

WeTHRIVE! FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE OVERVIEW



Engaging Faith in Health and Wellness

Wellness requires a holistic approach, reaching people in every stage of life—where they live, work, learn, worship, and play. Faith-based organizations play an important role in the community and often shape the way people live. Healthy environments set the foundation for faith-based organizations to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of its congregation.

The Faith Community's Role in Health and Wellness

Faith-based organizations have values and unique assets not found in many other groups, such as:

- Commitment to caring for ourselves as part of creation and as a way of honoring the Divine.
- Commitment to caring for our neighbors and for bringing justice to the world. Health inequities are a moral issue. People of faith can shift that balance within congregations and in the community.
- Strong ties to the community, history of community service, relationships with disadvantaged, and advocating to help others, especially those in highest need.
- Strength and support that can inspire and sustain healthy change.
- Placing a high value on healthy relationships that have positive effects on health risk behaviors and health outcomes.

Source: Modified from Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon Congregational Wellness Project.

WeTHRIVE! Faith-Based Initiative Goal

To improve health, safety, and well-being for all community members through engagement, coordination, and collaboration of faith and community partners and resources.

What Your Faith-Based Organization Can Do

- **Show Support for the Initiative**
Adopting the faith-based wellness resolution shows a commitment to supporting health, safety, and well-being in the community.
- **Develop a WeTHRIVE! Team**
The faith-based WeTHRIVE! (wellness) team brings congregants, faith leaders, and community members together to work on strategies that impact health and safety.
- **Complete Faith-Based Assessment**
A review of policies and programs within the faith-based organization that impact the health, safety, and well-being will help the WeTHRIVE! team talk about the strengths, as well as areas for improvement.
- **Develop an Action Plan**
Creating an action plan provides a blueprint for how the faith-based organization will work towards the creation of a healthy, safe environment where all congregants can thrive.

Strategies to Improve Health, Safety, and Well-being

- Family and community engagement
- Linkage to services for at-risk community members
- Healthy food options and opportunities to be active
- Tobacco-free and idle-free properties
- Hands-on learning opportunities (e.g. community gardening, cooking classes, composting classes)
- Recycling or composting programs
- Host General Education (GED) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and/or tutoring
- Youth asset development
- Open facilities for community health and safety programs



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