aware and Jessica Rodriguez and Connie Rocha-Mimoso of Seven Hills Behavioral Health with evaluators Paul and Max Florin, to discuss potential strategies.

BSAS reported that there were 205 non-fatal overdoses and 60 fatal ones due to opiates in the City of Fall River. There are 12 fatal opiate-related overdoses a week in the Commonwealth.

The Coalition is working on a variety of strategies to reduce fatal overdoses in Fall River including education and outreach to users, bystanders and healthcare providers. The group is also working with first responders to decrease barriers to contacting emergency services in the event of an overdose and a "Good Samaritan Policy" to provide certain protections from drug possession charges and prosecution when a drug-related overdose victim or a witness seeks medical attention.

For more information about the project, contact Project Coordinator Jenna Lagasse at 508-324-2415.



Carol Webber of the Fall River WIC program leads Brittney and Jeff Estrella in fitness exercises at CD-REC during the second Fitness Challenge.

Fitness Challengers get ready for third year

Community Development Recreation (CD-REC), the Diabetes Association Inc. (DAI), Healthy City Fall River, Children In Balance, the Boys and Girls Club, the WIC program, and the Fall River YMCA are joining together for the third time to challenge adults who live or work in Fall River to get fit.

For the past two years, these organizations have run a four-month Fitness Challenge beginning in early January that attracted over 1,000 people to a four-month weight-loss contest that awarded prizes to winning individuals and groups.

"This year we are starting early with a Fitness Challenge Warm-Up, starting October 17, 2009, for those who participated in either of the previous two years," said CD-REC program director Jamison Souza.

This series of events will help participants get started toward their weight-loss and fitness goals before the holidays. "When the challenge begins in January, you'll be at your best and ready to dive into the four-month challenge with everything you have!", added Souza.

This year, returning Challenge participants will also be able to sign up to work with a nursing student from BCC, Diman or UMass-Dartmouth to help assess their overall health status and the best approaches to increasing fitness.

Educational sessions will be held in October, November and December to teach nutrition and fitness basics as well as how to deal with holiday stress.

Participants will also be able to access non-profit fitness centers throughout the city for at reduced rates. The Fall River Fitness Challenge is open to all adults who live or work in Fall River. Challenge Participants will be asked to pay \$5 for a wrist band that will admit them to all of the special events.

Upcoming Events

October 6, 2009, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
DPH Ounce of Prevention Conference, Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center, Marlboro, MA, call 508-752-7313 for registration, \$50

October 17, 2009, 10 a.m. - Noon
Fitness Challenge Warm-up begins, CD-REC, 72 Banks Street. See article to the left. Call 508-679-0922 for more information.

October 23, 2009, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
NECON Conference, Building the Prevention Movement in New England, Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center, Marlboro, MA., \$55, register at www.neconinfo.org

October 24, 2009, 6:00 p.m.
Stepping Out II benefit dance, Venus deMilo, Swansea, \$75, call Paula Harison at 774-627-1204 for tickets and information

November 13, 2009 8:00-11:00 a.m.
Partners for a Healthier Community/ Greater New Bedford COAST Legislative Breakfast, White's Restaurant, \$15, contact BJ Valente at bjvalente@cox.net to register.

November 19, 2009
Great American Smoke-Out

December 4, 2009, 8:30 - 10 a.m.
Healthy City Design Team quarterly meeting, SSTAR classroom, 386 Stanley Street. Contact Dr. Weed at 508-324-2411 for information

January 12, 2010, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
"Worksite Health Resolutions 2010" conference, Woodland Commons, UMass-Dartmouth, \$20, contact Janet Hathaway at 508-679-3131 for information.



Doran Elementary School children enjoy using the new playground equipment donated by Children In Balance following the opening ceremony.

CIB adds playground equipment at Doran

The Children In Balance program opened new playground equipment at the Doran Elementary School on September 9, 2009, as part of its goal of increasing physical activity among Fall River elementary school children.

"I saw wonderful playground equipment at the new school buildings in the City but nothing at the Doran School," said Children In Balance Project Manager Marcia Picard, "When Maria Pontes, the Doran principal, came to me with the idea of purchasing playground equipment, I saw a chance to use project funds to provide years of safe physical activity for hundreds of children."

The program funds were provided by Tufts University, which is replicating its successful Shape Up Somerville childhood obesity prevention project in Fall River during a two-year study. The program uses a holistic approach to influence choices that families make when grocery shopping, dining out and selecting family activities. The program also works closely with the UMass Extension Nutrition Education program to bring nutrition and fitness education into classrooms. For further information about the project, contact Ms. Picard at 508-324-2228.



Jayden Quinto races against Simba Som-Has in the Summer Olympic sack race as CD-REC program director Jamison Souza watches from behind.



YOUth VOICE participants create Peace Flags in which hopes and dreams of peace are created on flags to be hung in various locations in the City.

YOUth VOICE leaders gather for first meeting

A Kick-Off to a Peaceful School Year organized by Massachusetts Promise Fellow Annemarie Sharkey as a way to reconvene YOUth VOICE (Volunteer Organizations to Increase Community Engagement), took place at CDRecreation on September 24, 2009. A follow-up to the Peace By Piece Summit held on March 28th, the interactive event encouraged participants create peace flags with messages of hope.

The event preceded the first meeting of the school year of YOUth VOICE. Youth leaders made plans for participating in the Governor's Statewide Youth Initiative, organizing another Martin Luther King CommUNITY Service Project and facilitating a regional youth summit next year.

YOUth VOICE is a "super group" comprised of representatives from several youth leadership groups who are actively involved in making a difference in their community. The mission of YOUth VOICE is to connect the different groups to each other, to provide leadership training, to offer an opportunity to share information, to increase civic engagement, and to work collaboratively to develop a youth action plan for the City of Fall River.

Teams of young people from nine Fall River neighborhoods gathered at the B.M.C. Durfee High School field to compete in a Summer Olympic style competition at the end of the summer. Nearly 100 children who have been participating in the summer lunch in the park program run by Community Development Re-creation (CD-REC) worked formed teams from North Park, Lafayette Park, Maplewood Park, Griffin Park, Father Diaferio Village, Abbott Court, Pulaski Park, Kennedy Park and Ruggles Park and competed along with a team from the YMCA. Each team had their own team names and shirts and competed for medals in 10 events.

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2004-2009 Action Priority Areas



Safety and Substance Abuse



Environment and Recreation



Health Education



Adult Education & Employment



Community Planning & Housing