Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More (Faithful Families)

North Carolina Division of Public Health and Extension at NC State University

Overview

Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More (Faithful Families) is a direct education and PSE change intervention that focuses on healthy environmental and policy changes within faith communities. It also promotes healthy eating habits and increased physical activity through a series of group nutrition/physical activity education sessions. Faithful Families can be used with any faith tradition. Trained lay leaders from individual faith communities are paired with nutrition/physical activity educators to co-teach lessons and deliver the program. **Target Behavior:** Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Food Insecurity/Food Assistance  
**Intervention Type:** Direct Education, PSE Change

Intervention Reach and Adoption

Faithful Families has worked predominantly with low-income African-American faith communities, designated by percentage of their members who are eligible for Medicaid, eligible for free or reduced school lunches and/or are at 200% of the federal poverty level. The program has also demonstrated success in non-African-American faith communities. This focus allows faith communities to link community members to education and resources, empowering them to eat healthier, increase their physical activity and become advocates for positive policy and environmental changes within their communities. **Setting:** Faith-based community  
**Target Audience:** Parents/Mothers/Fathers, Adults, Older Adults  
**Race/Ethnicity:** All
Intervention Components

The main components of Faithful Families include the following:
- Recruiting and training a nutrition/PA educator
- Recruiting faith communities
- Recruiting and training lay leaders from each faith community involved in the program
- Recruiting faith community members to participate in nutrition/PA sessions
- Administering environmental and policy assessments
- Committing to environmental and policy change (the faith community should commit to at least one environmental change (e.g. posting a map of the parking lot or available trails that details distance) and one policy change (e.g. requiring that fruit be a dessert option) during the first program year
- Implementing the Faithful Families curriculum the Faithful Families Planning Guide.

Intervention Materials

Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More has a curriculum, which nutrition/PA educators and lay leaders use while teaching the nine nutrition, food safety and food resource management lessons. The topics for the lessons are as follows:
- Plan: Know What’s for Dinner
- Shop: Get the Best for Less
- Shop for Value, Check the Facts
- Fix it Fast, Eat at Home
- Choosing More Fruits and Vegetables
- Fix it Safe
- Making Smart Drink Choices
- Choosing to Move More Throughout the Day
- Making the Connection

Faithful Families also has a full planning guide that makes adoption by others both feasible and straightforward. It contains draft policy and environmental change templates that a faith community can present to its members for adoption and sample documents to publicize once the changes are implemented. The Planning Guide also includes information on how to establish a health committee within a faith community. The curriculum and guide are available at http://www.faithfulfamiliesesmm.org/started.html. While the guide is free, there is a cost associated with the curriculum.

Intervention Costs

Cost information coming soon.
Evidence Summary

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 FFESMM 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 FFESMM 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. Classification: Practice-tested

Evaluation Indicators

Based on the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, the following outcome indicators can be used to evaluate intervention progress and success.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readiness and Capacity – Short Term (ST)</th>
<th>Changes – Medium Term (MT)</th>
<th>Effectiveness and Maintenance – Long Term (LT)</th>
<th>Population Results (R)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>MT1, MT3</td>
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<td>Environmental Settings</td>
<td>MT5, MT6</td>
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<td>Sectors of Influence</td>
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Evaluation Materials

Center TRT developed an evaluation logic model and evaluation plan for Faithful Families. The logic model is intended to guide the evaluation process (as opposed to the planning process). The evaluation plan focuses on the implementation and effectiveness of Faithful Families in changing faith community policies and environments to support healthy eating and physical activity. The evaluation addresses the reach, adoption, implementation and effectiveness of Faithful Families in changing faith community environments to prevent obesity. The evaluation is a pre-post design with no comparison group. The evaluation plan provides guidance on evaluation questions and types and sources of data for both process and outcome evaluation. The Faithful Families Logic Model and Evaluation Plan can be found at on the Center TRT website:

http://www.centertrt.org/?a=intervention&id=1090&section=10
Evaluation materials for the program can be found here: http://www.faithfulfamiliesesmm.org/resources.html.

Additional Information

**Website:** The Faithful Families website (http://www.faithfulfamiliesesmm.org/) includes information about getting the program started, a blog, resources, recognition and publications on the program. **Contact Person:** Dr. Annie Hardison-Moody Department of Agricultural and Human Sciences North Carolina State University Phone: (919) 515-8478 Email: amhardis@ncsu.edu