

What Is Faithful Families?

Faithful Families Thriving Communities (Faithful Families) is used in communities of faith across the country to promote health for individuals, families, and communities. Faithful Families is open to all religious traditions and engages religious communities across the socio-ecological model, through direct education, environmental supports, and community-wide efforts aimed at chronic disease prevention.

OUR VISION

Faithful Families believes that communities of faith are important health advocates, particularly in communities affected by health disparities or lacking access to crucial resources. We empower faith communities to become changemakers to help their communities thrive—physically, mentally, and spiritually.



Improving Health

Faithful Families recognizes that faith communities play a special role as they support their community's health and work to decrease health disparities. They offer unique resources and perspectives to connect a community's faith or religious traditions with messages about long-term health and chronic disease prevention. Faithful Families helps faith community members develop new skills and set goals for healthy eating and physical activity and encourages them to make key connections with clinical services for chronic disease prevention and management. These changes can have long term impacts on families and communities and decrease the risk for developing chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

North Carolina Flagship Program

Faithful Families was developed and first implemented in North Carolina, where it continues to build statewide capacity while serving as the center for the national program.

In 2019, over **370** individuals across North Carolina participated in Faithful Families classes. Of those who reported both entry and exit forms:

75%
OF PARTICIPANTS

IMPROVED IN AT LEAST ONE DIETARY INDICATOR (i.e., eating fruits, vegetables, drinking fewer sugary drinks, and cooking dinner at home).

60%
OF PARTICIPANTS

IMPROVED FOOD SAFETY PRACTICES

59%
OF PARTICIPANTS

IMPROVED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEHAVIORS



Policy, Systems, and Environmental Changes

In 2019 the Faithful Families team spent time capturing the many ways faith communities and local partners have worked together to implement policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes to improve health in the communities they serve. The team published some of these findings in the preeminent public health journal, the *American Journal of Public Health*. In the article, titled, "Faithful Families, Thriving Communities: Bridging Faith and Health Through a State-Level Partnership," Dr. Annie Hardison-Moody and Julia Yao shared best practices and lessons learned through the 10+ year implementation of the program, a collaboration between NC State Extension and the NC Division of Public Health. Additionally, Dr. Hardison-Moody and Lorelei Jones worked with a team of national implementing partners to publish results from a multi-state implementation of Faithful Families, focusing on successes and lessons learned from PSE changes. The article, titled, "Evaluation of a Policy, Systems, and Environmental-Focused Faith-Based Health Promotion Program" is available from the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*.

LEARN MORE.

For more information visit FaithfulFamilies.com

National Implementing Partners

In 2018, Faithful Families developed a new model for engaging our national partners in the work of the program. National Implementing Partners (Partners) are now recognized on our website for the work that they do to promote Faithful Families in their states. We currently have over 20 national implementing partners across the United States. Faithful Families provides our Implementing Partners with training, curricula and instructional materials, evaluation tools, and national leadership support while the Partners provide hands-on engagement, local resources, and relationship building opportunities to initiate and sustain health initiatives in their respective communities.

Eight of our Partners completed the 2019 Partnership Survey. It is clear they are doing substantial work to support chronic disease prevention and health promotion in the faith communities they serve. Across the country:

26

FAITH COMMUNITIES
were reached through
Faithful Families programming

780

INDIVIDUALS
were reached through
Faithful Families classes

70

PSE CHANGES
were implemented, to improve
healthy eating, physical activity,
and clinical connections

2,121

INDIVIDUALS
were reached
through PSE changes
implemented

Partnership and Training

This year, the team welcomed 12 new organizations from 9 states across the United States to our National Implementing Partners network. In early January, we held the Faithful Families 2020 National Training for states interested in implementing the program in their respective communities. Participants represented 6 different states, including 2 new Partners.

Faithful Families also continues to grow across North Carolina. In September we held the Faithful Families 2019 North Carolina Training for local health department and Cooperative Extension staff interested in implementing Faithful Families in their respective counties. Our team trained 55 facilitators from 23 teams representing 33 counties to implement the program.