**EBI 2 Description: Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More**

### *Description*

The Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More Program (Faithful Families) promotes healthy eating and physical activity in communities of faith.

Resources for the program include a 9-session Faithful Families curriculum and the Planning Guide for Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More (Planning Guide).

The Faithful Families curriculum is co-taught by nutrition and physical activity educators and trained lay leaders from faith communities in small group sessions. Lay Leaders bring the spiritual elements into each session, through discussion questions and "Thinking it Through" prompts in each lesson.

The Faithful Families curriculum was updated in 2016 to include updated nutrition information, social media connections, recipe videos for each lesson, a guide to carrying out family-based classes, and tips on incorporating fresh, local foods through farmers’ market tours. The curriculum includes everything you need to implement the program, including ready-to-use PowerPoint slides and scripts for the nine-session series, a Lay Leader Training Guide and evaluation tools. Additionally, the kit includes Move More activities, guides to carrying out family-based classes and farmers’ market tours, recipes for each lesson, recipe videos for each lesson, and faith-based discussion questions. The Planning Guide assists faith leaders in adopting policy and environmental change for their faith community and establishing health committees.

Faithful Families has been accepted as a ["Practice-Tested Intervention"](http://www.centertrt.org/?p=intervention&id=1090) by the Center of Excellence for Training and Research Translation (Center TRT) at UNC Chapel Hill. Center TRT, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Nutrition and Physical Activity Program to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases, has developed a process for reviewing, translating and disseminating interventions. This process is applied to obesity prevention interventions that have been tested through research studies or have been developed and evaluated in practice. Interventions are recommended by expert reviewers and CDC for dissemination. Faithful Families is the first faith-based intervention to achieve this status.

***Faithful Families* is delivered at 4 levels of the socio-ecological model:**

1. **Individual level:** The Faithful Families program coordinator and faith lay leaders work with each faith community to offer handouts and posters. In addition, individuals complete the Member Health Assessments and are recruited to participate in the nutrition/physical activity education series.

2. **Interpersonal (family) level:** Nutrition/physical activity educators, hired through NC Cooperative Extension, co-deliver with faith community lay leaders the series of nine nutrition, food safety and food resource management lessons. Through dialogue and goal setting, individuals and families in the classes are encouraged to change their risk behaviors and set goals for healthy eating and daily physical activity.

3. **Organizational:** Each faith community conducts a Faith Community Health Assessment to determine the most relevant and pressing policy and environmental changes needed. Additionally, *FFESMM* offers a comprehensive Eating Smart and Moving More Planning Guide for Faith Communities to enhance access to resources and supplement technical assistance for each faith community. Further, as requested, the Faithful Families program coordinator provides faith communities with sample newsletter ideas, bulletin inserts, and sermon/speaking topics to reinforce healthy behavior messages in the faith community.

4. **Community:** Faithful Families staff connect each faith community with existing county level resources, including programs offered through county Cooperative Extension offices and local public health departments. Additionally, faith communities are encouraged to enact policy and environmental changes that promote healthy eating and physical activity for the community at large. They are encouraged to think beyond the walls of the organization itself as they work for sustainable changes to promote healthy behaviors.

## Intended Audience

## Faith communities with limited-resource members

## Suitable Settings

Faith communities

## Required Resources/Core Components

## Curriculum

## Nutrition/physical activity educator

## Faith communities

## Lay health leaders

## Health assessments

## Food and supplies

## Sessions

## Environmental and policy sessions and changes

***Key Findings***   
The Faithful Families Leadership Team has evaluated both processes and outcomes of the intervention. Process evaluation includes tracking attendance at all educational sessions and conducting focus groups with program participants and faith community leaders. Two surveys are administered at the beginning and end of each program year to assess intervention effects on individuals, environments, and policies.

In a pilot program of the intervention conducted in Harnett County, four faith communities completed the intervention and 59 of their members attended group sessions. A pre- and post-intervention survey of those who attended group sessions found improvements in dietary intake, dietary behaviors and physical activity. Of the 59 graduates from the Faithful Families sessions, 43% increased fruit consumption; 47% increased vegetable consumption; and 35% increased the amount of their physical activity.

As of July 2010, 24 of the 35 (68.6%) faith communities participating in the Faithful Families intervention across four counties had completed all elements of the program. All participating communities completed a Faith Community Health Assessment at both the start and end of the intervention year. Data collected using the assessment tool documented the number and type of new environment and policy changes implemented by each faith community. The results included the implementation of 14 Eat Smart policies, nine Move More policies, and five environmental change policies. Twenty-three of the 24 faith communities have enacted multiple policies.

<http://www.faithfulfamiliesesmm.org/resources.html>