



Free Health and Wellness Resource Fair Coming to the Riverbend

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - River Church will host a Health and Wellness Fair for Riverbend community members who want to learn more about local resources and services.

From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 20, 2024, attendees can visit with different organizations in the community and learn about the support they offer. The fair will be held at River Church, located at 3401 Fosterburg Road in Alton.

“It’s an easy way to go and just get so many resources without having to make an appointment and make it to the appointment and maybe pay for the appointment,” said Renee Strowmatt. “I think overall, all of us involved have such a heart for helping people get connected, and we want them to know that there’s great resources out there. We don’t want anyone to feel like they don’t have access to care, access to a particular resource.”

Strowmatt, who collaborated with Kathy Alford to organize the first Health and Wellness Fair, explained that both women work at Alton Memorial Hospital. They wanted to create a space for local companies and organizations to share their services with community members.

Alford said that they’re looking for vendors to promote “anything mental health, substance use, anything in the area that we have relied on in the past for different patients that we have worked with.” They currently have 18 vendors signed up and hope to bring in more. The fair is completely free for both vendors and attendees.

In addition to Strowmatt and Alford, who work in the obstetrics department at Alton Memorial, other vendors include doulas, lactation consultants, dentists and more. Fluoride varnish will be available for kids, and one company will be providing lead testing. From 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., car seat safety checks will be offered. There will be Narcan and other supplies available for free. [Riverbend Head Start](#), [Amare](#) and other organizations will be present.

“Wouldn’t it be great to put it out there where people could come to one place and learn about all the different resources that we have right here in our own community?” Strowmatt said. “It’s really just opened our eyes to see where the needs are in our community.”

Alford and Strowmatt encourage everyone who wants to attend the fair to register so that they can provide a sack lunch for all attendees. The food and space have been donated by River Church.

For more information about the fair and how to register as a vendor or an attendee, email Strowmatt at renee.strowmatt@bjc.org.

“If any companies out there or anyone who specifically wants to make a difference in our community,” Strowmatt added. “Right now we have a great list of people to come and participate, but we want people who are coming to say, ‘This is a service we offer.’”

If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health issues or substance use, help is available. Please reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 988 or

visit their website for support and resources. Your well-being matters, and there is always someone ready to listen and provide the help you need.