

Faithful Families Thriving Communities

2022 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 through a strengthened partnership with Steps to Health, NC State University's SNAP-Ed program. Through this partnership, Faithful Families prioritizes work with NC communities that lack access to resources to support health.

In North Carolina (NC), Faithful Families is being implemented by Family and Consumer Science (FCS) Agents, EFNEP educators, Steps to Health nutrition educators, and health department staff. In 2021, Faithful Families established a strengthened partnership with Steps to Health with the objective of prioritizing programming and support; in 2022, we have grown this partnership, and worked to bring in partners like the Institute for Emerging Issues Rural Churches initiative, NC Council of Churches, Wake Forest FaithHealth, and Resourceful Communities. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, our team continued to support training for NC facilitators through our online training via Moodle, as well as regular webinars, social media, and newsletters. In 2022, 37 NC facilitators accessed the online training via Moodle.

We sent a yearly survey to all NC facilitators. Given the ongoing COVID pandemic, Faithful Families implementation has been down in 2022; however, we have several new facilitators signed on for 2023 implementation, and we will be working to train these facilitators to implement the program this year. Here are results from NC surveys:

- 2 facilitators completed the survey
- 4 faith communities were impacted by their work in 2022

- 84 individuals participated in Faithful Families programming in 2022

Partnership and Training

In 2021, Faithful Families scaled back our National Partnership model, making it easier for organizations outside North Carolina to access both training and curriculum materials. Online training continues to be available to organizations outside NC through the NC State Reporter system and Moodle and digital copies of curriculum materials are available for purchase online through an eCommerce platform facilitated through NC State Office of Information Technology. While the formal partnership model has been discontinued, we continue to support facilitators and organizations outside NC with ongoing technical assistance and support through webinars and newsletters and connection to resources that can supplement programming. 7 new facilitators from three states completed the online training in 2022.

Seven national facilitators completed a survey about their Faithful Families programming in 2022, reporting the following outcomes:

- 12 faith communities were impacted by their work in 2022
- 343 individuals participated in Faithful Families programming in 2022

The Faithful Families team will continue to enhance virtual and hybrid program guidance and resources (including focus on enhancing the discussion-based curriculum guidance and incorporating mental health concepts and resources) to support faith communities across the U.S., as we work to meet community needs during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond as we begin to address the long-term impacts of COVID. We will be piloting a new discussion based version of our curriculum, which incorporates mental health with healthy eating and physical activity, in the summer of 2023.

Learn More

For more information visit FaithfulFamilies.com

