



South County Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds
14 Woodruff Avenue, Suite 9 • (401) 788-2347 • bodiesminds.org

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For more information: Susan Orban, (401) 626-7529

New website offers fun, engaging and local health and mental wellness ideas and resources

Designed for South County parents and their children

Having a tough time getting your kid away from his PlayStation? Worried that your child will never, ever eat a vegetable? Wondering if your quiet child might be experiencing emotional issues?

If you live in South County, you have a brand new resource...actually lots of them. South County Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds has just announced an exciting new website – bodiesminds.org – which answers all the questions above, and many other health and mental wellness questions you have, too.

“We’ve collected powerful information that people can use in their everyday lives,” reported Susan Orban, who directs South County Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds. “We adapted much of the content for the web because many of the parents, caregivers, and teens use it as a key information source.”

Whenever possible, the information is notably South County-based, with lists of local hiking trails, breastfeeding advice, libraries that offer children’s reading hours, and farmers markets that accept WIC payments.

Orban explained that the website’s basic content is divided into four topics, with engaging quizzes, short pieces, infographics, and a calendar, too. The four categories are:

- **Eat Right, Eat Smart**, everything a parent could want to know about good food for his or her children, including recipes from Governor Raimondo, directions to local farmers markets, links to the best kids cooking websites, and information about area cooking classes,
- **Get Your Body Moving**, fun and engaging advice to get kids (and parents) off the sofa and away from the screen onto their feet, swimsuits, and bicycles.
- **Mental Wellness** reassures South County parents with quizzes, resources, and activities so they can create a nurturing, empowering environment for their young one
- **Your Thriving Child** presents the best of what we know in child development, from where to get advice on breastfeeding in South County to remarkably easy ways to entertain their baby.

Orban noted that the site also includes a calendar of local events.

“Everything will be updated regularly; we hope South County residents will bookmark bodiesminds.org,” Orban added.

Website part of a bigger picture of “moving the needle” on public health in South County

The website is a major component but just one piece of South County Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds, Orban explained.

“Our goal is to foster healthier lifestyles among all the residents of South County. We’re starting with childhood obesity and mental health, from lots of angles.” The organization is the designated HEZ (Health Equity Zone) for the region.

“We’re partners in several projects that dig deep,” Orban continued. She referred specifically to:

- 5-2-1-0: an effort in several parts of the country to increase children’s activity and good eating
- Reach Out and Read, also national, but supporting a local effort to get books to local underserved health centers and pediatric practices
- Food Access: making farmers markets affordable and accessible to low-income families
- Youth Mental Health First Aid: training people who work with youth – from educators to scout leaders – how to identify early warning signs of mental health issues and provide immediate response
- Project LAUNCH: working with families of children 0-8 to ensure the best possible start of their lives
- ParkRx: working with physicians to “prescribe” hikes and healthy activity for their young patients who need it.

“We have plenty we can do to ensure the health of South County residents,” Orban admitted with a smile.

Couldn’t do it without a strong collaboration of agencies and advocates

Orban noted that South County Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds is unique in that everyone is welcome around the table.

“Our steering committee represents nearly 20 different entities, from health agencies to the State House to the schools. Our individual programs represent as many more. The only way we can make a difference in the health of South County person by person is with this type of collaborative commitment to the same goal.”

“I am confident that five years from now we’ll have a much healthier South County as a result,” she concluded.

South County Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds receives primary funding from the Department of Health through federal grants. South County Health also provides generous support and serves as the backbone organization.

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