HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING (HEAL) ACTION TEAM

- HEAL partners are implementing strategies that
  The Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Action Team of the Healthy St. Mary’s Partnership brings together community organizations and residents to coordinate local action around healthy eating, active living, and weight management.
- HEAL partners are implementing strategies that
  - promote healthy eating and active living in our county and
  - Help individuals make healthy eating and active living part of their lifestyles.
- Initiatives include actions to:
  - Increase the distribution of fruits and vegetables to local residents
  - Promote workplace wellness
  - Provide opportunities for healthy eating and exercise in school settings
  - Create a “built environment” that supports active living in communities and neighborhoods and promotes physical activity by the people to live work and play in our County.

WHY HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING ARE IMPORTANT

- Regular physical activity can:
  - improve the health and quality of life of Americans of all ages,
  - lower the risk of multiple conditions including cancer, depression, heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.
- Health can be improved and risk of chronic disease reduced by:
  - Healthy food consumption
  - Achievement and maintenance of healthy body weight
- Maintaining a healthy weight can:
  - prevent 40 percent of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes
  - aid in the control of these conditions if they develop

HEAL TEAM WORK TO PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING

- Healthy Food Drive Tool Kit
  - The HEAL team has created tools, kits, and webpages with information that local businesses, organizations, and community members can use to host a healthy food drive to benefit County residents for whom healthy options may be unaffordable.
  - Visit http://healthystmarys.com/healthfood-drive/ for tips on hosting a drive that brings healthy food donations to people in need.
- HEAL Team Healthy Food Drives
  - advertise and arrange for collection at local events
  - donate food to local food pantries.
- Increase the amount and types of healthy foods that local food pantries can distribute
  - Outreach to farm market vendors for donation of seconds and unsold produce identified as adequate refrigeration as a need before pantries can accept produce in quantity
  - Working to initiate a project to make refrigeration available for perishable food items.
- Promoting development of Community Gardens
  - HEAL team successfully advocated for including development of community gardening as an action in the Lexington Park Development District Master Plan
  - A Community Gardening discussion was hosted by the HEAL Team at the 2016 HSMP annual Meeting
  - Team members have begun work with partners, including the Community Development Corporation and County Parks staff, to fund, design, and build a community garden within an ART PARK proposed for Lancaster Park in Lexington Park.

HEAL TEAM WORK TO PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

- The “More To Explore” Passport Program:
  - Encourages all community members to get outside and explore up to 26 sites including local parks, historic sites, water trails, the town of Leonardtown and the farmers’ markets that St. Mary’s County has to offer.
  - Provided through a partnership with the St. Mary’s County Libraries, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the HEAL Team.
  - Pick up your passport at any St. Mary’s County library or go to the Library website to sign up.
  - Complete the tasks online or turn in the passport for a prize.
  - To support the program, participants are encouraged to download and use the dealsnap app.

- Partnership with the Healthiest Maryland Business Initiative: A campaign that engages leaders to support a Healthy Maryland.
  - Business leaders who join the initiative are taking a step towards creating an environment that supports healthy employees, a key driver of a business’ fiscal health.
  - HEAL Team provides ongoing outreach to promote participation in the initiative via the HSMP website, HEAL meetings with the St. Mary’s County Department of Economic Development, and personal contact with individual businesses.
  - The Worksite Wellness discussion at the 2017 HSMP annual Meeting was hosted by the HEAL Team.
  - Outreach to County school officials. Team advocacy for retaining and enhancing options for physical activity for students during the school day.

HEAL TEAM WORK TO IMPROVE OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Community Walking Maps:
  - Walking maps have been created for and will be made available to the community on the Healthy St. Mary’s Partnership website
- Safe Bike Routes:
  - HEAL Team Members are working with local bicycle groups and the Department of Public Works and Transportation to map, provide signs, and improve safety for on-road bike routes in the County.
- Complete Streets
  - Advocacy is underway for adopting a Complete Streets policy that works for both the rural and planned growth areas in the County.

JOIN THE TEAM

Want to become part of the HEAL Team?
Visit http://healthystmarys.com/membership/
Attend a Meeting:
4th Wednesday of each month at 1pm; Health Connections, MedStar St. Mary’s Hospital

HEALTHY EATING Active Living (HEAL) Team

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