



**Mass
in Motion**

Better health. It's your move. ©

Communications

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Where We Started

- Small Group in January 2009
- CTG Expansion
- Development of Style Guide

Mass In Motion: Stories from the Field

Mass In Motion: Stories from the Field

Opening the Doors of Springfield Gyms for Safe Areas to be Active

In Springfield, there's a lack of places to be physically active. But that's not the only problem, according to Nicole Bourdon: "The even bigger issue is the lack of safe places for people to be active." As Springfield's Mass in Motion Coordinator, Nicole is working alongside many community partners and team members to open school gyms as a safe place for kids and adults to be active.

And the need for a safe place to be active is clear: Springfield has one of the highest obesity rates in Massachusetts. Nicole and her team set out to help Springfield get in shape, starting with the city's youth.

The first step Mass in Motion Springfield took was to map neighborhoods that lacked safe areas for physical activity. Not surprisingly, the neighborhoods lacking safe play areas also had the highest rates of obesity in the city.

Drawing on the existing relationship between the Parks Department and Springfield schools, Mass in Motion Springfield strengthened the partnership by bringing on a City Councilor

and the Springfield Youth Violence Task Force. Together they reviewed Mass in Motion's neighborhood maps, and chose two schools in neighborhoods in need. A member of the Springfield Wellness Leadership Council (formed by Mass in Motion) secured funding from Health New England Insurance. This funding was used to hire four staff members to help run a 3-month evening basketball program for kids.

The Parks Department used a press release and the city's website to promote the program. However, the biggest marketing effort came from the kids themselves. As Paula Thayer, Assistant Director of Springfield Recreation, promised: "if you leave the lights on, the kids will come." Sure enough the gyms were at capacity almost every night.

The open gyms were a hit from the start. Despite very little marketing, a total of almost 100 Springfield kids showed up to play over the three months, with an average of 26 kids between the ages of 5 and 17 participating each night. Many kids were surveyed on their experience:



School gyms with evenings hours give youth a safe place to be active.

- » Over half felt the gyms helped them stay out of trouble at school and in their neighborhood.
- » Almost two thirds said if they were not at open gym they would be watching TV or playing video/computer games.
- » Nearly everyone said they felt they were safe at the evening gyms.

Open gyms proved to be a great way to capitalize on existing resources in the community as well as an effective way to provide a safe place for kids to be active. Nicole and her team are already gearing up for this coming winter, and look forward to securing funds to open more gyms for the kids and adults of Springfield.

Contact: Mass in Motion Coordinator Nicole Bourdon > NBourdon@springfieldcityhall.com

Mass in Motion is generously supported by: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, the Boston Foundation, the Harvard Pilgrim Health Foundation, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation, and the Tufts Health Plan Foundation.

Curbs and Sidewalks

No curbs, broken patches of concrete and asphalt, and sidewalks that had not been re-paved in years.



Get Fit Gloucester! and Community Development staff came up with solutions for these much-needed sidewalk improvements, which included new concrete sidewalks, widened sidewalks, curb repairs, e-paving, and new ramps that met ADA regulations.



A Gloucester sidewalk before and after street improvements.

Staff also worked with Mass-Highway contractors to repair sidewalks and install bicycler-friendly storm drains. Mr. Winslow estimated the costs of all the recommended repairs to be substantially more than the \$50,000 available. With generous funding from DPW Director Hale, several sidewalks were repaired without slipping into the small amount allotted for other repairs. Community Development and DPW staff worked to trim other recommendations and prioritize so that the cost could be cut down to \$50,000 if necessary.

\$700,000 bid package issued by DPW. When the City received bids for the combined road and sidewalk project, the winning bid came in at \$570,000, allowing the City to fund all the final recommended sidewalk improvements.

DPW took on even more downtown sidewalk improvements during utility work, including a new sidewalk that closed a key gap between Downtown Gloucester and the Riverdale neighborhood. City residents have been enthusiastic about the number of sidewalk improvements the City made.

Due to the close collaboration between Get Fit Gloucester!, the Community Development Department, and the DPW, the sidewalk repairs were included in a

DPW Winslow > 978-281-9781 > swinslow@gloucester-ma.gov

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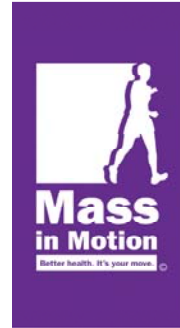
- “...a Mass in Motion Initiative sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health”
- “Mass in Motion is funded by a public-private partnership coordinated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.”
- “Funded (in part) by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.”

Where We Are Now

- Brand Identity
 - Customization
 - Co-Branding Mass in Motion logo
 - Restaurant decals
 - Corner store decals

State Initiative- Local Spin

Better Health



Better Holyoke



Decals



Where We Are Now

- Graphic Design TA and support
 - Other Creative
 - Posters
 - Healthy Event and Meeting Guide

www.maclearinghouse.com

Where We're Going

- Continued support and guidance
- Lani = Main communications contact
 - Graphic design
 - Material development
 - Customization
 - Attribution
- Development of key messages, specific target audiences
- MORE TA Contract

Contact Info

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