

INCREASING CAPACITY OF FAITH COMMUNITIES TO PROMOTE HEALTH

Live Healthy in Faith tools, resources, and training on healthy eating and physical activity

Public Health Problem

- Almost two-thirds of Georgia adults are overweight or obese.
- Faith is a fundamental influence in many Georgian's lives.
- Faith communities provide social support, community leadership, and reinforcement that can help members make lifestyle changes to achieve and maintain a healthy weight as well as help prevent the development of chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.

Program

- The faith-based workgroup of the Take Charge of Your Health Georgia Task Force developed the Live Healthy in Faith tool kit to assist faith communities in implementing healthy eating and physical activity strategies to decrease the burden of overweight and obesity.
- The tool kit describes the relationship between faith, health and wellbeing and provides obesity prevention strategies for large and small faith communities of all religious affiliations.
- Materials in the tool kit describe the process for establishing a church health committee, provide instructions for doing health assessments, and describe health promotion strategies.
- Tools and resources allow for variability in the user's interest and abilities. Suggestions related to monthly health observances and easily-applied evaluation methods are provided. The tool kit is available at: <http://www.district4health.org/pdf/faithbased%20toolkit.pdf>
- Two state-wide trainings have been conducted and seven regional trainings have been offered.

Impact

- Development and distribution of the tool kit helps the Division of Public Health reach several intermediate objectives of the Georgia Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan - to increase the number of programs and the capacity of faith-based organizations to implement and sustain initiatives which promote awareness and skills related to healthy eating and physical activity.
- Tool kit users say, "The toolkit helped us to get the buy in we needed from leadership to expand our wellness outreach efforts" and "We LOVE your Live Healthy in Faith resource guide."

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