

Faithful Families Thriving Communities

2020 Annual Report

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 and changes to support long-term health and chronic disease prevention. 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.

Despite COVID-19, in 2020, 23 faith communities participated in Faithful Families. 132 individuals across North Carolina participated in Faithful Families classes. Of those who reported both entry and exit forms (n=60).

- 55% now use nutrition labels to select foods
- 43% of participants improved physical activity behaviors

#WalkwithFF2020 Virtual Walking Challenge

Faithful Families Thriving Communities developed a Virtual Walking Challenge, which ran for four weeks in summer 2020. The challenge helped people stay connected and be physically active while staying socially distanced. Participants reported that the challenge helped them to walk more and to continue with their physical activity after the challenge ended. Across the country, 22 teams participated in the challenge and a total of 322 people participated! Together, teams and individuals walked a total of 491,220 minutes.

At the end of the challenge, the Faithful Families team distributed a survey to evaluate impacts:

- 93% of respondents (76 of 82) would like to see similar challenges in the future.
- 85% of respondents (70 of 82) reported that they have increased their physical activity through walking as a result of this challenge.
- 92% of respondents (75 of 82) reported that participation in the challenge has encouraged them to continue walking as a form of physical activity after the challenge ends.

As part of the evaluation, participants reported that they enjoyed the feeling of camaraderie as they encouraged and supported each other to walk more. Others commented about taking time out for themselves to improve mental health. Many enjoyed the increase in physical activity as a result of walking more. To read the full evaluation report, view or download all challenge materials, as well as success stories from challenge participants and award winners, visit FaithfulFamilies.com.

The 2020 Faithful Families Virtual Summit: Engagement and Equity: Faith and Health Partnerships for Thriving Communities

The Faithful Families team hosted a virtual Summit, focused on health equity. Each day of the five day summit (March 30 – April 3, 2020), 261 registrants received an email with links to interactive daily webinars, videos and podcast recordings developed by our team, resources that they can share or use related to the daily topic, and a personal challenge to complete each day. Between 70-100 participants logged in for each daily webinar, and we awarded our first ever [Faithful Families awards](#) to a North Carolina and national program. Daily newsletters and all materials are archived on our [website](#).

Partnership and Training

As a result of COVID-19, the team created an all online national partnership training, which is offered through the NC State Reporter system using Moodle. 9 new partners from six states across the US joined the national network in 2020 and 62 individuals were trained in the program in 2020. In North Carolina, Faithful Families is being implemented by FCS Agents, EFNEP educators, Steps to Health nutrition educators, and health department staff. Faithful Families continues to grow across NC. Due to COVID-19, our team created an all online training for North Carolina facilitators, as well as regular (quarterly) technical assistance calls. In 2020 our team trained 37 facilitators from 36 counties to implement the program.

In 2020, our team developed a comprehensive guide to carrying out virtual programming due to COVID-19. We held training sessions and worked collaboratively with agents and EFNEP educators to create short videos, resources, and a website to house virtual training materials.

Learn More

For more information visit FaithfulFamilies.com

