



Healthy City Fall River
Government Center, Room 440
Fall River, MA 02722
508-324-2411

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
Corigan 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
Katie Brown Educational Foundation
Khmer Family Resource Center
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
Saint Anne's Hospital
St. Luke's Episcopal Church
Stanley Street Treatment & Resources
The Trustees of Reservations
Thomas Chew Mem. Boys & Girls Club
Univ. of Mass. Extension Service
Y.M.C.A. of Greater Fall River

Visit us at

www.HealthyCityFallRiver.org

The Healthy City Fall River CONNECTION

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

Vol. 6 No.2

Winter 2010

Healthy City public survey reveals progress in many areas, more work to be done in others



Dr. David Weed discusses the implications of the findings of the recent public survey on plans for the next five years of the Healthy City initiative.

A survey conducted between July and September, 2009, of 613 people who live, work or attend school in Fall River revealed that improvements have been made in most of the fifteen goals that the Healthy City initiative set out to reach in the past five years.

Conditions in the City were perceived to have improved in eleven of the fifteen measures that over 500 people throughout the City selected in the fall of 2003 as necessary to make Fall River a healthier place to live and work.

The greatest improvements were seen in recreation and environment, nutrition and diabetes education, tobacco education, physical fitness education, and alternative education programs. More improvements were also seen in clean air and water, adult and out-of-school education, youth and senior employment, improved recreational facilities and waterfront access.

Areas in which conditions were perceived to be worse than they were five years ago included community policing, substance abuse, gang activity, and affordable housing.

"I think one can point to some important successes as well as some continuing problems that may explain the results," commented Healthy City Coordinator David S. Weed, Psy.D. who designed the follow-up study of the project's first five year results.

"Many organizations, including Community Development Recreation, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Diabetes Association have really stepped up the provision of recreation and fitness programs -- including the Fitness Challenge -- in the City," he stated. "In addition, environmental efforts, including the combined sewer overflow project, have made a big difference."

The City has also been involved in major nutrition and diabetes prevention efforts through the Children In Balance project and the University of Massachusetts Nutrition Education program that operates in the City's schools.

Areas that were perceived by more people to be worse included public safety concerns that may be the result of recent cut-backs in law enforcement. Substance abuse and gang activity continue to be seen as major impediments to improving the quality of life in the City.

The survey also asked respondents to speculate on what would make life healthier in the City in the coming years. The top response, by far, was the need for better sidewalks and safe places to walk. "I think that people are beginning to see the importance of walking on a regular basis as central to maintaining good health," commented Healthy Lives coordinator Michael Ramos. "Ensuring safety is the biggest concern."

Other top suggestions included increasing farmers' market days and hours, planting more trees throughout the City, improving and adding to the number of parks throughout the City, and making more streets accessible for bicycles.

"A surprise was the large number (over 50%) of respondents who said that the City needed more restrictions on smoking, such as in parks or even in automobiles," noted Weed. "I think the tide of opinion has really turned against smoking in this City," he noted.

The full results of the survey can be seen in chart form on page two of this newsletter.

Design Team Meets



Participants in the December 4, 2009 Design Team meeting discuss goals and objectives for the next five years.

Members of the Healthy City Design Team used the final quarterly meeting of the year to outline and review a draft of the 2010-2014 Action Plan.

At this time, the Plan includes the following elements:

- Reduce the likelihood that adolescents will become involved in gang activity through an aggressive program of education, diversion and engaging them in alternative healthy activities.
- Reduce lifetime substance abuse and the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) among youth through comprehensive individual, family and environmental strategies.
- Develop a robust city-wide, year-around youth recreation and adult fitness system that ensures access to at least 2,000 City residents below 200% of poverty
- Create and support ten school-based and twelve community-based vegetable gardens
- Establish linkages between physical fitness providers and physician practice offices to permit physicians to verify participation in physical activity for their patients between visits
- Modify built environment planning and construction standards to ensure active living environments.

To see the complete list, go to the Action Plan Project link at the top of the Health City website (HealthyCityFallRiver.org).

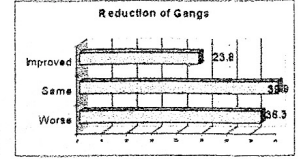
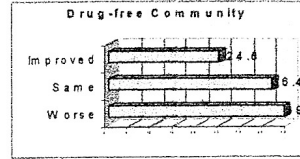
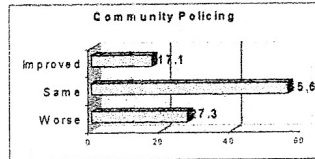
Healthy City Fall River Public Survey Results

Over the summer of 2003, over 1,000 people were surveyed in Fall River to ask what they thought would make the City a healthier place to live and work. From that survey came fifteen Action Plan items that outlined what needed to be done.

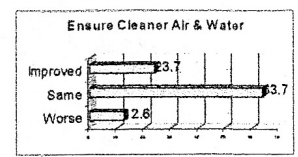
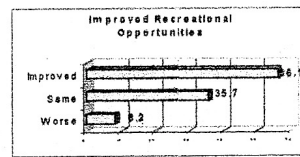
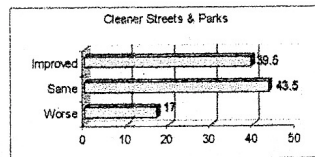
Between July and September, 2009, 613 people responded to a new survey that asked them to rate how those Action Plan items have changed. In addition, respondents were asked to identify actions that would make life in the City healthier over the next five year period.

In your opinion, have the following gotten worse, stayed the same or improved ?

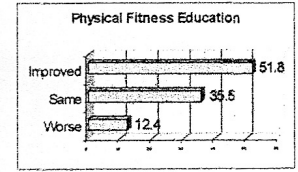
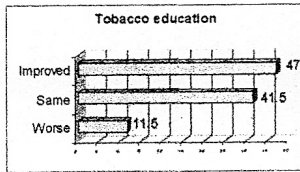
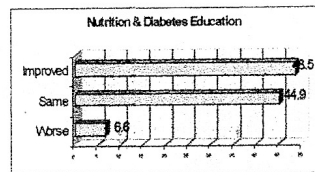
Safety & Substance Abuse



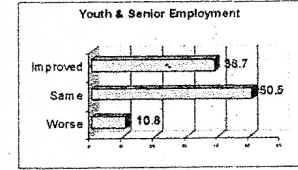
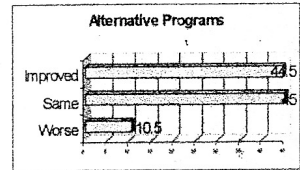
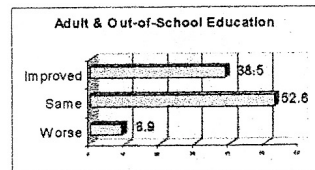
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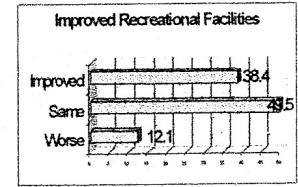
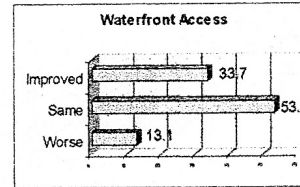
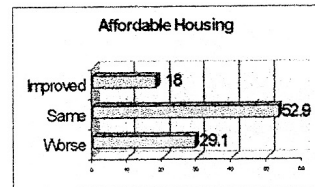
Health Education



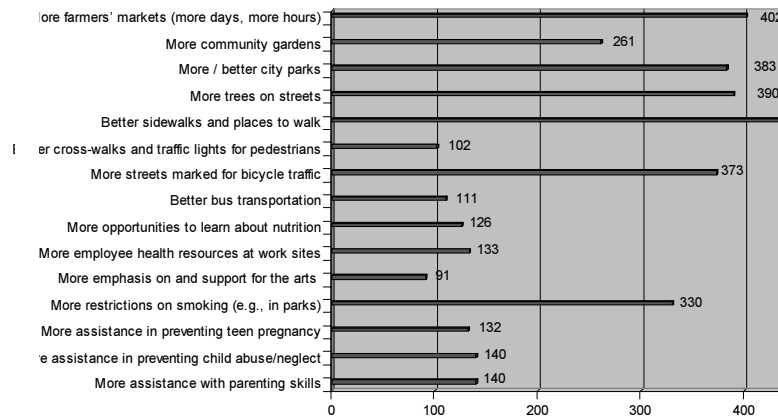
Adult Education, Job Training & Employment



Community Planning & Housing



What would make life in FR healthier?



Note: Charts do not reproduce well in pdf format. For a clearer view, go to the Community Survey Report on the main menu of the Health City website (www.HealthyCityFallRiver.org).



Diman School of Practical Nursing students do twenty laps as part of the Fitness Challenge Warm-up that began in October to prepare Challenge participants.

Fitness Challengers sign up for a third year

The Fitness Challenge is scheduled to kick-off its third season at CD-REC headquarters from 10-2 at 72 Bank St. on January 9, 2010.

"The Challenge puts people through their paces and helps them learn what they'll have to do to get into better shape and lose some unwanted pounds over the coming months," commented fitness instructor Amy Jones.

Sponsored by the Diabetes Association, Inc. (DAI), Children In Balance, Community Development Recreation (CD-REC), the Fall River YMCA and Healthy City Fall River, the event has already signed up over 125 participants, including over fifty nursing students from the Diman School of Practical Nursing and the UMass-Dartmouth College of Nursing, for a Warm-Up session in the fall.

Nursing students will be available in January to work with anyone who wants to work with them to reach their fitness goals.

For more information, contact CD-REC program director Jamison Souza at 508-679-0922, YMCA director Frank Duffy at 508-675-7841, or DAI director Candice Foster at 508-672-5671.



Rehabilitation nurse Dixie Tavares introduces Carolynne and Harvey Schwartz to the other members of the smoking cessation group at the evening session.

Alumni support new cessation group folks

Alumni of the Saint Anne's Hospital Freedom from Smoking group gathered on October 27, 2009, at the Hospital to share experiences with members of the current group that began on October 6th.

Dixie Tavares, R.N., who leads the program, finds that these sessions are as good for the former smokers as they are for the newly-quit. "Former smokers come here to reinforce a decision they made five or ten years earlier that changed their life," notes Tavares. "And those who have just quit a week ago get a lot of confirmation of the importance of the decision they just made," she added.

This program offers eight weekly sessions to guide persons through the process of quitting. The program is guided by the American Lung Association curriculum, which is also offered on-line.

The St. Anne's program is offered several times a year for a nominal registration fee of \$25. Another session is scheduled to start on January 12, 2010. For more information, call 508-674-5600 and ask for Ms. Tavares.

Upcoming Events

January 9, 2010, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Fitness Challenge Kick-off Sign-up and Health Fair, CD-Recreation, 72 Bank Street, FR. Call 508-679-0922 for details or go to www.FallRiverFitnessChallenge.com.

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.

January 14-18
Martin Luther King Days of Service. Celebration, January 18th, 1:00 p.m., 72 Bank Street. Contact Christian McCloskey, 508-679-0922 for details.

January 20, 5:30 p.m.
Fall River Park Advocates, Preserve, protect and plan people-friendly parks and recreational spaces, Government Center cafeteria. Contact Mass In Motion coordinator Julie Kelly at 508-324-2405.

January 25, 2010, 8:00 - 3:30
"Take it to Heart: Nutrition Matters, Preventing and Managing Heart Disease and Stroke", Crowne Plaza, Worcester, MA. \$60. See www.HeartStrokeMA.org for registration.

March 5, 2010, 8:30
Addiction Symposium, Bristol Community College, Jackson Arts Building, free CEUs. Contact Jenna Lagasse at 508-324-2415 for registration and details.

March 18, 2010
Absolutely Incredible Kids Day. Contact Christian McCloskey, 508-679-0922 for details.

Urban parks to be the focus of City advocates



People interested in improving and protecting Fall River's green spaces by forming an Urban Parks Advocates Network in the City met on October 22, 2009, with

Andrea Freeman, Director of the Putnam Conservation Institute of the Trustees of Reservations who introduced the concept of the Urban Parks Advocates Network and answered questions regarding the Network.

The Trustees define parks broadly, including traditional parks, playgrounds, schoolyards, recreational fields, picnic sites, pocket parks, walking and biking trails, community gardens and more.

For more information about the Network, which meets next on Jan. 20th, or to sign-up at any time, contact Mass In Motion coordinator Julianne Kelly at 508-324-2405.



Mass Promise Fellow Annemarie Sharkey starts a discussion about the previous exercise during the training that involved youth from both cities.

FR & NB Youth leaders gather for first training

Over two dozen youth from Fall River and New Bedford get together at the Bank Street location of Community Development Recreation (CD-REC) on November 9, 2009, for an improv-style training with a local group called "Out of the Gutter."

The purpose of the training was to "break the ice" between the youth members from the two cities so they could work together more effectively to create a Youth VOICE group in the entire SouthCoast region of the state.

The first task that the group will undertake is to create a regional youth summit planned for sometime next year.

Students from Fall River's YOUth VOICE (Volunteer Organizations to Increase Community Engagement) were honored for the work that they did to promote a Youth Bill of Rights at the Massachusetts Youth Forum on October 24, 2009, held in Marlboro.

For more information about the project contact Youth CHANCES Task Force co-chairs Christian McCloskey at 508-324-2419, or Jamison Souza at 508-679-0922.



Fitness leader Suzanne Ramos gets children and parents to exercise to the tune of "Y.M.C.A." at the Letouneau School "Farmers' Market" event.

Balance holds "Market" events at 7 of 9 schools

The Fall River Children In Balance (CIB) program that is replicating the Shape Up Somerville childhood obesity prevention project held its seventh "Farmers' Market" event at the Doran Elementary School on November 12, 2009.

CIB project manager Marcia Picard and assistant principal Sandy Soderstrom welcomed dozens of families to participate in the nutrition and fitness program and the chance to take home \$50 in fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods at the end of the night.

Parents and children learned how to cook a healthy dish, participated in twenty minutes of vigorous exercises, and attended a community marketplace with displays by a dozen local agencies and a local farmer selling fresh fruits and vegetables. Similar events will be held at the Fonseca and Spencer Borden schools in the spring. For further information about the project, contact Project Manager Marcia Picard at 508-324-2228.

Urban parks to be the focus of City advocates



Advisor Paul Leite poses another case scenario as youth outreach worker Savonn San listens.

Advisors for the Peaceful Coalition gathered direct care youth workers from the City recently to discuss what they felt works and doesn't work for gang prevention and intervention.

The Peaceful Coalition presentation was the second Fall River Shannon Initiative event that invited direct care youth workers to learn what works and what doesn't work for gang prevention and intervention.

For more information about the group, contact student advisor Paul Leite at 508.675.8100, Ext. 1112.

The Healthy City Fall River CONNECTION is published four times a year by Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc. P.O. Box 1228 Fall River, MA 02722

Healthy City Fall River is a collaboration between the Fall River Health and Human Services Department 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

Supported in part by linkage funding from Saint Anne's Hospital

2020 - 2014 Priority Strategy Areas



Safety and ATOD Control



Recreation & Fitness



Food Supply & Nutrition



Educational & Medical Policies



Built Environment & Advocacy