



***Working Towards a Healthy D.C.:  
Wellness Guidance for the Faith Community***

Advocates for Better Children's Diets  
with support from  
D.C. Department of Health  
2012



Dear Friend in the D.C. Faith Community,

As part of a two year District of Columbia (D.C.) Department of Health funded initiative to bring wellness to the faith community, we have been collaborating on ways to inspire D.C. residents to eat healthy foods and get physically active. Advocates for Better Children's Diets (ABCD) started by checking in with a diverse group of religious organizations throughout D.C. to find out what they were doing to encourage healthy lifestyles and where they might need some assistance in the fall of 2011. This guidance document, *Working towards a Healthy D.C.: Wellness Guidance for the Faith Community* emerges from those responses and discussions.

The high prevalence of overweight and obesity in the District of Columbia raises major concerns about: health, particularly risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and stroke; economic; and psychosocial well-being for its citizens and their future. Even life expectancy is compromised as weight increases. More residents of D.C. die each year from the complications of obesity-related chronic diseases than from AIDS, cancer, and homicide combined. In D.C., five of the top ten causes of death are directly related to diet, physical activity, and weight status, including heart disease, cancer, hypertension, diabetes, and cerebrovascular disease. Over half (55 percent) of all adults in D.C. are overweight or obese, and over one-third (35 percent) of children in D.C. are at-risk-of overweight or overweight.

The good news is if we all work together we can change this situation. It will take support, knowledge, the right surroundings, and the right mind set to eat right and be active. Since changing what we do is not easy, we want to help our congregations tackle the areas where they will see success first. By changing what we serve in our places of worship, planting a garden, offering more opportunities to be physically active, and even, providing inspiration from the pulpit, we can reinforce the positive changes folks are trying to make.

This guidance document provides advice on getting started and creating a culture of wellness that will lead to healthy eating and physical activity, and ultimately avoid disease among D.C. residents. It also identifies numerous sources for additional information and possible funding.

Join us in starting the journey to better health.

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## **Section 1: Setting the Stage for Success**

### ***Approach to Spirit, Mind, and Body***

There are multiple dimensions to health and well-being. The body, mind and spirit are connected. The health of any one of these elements seems to affect the health of the others. Adopting healthier habits spiritually, mentally, and physically is the way to find meaning, hope, comfort and inner peace in your life. Recent medical studies indicate that spiritual people exhibit fewer self-destructive behaviors (like suicide, smoking, and drug and alcohol abuse), less stress, and a greater total life satisfaction.

Spirituality is not something we can physically grasp, but from within we can embrace it in a way that fits our beliefs, values, and life. – *Reverend Patti Fears*

### ***Identifying Leadership***

For the faith community, the path to wellness of the body, mind and spirit of a congregation begins with identifying your leadership that is willing to assume responsibility. Anyone can be a wellness leader, but someone who can help keep the group organized, stay on task, and keep track of goals and activities will be beneficial to moving toward the goal of wellness. Many leaders volunteer their time, so consider empowering two or three individuals that can all equally contribute time and effort. Leaders will guide the group, help advocate for resources in the community, and have the motivation to see their group's efforts succeed. Securing the support from the religious leaders of your organization is essential to moving forward the appropriate resources and committed lay leaders. Leading a congregation to wellness means helping each individual understand what a healthy body, mind, and spirit will mean to them personally and to the congregation as a whole. Success of the effort will require mutual support, understanding, and acceptance of each individual's starting point on the pathway to health.

### ***Forming a Small Group or Committee and Defining the Vision***

After finding leaders, it will be important to consider how your faith-based organization wants to get involved in promoting nutrition and physical activity. The size of your group or committee could be anywhere from two to twelve people. Consider the advantages and disadvantages to both a small or large group. You must also ponder how you want to encourage an overall healthful lifestyle for your families, congregation, and community. Defining your initial vision is an important first step. In developing this vision, reflect on the following questions:

What are the needs of the community?

What are the priorities for those you serve?

What can we feasibly do as an organization?

What are the goals we hope to accomplish?

Who can help us reach these goals?

What are the needed resources?

Once the initial vision is established, the clergy and the appointed lay leaders can identify key players in the congregation and reach out to them with that vision of wellness. You can then measure their interest and recruit those who share your enthusiasm and dream. Engaging those who can contribute as health service providers, parishoners, thought leaders, and fund raisers or funders is important.

As your group is forming, you will have to decide the structure of the wellness committee. Forming a standing committee will simply provide the opportunity for members of your faith-based organization to gather together in the name of health and wellness in your community.

The next step is to host the first meeting and orient all members to the vision, mission, and priorities of the wellness committee. Developing strategies for addressing the issues identified as well as mapping out how the committee will address these priorities are important next steps. Create specific and measurable goals that the committee hopes to achieve and determine how and when the committee shall revisit and evaluate the progress made towards those goals.

As part of forming your wellness group, you will need to establish an identity. Create a name that defines your group as a part of your faith-based organization charged with the task of improving the eating and physical activity habits along with the health of your congregation. Perhaps, you'll want to have a pin, t-shirt, bag, or cap that displays your group's name.

### ***Plan***

Put together a plan which will give your organization a concrete way to set up whatever it is you would like to accomplish and what activities to do to accomplish it. It takes time to develop a plan, especially to gain community input and achieve sufficient buy-in from the faith leaders and the lay community. Depending on what may have been previously pursued by a Wellness Ministry and the level of interest among the congregation, creating a plan could take six months to 18 months.

A good plan should include goals, personal responsibilities, actions, needed resources, and progress. A sample work plan that illustrates the various components of an Action Plan is included in Appendix 1.

The North Carolina Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More resource guide outlines a program plan and what should be included to put all the pieces together.

*Goals:* A goal is a broad and simple vision statement that will give your program direction. Assess the congregation to find out what members most want or need to address (for example, drinking more water or being physically active 30 minutes a day). These responses can help you write your goals.

*Actions:* Actions are specific statements that identify the programs, activities, policies and environmental changes that your group plans to enact. Your actions are the ways you will work to reach your goals. Use the input of your assessment of the congregation to determine programs and activities that can support their needs. Survey your community to help gather information about policies (such as serving water instead of lemonade or fruit drinks at events) or environmental changes (such as removing the soft drinks and adding water and juices to the vending machine) your faith community may need to adopt. Be sure to include these recommended policies, changes in the surroundings, and activities in your program plan.

*Resources needed:* In this section of the program plan, list all of the resources and materials that you will need to accomplish your actions. Be sure to think about financial resources, printed tools or materials, and volunteer time. Ensure leadership is willing to be responsible for the achievement of the community action plan's goals and can commit or raise the necessary resources. Remember to include your human resource needs as well.

*Progress:* Use this section of your program plan to develop a way to track what new activities, policies, and changes in the environment have been started and finished. You can list dates that items were completed and the person responsible. For example, a goal might be for the clergy to talk about wellness in an inspirational message every two months. Progress could be tracked by reviewing the bulletin from the worship service. Evaluating progress has two purposes: 1) helps you know if your efforts are working and 2) allows you to decide if your initial goals and program plan need to be revised to reflect the reality of lack of resources, lack of interest, or lack of knowledge. Perhaps, the plan will need to address the barriers first before the activities can be started.

Having a plan in place will help to guide and organize all efforts. It can also make the best use of limited manpower and resources.

### ***Building Networks and Developing Resources***

To improve the health and wellness of the faith community, it will take involvement and commitments from all areas of the community. Building a network to implement the activities along with partnerships with foundations or businesses within the community will help support the efforts of the wellness organization and initiative. The *Let's Move Faith and Community Toolkit for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Organizations* provides useful strategies for mobilizing a community and leveraging public-private partnerships, which are key in building networks and partnerships. (Collaboration and mutual support between nonprofits and congregations and the philanthropic and business sector are often called public-private partnerships).

There are many ways to develop resources and programs. Although it may seem overwhelming, the first thing to remember is that chances are another group has already developed a program or secured resources, so "reinventing the wheel" probably isn't necessary. Even if the exact program or resource you need isn't available, there is, most likely, something similar that your organization can adapt rather than starting from scratch.

The Internet is full of ideas and helpful tools. A simple search will easily point you in the right direction, or at least get you off to the right start. This guide also includes a number of useful resources.

Here are some steps when to get started:

- Define strengths, highlight needs, and then determine what type of partnerships with a private entity would work best for your goals.

- Leverage the skills of your members to develop a proposal that explains what type of collaboration and resources your organization needs and present it to a potential partner.
- Reach out to professionals in your organization with the expertise on the topic you are looking to create resources.
- Collaborate with other non-profits, the business community, and the foundation sector to identify activities that will prevent disease, obesity, and hunger among members of your organization and the community.
- Meet with your local decision-makers (e.g., ANC Commissioner, Mayor, City Council Representative, Department of Health Director, Parks and Recreation Director, City Planner) and see how they might be able to fit into your organization’s goals or if your organization might be able to collaborate with other initiatives within the greater D.C. community.
- Plan to communicate regularly with partners and identify a partnership manager who can communicate with private groups, non-profits, and public institutions.
- Identify several additional sources of funding and create grant proposals. (See below for specific ideas).

Here are some resources for building partnerships:

- “Partnerships for the Common Good: A Partnership Guide for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Organizations” includes a section on capacity building and provides some useful resources. Access it at [http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/resources/partnerships\\_toolkit\\_2.pdf](http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/resources/partnerships_toolkit_2.pdf).
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families’ “A Guide to Resources and Funding for Community & Faith-Based Organizations,” includes a section dedicated to clearinghouses and national resource centers which may help direct you to a resource that may already have developed materials on the topic of interest or might assist you in getting started in the right direction. To view the resources, visit <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ccf/resources/toolkit.html>.
- “Maximizing Program Services through Private Sector Partnerships and Relationships: A Guide for Faith- and Community-Based Service Providers” contains more information about how to support public-private partnerships at [http://www.samhsa.gov/fbci/fbci\\_pubs.aspx](http://www.samhsa.gov/fbci/fbci_pubs.aspx).

Here are additional resources for programming:

- Let’s Move Faith and Communities [http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/resources/Pubs/lets\\_move\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/resources/Pubs/lets_move_toolkit.pdf)
- My Plate Community Tool Kit <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/MyPlate/MyPlateCommunityToolkit.pdf>
- Body & Soul: A Celebration of Healthy Eating & Living <http://rtips.cancer.gov/rtips/viewProduct.do?viewMode=product&productId=257631>
- Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina <http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/>
- The Good News – Live Life Lovingly and Healthfully is a community partnership among SouthFair Community Development Corporation, UT Southwestern Medical Center, Methodist Hospital System, SouthFair Weed and Seed Faith-Based Coalition, and the United Methodist Church that

developed a toolkit to train lay people to be health promoters. To obtain toolkit, visit [http://goodnews-trueliving.com/wp-content/uploads/Challenge\\_Section\\_Challenge-Summary.pdf](http://goodnews-trueliving.com/wp-content/uploads/Challenge_Section_Challenge-Summary.pdf)

## **Funding**

### *D.C. Department of Health*

The D.C. Department of Health (DOH) may have funding opportunities available and it provides information about federal government and private sources of funding. To update funding opportunities weekly, DOH conducts routine searches of the Federal Register, federal agency websites, and private grant-making organizations. This information may be found by visiting the DOH website, [www.doh.dc.gov](http://www.doh.dc.gov), and clicking “Grants and Funding” under “Information.” Or copy and paste the following link:

[http://www.doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1370,q,574584,dohNav\\_GID,1787,dohNav\\_|33120|33139|.asp](http://www.doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1370,q,574584,dohNav_GID,1787,dohNav_|33120|33139|.asp)

Click on “Grant Programs” which shows grants administered by DOH and “Funding Opportunities” that include other potential funding opportunities.

### *D.C. Partnerships and Grant Services*

The Office of Partnerships and Grant Services' (OPGS) Nonprofit Development Center is a part of a comprehensive approach to promote the growth and development of the District's ever more diverse and essential nonprofit service providers. OPGS can connect your organization to potential funding opportunities through various foundations and other initiatives.

<http://opgs.dc.gov/opgd/cwp/view,a,3,q,587576.asp>.

### *D.C. Grants Search*

Your organization can utilize the D.C. grant finder to locate various grants. Search at:

<http://app.opgd.dc.gov/grantautomation/grantfinder.asp>.

### *Grants.gov*

Grants.gov is the place to find and apply for federal government grants. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is the managing partner for <http://www.grants.gov/>.

### *Kaiser Permanente Foundation*

Through the Community Benefit Department, Kaiser Permanente makes financial, material, and human resource investments across the Mid-Atlantic region to directly address health care issues and eliminate health inequities in our communities. It's sponsorship funds are reserved for events or activities related to access to health care, prevention, racial/ethnic disparities, and health care professional education.

To make an inquiry, visit [https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_946/?SA=SNA&FID=35096](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_946/?SA=SNA&FID=35096).

### *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provides grants for projects in the United States and U.S. territories that advance their mission to improve the health and health care of all Americans; you can find available funding opportunities here: <http://www.rwjf.org/applications/solicited/cfplist.jsp>

### *United Way*

United Way provides funding both locally and regionally through United Way organizations. Visit United Way of the National Capital Area to seek potential funding at <http://www.uwnca.org/>.

### *U.S. Department of Agriculture*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Food and Nutrition Service provides some opportunities for grants. Please visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/grants.htm> to view federal grant announcements.

### *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

The Administration for Children and Families under HHS provides resources on acquiring grants, managing public grants, and building multiple revenue sources. To view the resources, visit: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ccf/resources/toolkit.html>.

### ***Sustaining the Effort***

To sustain your efforts, you will need strong commitment and dedication from your congregation and, perhaps, the community as a whole. Maintaining enthusiasm for a wellness initiative may require interchanging lay leaders and revisiting the action plan. Engaging the clergy leadership will also be essential to ensure that the priorities of the wellness committee are in line with the greater priorities of the church, synagogue, mosque, or other faith organization. Continuous outreach to the congregation through bulletins, worship services, and testimonials also helps motivate a broader group. Encouraging support groups for healthy eating, physical activity, breast feeding, and stress management will allow for the initial lifestyle changes to be maintained.

To sustain a wellness initiative also requires some major changes in specific policies and attitudes of a faith community. Information about healthy eating and the benefits of physical activity alone is not enough to change behavior. Understanding the struggles each individual has in making healthy food selections, being active, and putting health as a life priority will be important to knowing where to begin providing information and support. We all need friendly reminders about making the healthy choice the preferred choice. We also need an environment that makes the healthy choice the easy choice. It is difficult to say "no", especially if individuals must do it alone.

The type of foods offered in vending machines or at pot lucks, snack breaks, and other meals can either reinforce or challenge the decisions of individuals to eat healthy foods and manage their blood sugar, blood pressure, and blood cholesterol. Adopting a policy that limits unhealthy foods from being served at faith-based functions can be controversial but also empowering for those who want to live healthier lives. Offering opportunities and encouraging the congregation to exercise (like take a walk, enjoy line dancing, or relax with yoga) before and after worship services, in the evenings, or on the weekends also supports those who have decided to follow a healthier lifestyle. Starting and maintaining a garden or offering a farmers market brings together the congregation for a healthy social outing that reinforces healthy habits. Policies and programs can help to make healthy options available; but ultimately individuals still have the responsibility to make healthy choices. When people are empowered, they are

able to take an active role in improving their health, support their families and friends in making healthy choices, and lead community change.

<http://www.healthcare.gov/prevention/nphpphc/strategy/report.pdf>

Faith communities can play an essential role in providing their congregations with tools and information to make healthy choices. Information needs to be available in ways that makes it easy for individuals to understand and follow where they worship, work, learn, or play. Providing accurate information that is culturally sensitive, motivating and not judgemental will help individuals succeed as they search for, use health information, and adopt healthy behaviors. Some folks are motivated by knowing that what we eat and whether we are physically active directly effects our chances of getting diabetes, heart disease, and even cancer which may lead to pre-mature death. Others will change their habits because they want to look different or because another friend or family member has adopted healthier habits. Your congregation will be empowered to begin and sustain a healthy lifestyle when they have the knowledge, ability, resources, motivation, and support to identify and make the healthy choice, the easy choice. With this empowerment, they are able to take an active role in improving their health, support their families and friends in making healthy choices, and lead community change.

Faith communities can also sustain their wellness initiatives by extending activities to the surrounding community. Encourage neighborhood corner stores, restaurants, and other vendors to begin offering healthier choices. Help clean up abandoned vacant lots or park areas near your faith establishment to encourage gardening and other forms of exercise. Having a farmers market on your property would be an asset for the whole community. Working towards a healthy environment at your faith-based organization leads to an overall healthier D.C. community.

### ***Measuring Change***

Knowing that progress is being made in the overall environment in your establishment or in the health of individuals will be important to maintaining interest and support for a wellness initiative. There are multiple ways to gather information, but it is important to be sensitive to individual privacy and confidentiality. To measure progress with food offerings, one may tally the sales or selections of the healthier options in a vending machine or serving table versus the traditional offerings. Conducting a customer satisfaction survey can register support for new menu options and capture suggestions for changes.

To document individual progress, there are some tools for tracking calories consumed versus calories expended that are available free through website and mobile applications. The USDA MyPlate SuperTracker can help you plan, analyze, and track your diet and physical activity. Visit this website <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools.html> to use the tracker.

Documenting how one feels, the amount of effort or pain with movement, and ease with breathing can register health improvement. Ultimately, changes in one's body weight, blood pressure, blood sugar, and blood cholesterol are the real signs of an impact of healthier eating and physical activity habits and progress toward wellness. The faith establishment may want to conduct periodic screenings or have available scales, pedometers, and individual food diaries. Personal medical information must be

protected, so any effort to collect these data requires permission and the data bases should be securely held. Please have your congregation consult with their physicians who may be tracking their personal medical status.

Individuals progress at different rates and what constitutes a healthy weight or body size varies widely among individuals. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, your Body Mass Index (BMI) is calculated from your height and weight and is a fairly reliable indicator of body fat for most adults, with athletes and the elderly being two exceptions. BMI's also differ among ethnic groups. BMI does not provide information on your body composition (muscle versus fat), so often those with higher muscle mass or denser bones may weigh more because bones and muscle are heavier than fat. Waist circumference may be another indicator of more fat tissue than muscle mass. Changes in weight, BMI or waist measurements overtime are a good way to measure progress rather than comparing individual measurements to some national standard. To calculate BMI, visit the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute at <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>.

### ***Committee To Do List***

It is important to remember your faith-based community does not have to do everything. Set small goals that you feel your congregation can reach and in which the broader community can participate. You will be able to build successes and expand your efforts as you progress.

The following list is not all inclusive, but may give your committee some ideas on what to do and how to begin an initiative and start improving the health and wellness within your community.

- Hold a kick-off event to showcase your wellness committee or group and to let the congregation know what wellness initiatives you have in mind.
- Incorporate health, wellness, nutrition, and physical activity messages in bulletins and/or newsletters and sermons.
- Plan a health and wellness activity or fair and add the dates to the congregation's calendar.
- Encourage members of your surrounding community to become engaged and to participate in the health and wellness initiatives.
- Promote the health and wellness initiatives and establish awards for accomplishments.

### ***Some Ideas to Get Started***

- Set up a walking club, set goals, and provide awards and/or other incentives.
- Organize other fitness challenges around activities popular with members of the congregation.
- Organize intramural sports and physical activities clubs. Encourage anyone to participate, regardless of age or skill.
- Coordinate a walking club, dance-a-thon, jump rope contest, or a summer sports camp in the community.
- At potlucks and other events serving food, provide healthy options, including water, fruit salads (avoid topping with whipped cream and sugar), vegetable side dishes (avoid extra fat and cheese), baked chicken, and whole grain breads, rolls or noodle dishes.

- Offer healthy foods in vending machines.
- Hold a recipe contest and challenge members of the congregation to make some of the common recipes healthier with less sugar, butter, lard, and salt.
- Organize a nutrition and healthy cooking class.
- Sponsor the USDA Summer Food Service Program in your community.
- Consider opening your playground or other facilities (basketball court, etc.) to the community for public use.
- Help to build or makeover playgrounds in the community.
- Encourage convenience and grocery store managers in the neighborhood to offer healthier options such as water, fruits, fruit juices, and pretzels, close to the checkout counter.

Ideas above adapted from *Adventist InStep for Life Toolkit*.

## **Section 2: Healthy Eating with your Congregation and Beyond**

The most difficult but rewarding lifestyle change is adopting healthy eating habits. We have to eat to survive, but our body feels better and works better when we fuel it with healthy foods. God's plants and other animals flourish best with adequate water and the right combination of nutrients. Too often the current medical system only takes care of us when we get sick. But the hope and promise of preventive actions such as healthy eating, active movement, and managing stress are that we can avoid getting high blood sugar and high blood pressure at a young age. But making lifestyle changes will take time, continued support from family and friends, and will encounter some setbacks. At times, weight loss may appear to be too slow and temptations too great. Stress from job changes, emotional upheavals, and unexpected hardships may lead to overeating, so lessons on managing stress may need to go before nutrition education. The reward of staying healthier longer to see grand kids grow up or to fulfill dreams of retirement can, however, be worth today's sacrifices. Before embarking on changes in diet and physical activity, individuals should always be encouraged to talk with their physicians.

### ***Nutrition Education and Healthy Cooking and Shopping***

Nutrition education and healthy cooking and shopping classes play important roles in helping people recognize that healthy eating habits keep blood sugar, blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and body weight in a healthy range. Healthy eating also helps us feel better, breathe more easily, and move effortlessly. The nutrition education classes should provide helpful and practical information on how to purchase and make healthful food choices within food budget limitations.

A faith-based organization is the perfect place to educate members of your congregation on why and how to make healthy food choices. Be sure to offer activities that appeal to various groups with different needs and include:

- Growing herbs and vegetables in pots or a garden as part of Sunday school
- Lectures by dietitians in the congregation or neighborhood during men's or women's group meeting, Bible study, book club, or youth groups
- Cooking demonstrations and classes on healthy ways to prepare and cook food
- Tasting get-togethers with sampling of whole grain breads, fruits and vegetables (including smoothies and different types of fruits and vegetables), and low fat entrees or desserts
- Workshops on various topics including what to eat during pregnancy, what to eat as a vegetarian, what to eat as an athlete, what to eat as one ages, how to buy and make meals for one or two people, how to control weight, how to start a garden, and how to prevent and control various diseases like high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, and heart disease
- Tours of the local grocery store to find healthier low cost options and shopping classes
- Articles and motivational messages about healthy eating in newsletters, bulletins, and educational sections of the organization's website

USDA offers a series of nutrition education materials which are all available online and are printer friendly or can be ordered. Some of the materials are also available in Spanish. Each topic includes ten tips that can help one get started in making changes and moving toward a healthier lifestyle. For this consumer friendly

information on healthy eating, visit the USDA website [www.chooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.chooseMyPlate.gov) and find handouts on the food guide MyPlate, weight management and calories, and healthy eating tips.

### **Nutrition Connection for Good Health Program (Culinary Ministry)**

The University of the District of Columbia (UDC), Howard University, the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association (AHA/ASA), and Advocates for Better Children's Diets (ABCD), offer a Culinary Ministry Class, *Nutrition Connection for Good Health Program*, on nutrition and wellness for cooks or food providers with faith based organizations. This three hour course is offered twice a year to individuals in a faith-based organization to learn how to purchase, prepare and serve healthier meals that can reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and other chronic disease in D.C. The objective is to teach participants ways to improve cooking healthier congregate meals without additional costs.

### **Cooking Matters and Shopping Matters**

Cooking Matters® and Shopping Matters® are programs offered by Share Our Strength through the Capital Area Food Bank in the Metro D.C. area. These nutrition education programs empower families with skills, knowledge, and confidence to purchase and prepare healthy and affordable foods. For more information about these programs, visit [www.cookingmatters.org](http://www.cookingmatters.org). To learn about hosting a class at your congregation or how to volunteer visit: <http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org/cookingmatters/>.

### **General Healthy Eating Guidance**

The food we eat provides the fuel we need to keep our bodies working, just like gas provides fuel to keep a car running; but one has to select the right type of fuel to keep the body functioning to its maximum performance. Figuring out what the healthiest choices are is not always easy. By making the healthy choices the easy choices during events at your faith-based community, you demonstrate your concern about your congregation's health and wellbeing.

Additionally, parents and caregivers play a key role in making healthy choices and shaping lifelong healthy habits. Children learn about healthy eating from their family and from the food served at home, the place of worship, schools, and other community gatherings. Parents and community members can model healthy decisions about nutrition; but, they often need to gain information and practice skills to be able to select, prepare and consume healthy foods and beverages. With the support of your faith-based community through education and modeling opportunities, your congregation can find making healthy choices becomes a lasting habit.

Healthy nutrition habits formed at a young age will last forever, but that doesn't mean those of us who might have less healthy eating habits as adults can't change them. Many people eat too much saturated fat, cholesterol, added sugars, sodium, and refined grains because portions are too big and food selections are unhealthy. Likewise, the majority of adults and children do not eat enough fruit, vegetables, or whole grains and do not get enough vitamin D, calcium, potassium, and dietary fiber.

Below are general healthy eating tips and guidelines which should be considered as your wellness committee develops the nutrition education programs and guidelines for food service for your congregation. Targeted messaging for specific groups is also outlined below.

	<b>Tips</b>
<b>Limit Salt</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not add additional salt to recipes.</li> <li>• Don't add salt to recipes or prepared mixes for cakes, biscuits, pancakes &amp; desserts.</li> <li>• Use fresh or frozen vegetables, select low or no added salt canned vegetables or rinse them for 2-3 minutes in a strainer.</li> <li>• Do not add salt to boiling water when cooking vegetables.</li> </ul>
<b>Limit Fat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid pre-prepared products with animal fat (lard) or saturated vegetable oils, such as coconut oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil, and hydrogenated shortening on the ingredient list.</li> <li>• For baked goods, use pan liners and nonstick cooking spray instead of greasing pans.</li> <li>• Use soft margarine in place of butter or shortening.</li> <li>• Trim away all of the visible fat from meats and poultry before cooking.</li> <li>• Bake, broil, grill, roast, poach, boil, or stir-fry meat, poultry, or fish instead of frying.</li> <li>• Purchase leaner meats, e.g., ground beef with no more than 15% fat.</li> <li>• Purchase ground chicken or turkey to substitute for lean ground beef.</li> <li>• Trim away all of the visible fat from meats and poultry before cooking.</li> <li>• Purchase low-fat cheeses and products made with these cheeses</li> <li>• Purchase the low-fat versions of mayonnaise, yogurt, sour cream, and salad dressings.</li> <li>• Coat foods with herbs and seasonings instead of fats.</li> <li>• Prepare items from scratch to control the amount of fat.</li> </ul>
<b>Limit Sugar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add less or no sugar to beverages such as coffee and tea.</li> <li>• Substitute fruit purees for sugar as an ingredient in baked goods (Ex. applesauce in cupcakes).</li> <li>• Read labels of low-fat products carefully; sugar and other carbohydrates often replace fats.</li> <li>• Choose 100% fruit juice in place of fruit drinks/beverages as they have less sugar.</li> <li>• Choose canned fruit in 100% juice or water instead of in sugary syrups.</li> </ul>
<b>Increase Whole Grains</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read labels to ensure that first ingredient is a whole grain.</li> <li>• Choose whole grain versions of breads, pastas, rice, bagels.</li> <li>• Incorporate whole grains such as bulgur, brown rice and quinoa into your favorite recipes.</li> </ul>
<b>Incorporate Fruits and Vegetables</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make available for snacks washed, cut fruits and vegetables such as apples, celery, peppers, and carrots.</li> <li>• Add fruit to breakfast, such berries on pancakes and raisins on oatmeal and dry cereal.</li> <li>• Offer un-sweetened fruit in any form as an alternative to sugary desserts.</li> <li>• Serve as sides vegetable salads with limited dressing, cheese or sour cream.</li> <li>• Use no sugar added, and low salt frozen or canned fruits and vegetables.</li> <li>• Offer vegetarian meal options and make meals using vegetarian recipes.</li> </ul>
<b>Portion Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide pre-cut portions of larger dishes.</li> <li>• Use small serving plates, bowls, and cups</li> <li>• Premeasure servings of salad dressing, butter, and gravy.</li> <li>• Make half the plate fruits and vegetables, a quarter from grain products and a quarter from meat, chicken, fish, soy-based products, nuts, or beans.</li> </ul>

*Food Guidance with USDA's MyPlate*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s MyPlate provides user friendly materials and

resources for anyone wanting to serve healthy foods and adopt healthy eating habits. Visit [www.MyPlate.gov](http://www.MyPlate.gov) for additional tips and guidance.

### *Pregnancy*

Nutrition before and during pregnancy is essential to delivering a healthy, thriving baby. Poor nutrition is linked to birth defects and other serious health problems, not only in the child's infancy but also in later life when diet-related chronic diseases occur. Your organization can offer a course on prenatal nutrition and ensure new mothers have the needed resources to obtain a healthy diet. There may be a dietitian in your congregation that would be pleased to offer such a course.

During pregnancy, women have a higher need for some vitamins and minerals and protein. They need to make the best food choices which provide the nutrients for the optimal growth and development of the unborn infant and which avoid too many calories leading to excess weight gain. Doctors advise a normal weight individual gain no more than 35 pounds and an obese or overweight pregnant women gain no more than 20-25 pounds. Besides a healthy diet, pregnant women need to take a prenatal supplement with folic acid and iron every day. Pregnant women and women who may become pregnant should not drink alcohol drinks, including beer, wine, liquor, mixed drinks, malt beverages, etc.

Even moderate drinking during pregnancy can cause behavioral or developmental problems for your baby. Heavy drinking during pregnancy can result in serious problems for the baby, including malformation, fetal alcohol syndrome, and mental retardation.

The United States Department of Agriculture's ChooseMyPlate.gov provides guidance on the best food choices to provide what the mother and unborn infant need. USDA also offers financial support to pregnant women and mothers through the Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to obtain specific nutritious foods from the market which boosts nutrition of pregnant women and children up to age five. Your faith-based organization can help women find out about enrolling in the WIC program operated by the D.C. Department of Health. To gain more information on WIC, visit [http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,581969,dohNav\\_GID,1801,dohNav,|33183|.asp](http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,581969,dohNav_GID,1801,dohNav,|33183|.asp).

### *Breastfeeding*

A faith-based organization has an important role to play in promoting breast feeding among the congregation. Infants that are breast fed have fewer infections and are less likely to be overweight. Often a mother needs a lot of support to start and sustain breast feeding, so your organization can offer classes in breastfeeding or a support group and set aside quiet places for moms attending worship or other events to breast feed.

Similar to pregnancy, breastfeeding mothers require additional nutrients and fluids, especially water. In general, following the healthy eating guidance for pregnancy described provides the right path. Breast feeding mothers need to be encouraged to avoid sweetened beverages and alcohol and limit caffeine which pass through breast milk and irritate the infant. Drinking a moderate amount (up to 2 to 3 cups a day) of coffee or other caffeinated beverages does not affect the baby. It is important for new mothers to wait until the baby has a routine breastfeeding pattern, at least 3 months of age, before taking an occasional alcoholic beverage. Mothers who have a single alcoholic drink should wait at least four hours

before breastfeeding. The USDA WIC program also provides additional foods for mothers who breast feed. To gain more information on WIC, visit [http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,581969,dohNav\\_GID,1801,dohNav\\_|33183|,asp](http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,581969,dohNav_GID,1801,dohNav_|33183|,asp).

### *Preschoolers*

Preschooler nutritional needs depend on the rate they are growing, their health status, food restrictions and other factors. Often, faith-based groups sponsor child development centers or educational classes and should be particularly aware of the important role these first meals play in a young child's future eating habits. Offer different foods from day to day and encourage your child to choose from a variety of healthy foods. Serve all foods and beverages, whether snacks or meals in smaller portions according to a specific age and at scheduled times. Do not be concerned if preschoolers do not eat suggested amounts, as they are often picky eaters. Each child's needs may differ from the average, and appetites can vary from day to day. Try to balance the amounts over a few days or a weeks. As long as preschoolers are healthy, growing normally, and have plenty of energy, they are most likely getting needed nutrients. If a child's picky eating lasts for a long time or is very restrictive, inform the parents and encourage them to consult a doctor. The USDA website, [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) provides some sample meal and snack ideas. USDA also offers funding through participation in the Child and Adult Food Program and provides excellent information such as meal patterns at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>.

### *Children and Youth*

Again, your organization may offer classes, groups, or events for children and youth which could become great times to promote healthy eating. Because many children face challenges like poor diets, excess calories, and inadequate physical activity, which all contribute to childhood obesity, it is important to establish healthful eating practices young so they can be carried throughout life. Obesity increases the chances of a child developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure at a very young age. By eating healthy foods and staying physically active, a child can prevent the onset of chronic diseases. Most children need to consume more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and less of foods high in fat, sugar, salt. If your organization runs an after school program and needs help with expenses, consider the USDA After School Snack program <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Afterschool/default.htm>.

### *Adults*

In all the hustle and bustle of everyday life, healthy eating might take a backseat to the stress of a job, raising children, caring for an aging parent or friend, and managing a household. But, the consequences of not eating healthfully may lead to high blood pressure, high blood sugar, and/or high cholesterol which may require medications and lead to complications. Maintaining a healthy diet can help prevent the pre-mature onset of these diseases. The faith community has a unique role in promoting both a healthy spiritual life and a healthy body for the congregation. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans offer universal guidelines for adults and children's meals and snacks:

- Increase fruit and vegetable intake.
- Eat a variety of vegetables, especially dark-green, red, and orange vegetables, and beans and peas.

- Increase whole grain intake by replacing at least half of the refined grains with whole grains. Refined grains are grains and grain products that are missing the bran, germ, and/or endosperm of the grain and is therefore no longer “whole.” Examples of refined grains include: white bread, white rice, and white pasta.
- Increase intake of fat free or low fat milk and dairy products or soymilk.
- Choose a variety of protein foods, like seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- Replace protein foods that are higher in solid fats with choices that are lower in solid fats and calories and/or are sources of oils. Solid fats are fats with a high content of saturated and/or *trans* fatty acids, which are usually solid at room temperature.
- Use oils to replace solid fats where possible.
- Choose foods that provide more potassium, dietary fiber, calcium, and vitamin D, which are nutrients of concern in the American diets. Foods that could help do this include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, milk and milk products, and soy products.
- Reduce sodium intake to less than 2300 milligrams a day.
- Limit intake of saturated fat, *trans* fat, and dietary cholesterol.
- Reduce the intake of calories from added sugars.
- Limit refined grains.
- Limit alcohol to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men for those who consume alcohol and for those adults of legal drinking age.

### *Aging Adults*

In addition to the guidelines above for adults, individuals above the age of 50, should choose foods carefully, as they need fewer calories but more vitamin B<sub>12</sub> (from foods like eggs, seafood, low fat dairy, and meats), calcium (from foods like low fat dairy, fortified soymilk, and leafy green vegetables), and protein (from foods like lean meat and poultry, low fat dairy, legumes, and nuts).

### ***Mindful Eating and Fasting***

Often, it is not just what we eat but how we eat that may affect our health. For centuries, religions have put forward various food practices and traditions. In particular, mindful eating and fasting may influence how much and how often individuals eat.

### ***Mindful Eating***

Mindful eating focuses on listening to the needs of your inner body and becoming more aware of the nourishment provided through food preparation and eating. When eating mindfully, you should use all of your senses in order to savor and taste each element of the meal without judgment. Likewise, throughout the process, you should pay close attention to how your body reacts to the food. Mindful eating may be motivated by several different goals. Some may practice mindful eating as a weight management tool, as increased awareness helps learning to pick-up on satiety and hunger cues that may limit consumption. In the context of spirituality, mindful eating helps to enhance and appreciate the taste of food, to better understand the connectedness of all living things, and to have gratitude for the

food. Mindful eating may be used as a form of meditation and prayer, asking for thanks to God for each individual ingredient. For more information on this subject, visit <http://www.tcme.org/principles.htm> and <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/08/dining/mindful-eating-as-food-for-thought.html?pagewanted=all>.

### *Fasting*

Fasting is eliminating or restricting foods or beverages over a period of time. Whether it was on purpose or not, at some point in your life, you have probably fasted for some amount of time. One of the most common forms of fasting is religious fasting. The length of time and the foods restricted or eliminated for a fast vary across religious sects and denominations. Some fasts requires no food from sunrise to sunset for a month, while others restrict eating on holy days or eliminating dairy, meat, and eggs for weeks at a time. Fasting can be a very powerful tool for your spiritual well-being because it may provide fulfillment, humility, and a renewed closeness to God or another higher being. This guide will only generally describe the types of fasting and offer some resources that provide more information. It is important to recognize the motivation for embarking on a fast as it is not recommended for weight loss and should be pursued only with a physician's approval and oversight for those who are ill, have a history of an eating disorder, have a health condition, or are pregnant.

Due to the diversity of religions, there are a variety of different types of fasts, practices, or restrictions. There are three types of fasts: partial fasts which exclude a specific food or meal; regular fasts which bar eating any food and allow only water or juice; and full or absolute fasts which restrict all food or drink for a period of time. Generally, the Eastern Orthodox Christianity, Roman Catholic, and Protestant faiths share the practice of partial fasts by restricting specific foods (like meat) on specific holy days. A partial fast is believed to increase spiritual understanding, avoid sinful behavior such as gluttony and drunkenness, and teach self-restraint. On the other hand, Muslims who undergo absolute fasts to cleanse their bodies of evil elements. During a period time called Ramadan, people of Islam refrain from eating or drinking from sunrise to sundown.

Food and drink restrictions may lead to dehydration, an electrolyte imbalance, or over-eating after the fast ceases. Careful attention should be paid to getting enough fluids especially for those who are in the heat or are active and sweating. Additional information about fasting is available from these websites:

<http://www.cru.org/training-and-growth/devotional-life/personal-guide-to-fasting/index.htm>

<http://danielfast.wordpress.com/2007/12/13/types-of-fasting/>

<http://www.faqs.org/nutrition/Pre-Sma/Religion-and-Dietary-Practices.html#ixzz1LsxWnBf6>

<http://www.nature.com/ejcn/journal/v57/n2s/full/1601899a.html>

<http://www.allaboutprayer.org/types-of-fasting-faq.htm>

### ***Congregation Meals, Potlucks and Celebrations***

Whether your faith-based organization has daily meals or just one every couple of months, setting the table with healthy options can help members of your congregation make better choices outside of the

fellowship hall. Potlucks and congregation sponsored meals are an opportunity to promote healthful eating for all members of your community. There are many appealing ways that favorite recipes and traditional foods can be made healthier. This doesn't mean that indulgence is not allowed, but try to develop a congregation meal policy that is customized to your faith-based community. The policy can define how to increase fruits, vegetables, and whole grains as well as reduce the amount of highly sugared foods such as desserts and sugar-sweetened beverages and high fat foods that are fried.

An easy way to help members of your congregation become more aware of the nutrient content of the foods they are eating at faith-based gatherings is to provide them with nutrition information. Consider having an event to talk about interpreting nutrition labels. Prepared foods purchased in bulk must carry nutrition labeling on the Nutrition Facts Panel on the food package. For foods prepared from recipes, the nutrient and calorie content of the recipe per serving size can be determined by using free programs on websites such as [www.nutritiondata.self.com](http://www.nutritiondata.self.com) or [www.caloriecount.com](http://www.caloriecount.com). When entering recipe ingredients, an exact match may not be found and nutrition information may not be exact, but you can obtain information on calories, fat, sodium, and carbohydrates (helpful for those carbohydrate counting to manage their diabetes) for a meal. On an index card, providing this nutritional information for a specific serving size of a dish to help your congregation make choices right for them. It is educational to compare the calorie and nutrient content of recipes that have been changed to use lower fat milks and cheeses, add fruits and vegetables to mixed dishes, and substitute lower sugar ingredients to traditional items. You can even create a cookbook of recipes with the nutrition information from this activity.

### ***Vending Machines***

Vending machines may not be present in your place of worship. If they are, they can be a competing source of sugar-sweetened beverages, chips, and candy that can undermine your efforts of providing healthful foods to your membership. It is recommended that all food and beverages available are healthy and meet minimum standards, so include fruits, vegetables, nuts, pretzels, water, low-fat or low-fat milk or soymilk, and 100% fruit juices in vending machines. Before changes are made to vending machine options, you might want to talk with those who use the vending machines frequently about choices they would like. Here is some guidelines and read the Nutrition Facts Panel on the food packages:

- For beverages: make available water, low-fat or low-fat milk or soymilk, and 100% fruit juice or drinks with few to no calories (i.e. 40 calories or less per serving).
- For snacks: stick to serving not more than 250 calories; no more than 35% calories from fat with the exception of nuts and snack mixes; not more than 10% of calories from saturated fat, no trans fats ; and not more than 360 mg of sodium per serving.

## Section 3: Food Access within your Faith-based Community

Your congregation may have the information they need to select and prepare healthier meals, but finding a place to obtain the food may be more difficult. Your faith community may want to bring several sources of food such as a community garden, a farmers market, a partnership with a Community Supported Agriculture program, or a connection with a food bank to your location to provide healthier offerings to the congregation.

### ***Vegetable Gardens***

Recently, there has been a renewed interest in having gardens at schools and at other community locations, as we found in our survey of the faith community in D.C. Designating land on your property for a garden will give members a chance to participate in growing and collecting fresh fruits and vegetables or sharing them with the community. See Appendix 3 for a flowchart on how to start a Community Garden and a list of resources. Here are some important things to consider before starting a vegetable garden:

- Identify available resources - land, source of water, sunlight, irrigation, and drainage
- Recruit a large number of potential gardeners
- Seek technical advice or training from community organizations
- Design layout of garden including plot size and number
- Test soil for nutrients and contaminants, such as arsenic
- Develop agreements for committing gardeners to maintain the plot
- Figure cost of making land usable and maintaining the garden
- Partner with a mentorship program to teach beginner gardeners
- Determine equipment needs (tools, etc) and storage areas (locked shed)
- Plan for fencing to protection against wildlife
- Prepare areas for composting and plan for waste removal
- Secure funding of the initiative (donations or usage fees)

There are a number of groups in D.C. and websites that provide more detailed information on starting vegetable gardens. Below are a few resources to get going:

[The USDA: People's Garden Resource](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=peoples_garden_advice.xml) may assist you in answering several questions - What exactly is a healthy soil? What makes a plant invasive? How to decide what to plant?  
[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=peoples\\_garden\\_advice.xml](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=peoples_garden_advice.xml)

[The UDC's Cooperative Extension Service](http://www.udc.edu/college_urban_agriculture_and_environmental_studies/cooperative_extension_service) engages, educates and empowers District residents by providing free and fee-based, non-credit classes, workshops, demonstrations and technical assistance. For more information on general programs, visit  
[http://www.udc.edu/college\\_urban\\_agriculture\\_and\\_environmental\\_studies/cooperative\\_extension\\_service](http://www.udc.edu/college_urban_agriculture_and_environmental_studies/cooperative_extension_service) and for the Master Gardeners Program visit [www.extension.org/mastergardener](http://www.extension.org/mastergardener).

[Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food](#) Through this initiative, USDA integrates programs and policies that: stimulate food- and agriculturally-based community economic development; foster new opportunities for farmers and ranchers; promote locally and regionally produced and processed foods; cultivate healthy eating habits and educated, empowered consumers; expand access to affordable fresh and local food; and demonstrate the connection between food, agriculture, community and the environment.”

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER>

Two additional groups with information on community gardens include the American Community Garden Association website at [www.communitygarden.org](http://www.communitygarden.org) and the Urban Harvest website at [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org).

For free seeds, visit <http://www.dinnergarden.org/needSeeds.html>.

Resource Guide to Starting a Community Garden in Washington DC on DC's Field To Farm Network website at <http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Starting-a-Community-Garden-in-DC-final-version.pdf>(DESCRIPTION)

All of DC's Community Garden Data sheet on DC's Field to Fork Network website at <http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/community-gardens/chart/> (DESCRIPTION)

DC Garden Services Survey, created and updated by DC Field to Fork, can be found at [http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/DC-Garden-Services-Surveys-final\\_MayUpdate.pdf](http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/DC-Garden-Services-Surveys-final_MayUpdate.pdf) (DESCRIPTION)

If your place of worship does not have workable land to use, there are other alternatives. Your faith-based community can join already established gardens, look for new garden development projects or partner with an organization to work toward developing a new garden. If there is available land nearby, you can approach the owners to see if they would be willing to lease the land to your faith-based organization.

Remember, growing successful gardens can be a timely and labor-intensive process, but with dedication great success can result. You may eventually even have enough to donate to your community. Visit [www.AmpleHarvest.org](http://www.AmpleHarvest.org) to find a local food pantry to donate your garden surplus.

### ***Farmers Markets***

Farmers markets represent a vibrant asset to any community. They allow the community to engage with those who grow their food, keep money circulating in the local economy, and create an opportunity for everyone to obtain fresh and healthy produce and food products. As a faith-based organization, you can connect your members to farmers and food through starting a farmers market at your facilities. Partnering with other organizations and leveraging resources that are available can simplify and streamline the process of establishing a farmers market. Be sure to consider:

- Source of food and produce (making connections with local farmers)
- Schedules – days of the week, hours of day, and frequency of the market
- Advertising the market to your congregation and community
- Necessary legal logistics such as permits, contracts, insurance, and food safety practices
- Potential partnerships and sources of funding

If starting a farmers market is not possible, hosting or shopping at an already established farmers market is another option. You might arrange for transportation from your location for your members to travel to a market in the community. In the Washington, D.C. area, farmers markets are typically open from June until November. Some, but not all, farmers markets accept food assistance benefits such as SNAP and WIC. Additionally, many farmers markets offer periodic incentives that can double the value of SNAP benefits when used to purchase fruits and vegetables. For information in English and Spanish on farmers market locations, visit

[http://www.dchealth.dc.gov/doh/frames.asp?doc=/doh/lib/doh/services/administration\\_offices/mch/pdf/buyers\\_guide\\_-2011\\_%28final%29\\_-8\\_2\\_2011.pdf](http://www.dchealth.dc.gov/doh/frames.asp?doc=/doh/lib/doh/services/administration_offices/mch/pdf/buyers_guide_-2011_%28final%29_-8_2_2011.pdf). The D.C. DOH also conducts the Farmers Market Nutrition Program for women and children (1 year to 5 years) who receive WIC Program benefits are eligible to participate in the FMNP. For more details to share with your parisheners, visit [http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,582102,dohNav\\_GID,1787,dohNav\\_|33120|33139|.asp](http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,582102,dohNav_GID,1787,dohNav_|33120|33139|.asp).

### ***Federal Nutrition Program Materials***

There are numerous programs that help those in need receive food so that no one goes hungry in D.C. As a community organization dedicated to the well-being of its members, you can play a key role in helping those in need apply for assistance, providing them with nourishment and reducing food insecurity in your community. There are several different food benefit options; the most common programs include the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants, & Children (WIC).

One way to get started is helping families in need apply for these programs. Informing committee members and volunteers with the basic information on who is eligible, how to apply, what the benefits are, etc. are, is the first step to helping those who might perceive barriers actually apply. D.C. Hunger Solutions includes information and resources to determine SNAP/Food Stamp eligibility for special populations including the homeless residents at [http://www.dchunger.org/fedfoodprogs/foodstamps/fsp\\_apply\\_resources.htm](http://www.dchunger.org/fedfoodprogs/foodstamps/fsp_apply_resources.htm) and [http://www.dchunger.org/pdf/homeless\\_foodstamp\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.dchunger.org/pdf/homeless_foodstamp_flyer.pdf).

The process for applying for SNAP food assistance benefits involves completing an application. Volunteers from your wellness committee and others can host regular information sessions or create other opportunities to help assist families in need with their application. Contacting the SNAP office for promotional materials is one way to advertise the service you are providing to congregational members.

*DC SNAP offices:*

Anacostia	2100 Martin Luther King Avenue, SE	(202) 645-4614	(202) 727-3527
Congress Heights	4001 South Capitol Street, SW	(202) 645-4546	(202) 654-4524
Fort Davis	3851 Alabama Avenue, SE	(202) 645-4500	(202) 645-6205
H Street	645 H Street, NE	(202) 698-4350	(202) 724-8964
Taylor Street	1207 Taylor Street, NW	(202) 576-8000	(202) 576-8740

There are several other programs in the District to help with SNAP applications and benefits:

**The Family Place Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB)**

3309 16th Street N W  
Washington, DC 20010  
Phone: 202-526-5344  
E-Mail: [Advocacy@CapitalAreaFoodBank.org](mailto:Advocacy@CapitalAreaFoodBank.org)

**Department of Public Policy & Community Outreach**

645 Taylor St. NE  
Washington, DC 20017  
202-265-0149

**D.C Hunger Solutions: A FRAC Project**

1875 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 540  
Washington, DC 20009  
202-986-2200 ext 3023

In addition to connecting congregational members with federal nutrition programs, short term food insecurity can be alleviated through the use of food banks. Serving the District is the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) that feeds those who suffer from hunger by acquiring food and distributing it through its network of partner agencies, including many in the faith community. For help, call the Hunger Lifeline: (202) 639-9770 or visit <http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org/>. The D.C. Food Finder can also direct those in need to other sources of food in the metro D.C. area, so visit [www.dcfoodfinder.org](http://www.dcfoodfinder.org)

***Breast Feeding Support Groups***

Supporting the women of your congregation in their journey through motherhood is an important role a faith-based institution can play. There are several ways in which you can offer your support to new moms or moms-to-be. A major need for mothers is having a designated private place where they can feel comfortable breastfeeding their child or pumping breast milk. Providing this space is an easy way that you can help the women of your congregation feel at ease when it is time to feed!

Important considerations include:

- Private space (bathroom stalls are not considered appropriate locations)
- Sanitary conditions
- Comfortable chairs
- Sink area for clean-up
- Refrigeration for milk storage

- Bulletin board to post information and support group resources
- Healthy snacks and beverages available to nursing mothers

In terms of providing support to breastfeeding women, there are numerous resources already available within the community. The District of Columbia Breast Feeding Coalition offers information, resources, and contacts with local lactation consultants through the Lactation Support Center, the Le Leche League of D.C., the Breastfeeding Center for Greater Washington, and Women, Infants, Children (WIC).

**Lactation Support Center**

2501 Good Hope Road, SE  
 Washington, DC 20020  
 Phone: 202-476-6941  
 Fax: 202-476-6991

**Hours:**

Monday-Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm  
 (Closed Holidays)

**The Breastfeeding Center for Greater Washington**

2141 K Street NW, Suite 3  
 Washington, DC 20037  
 Phone: (202) 293-5182

**Hours:**

Monday–Friday 8:30am–5:00pm  
 Saturdays 10:00am–4:00pm

**Le Leche League of DC**

<http://www.llofmd-de-dc.org/WashingtonDC.html>

**Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)**

[http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,g,582060,dohNav\\_GID,1787,dohNav,|33120|33139|.asp](http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,g,582060,dohNav_GID,1787,dohNav,|33120|33139|.asp)

***Food Retailer Outlets***

As individuals think about where they buy food, they often ask: How do you know what is healthy? Are there healthy foods available? How do you prepare them? Members of your congregation may have the same questions when shopping for their food. There are many places to buy food such as grocery stores, corner convenience stores, and food carts. The D.C. Department of Health has embarked on a program that offers technical assistance for the Healthy Corner Store initiative and that will bring green carts with fresh produce to neighborhoods. Promoting healthy foods where they are purchased can increase consumption of these foods. Creating opportunities for grocery store tours, nutrition label education, and cooking demonstrations are just a few ways you can promote healthy food purchases.

***Grocery Store Tours***

The healthiest foods available can sometimes be hard for shoppers to find. Regardless of the size of the store, foods compete for shelf placement and advertising displays. Approaching food retail outlets in your neighborhood to organize a store tour is a great way to help members of your congregation find

healthier foods in the stores where they shop. Retailers are likely to host tours because they bring customers into their stores and advertises the foods they sell.

\*The organization La Clinica Del Pueblo offers grocery store tours of Latino food markets in the District. For more information visit: [www.lcdp.org](http://www.lcdp.org)

Share Our Strength also provides grocery store tours through its program Shopping Matters®. For more information, visit: [https://secure.strength.org/site/SPageNavigator/SOS/SOS\\_ofl\\_shoppingmatters\\_home](https://secure.strength.org/site/SPageNavigator/SOS/SOS_ofl_shoppingmatters_home).

### *Nutrition Label Education*

Understanding the type and amount of nutrients that are in different foods can be a challenging for anyone. For that reason, food manufacturers are required to provide nutrition information on the food package, referred to as the *Nutrition Facts* panel. Your faith-based organization can offer classes that teach how to use the nutrition information provided and encourage members to use the *Nutrition Facts* panel of food packages when shopping. Registered Dietitians and other nutrition professionals can provide this education. Here are some quick tips for reading food labels. (See resource section for more information).

- Look at the serving size (there may be several servings in an individual package).
- Determine how many calories are in each serving. Encourage your congregation to know about how many calories they should be consuming in a day.
- Consider how much fat, sodium, vitamins and minerals each food provides. Compare foods. Think about how eating this food will affect your nutrition goals for the day.
- Examine the ingredients list as many people have allergies and sensitivities to certain ingredients.

### *Cooking Demonstrations*

A fun and interactive way to engage members of your congregation around food is to host or create opportunities for cooking classes or tasting parties. Depending on whether or not your place of worship has a kitchen that can host a cooking demonstration; you may want to look for another place to host this type of event. You can bring in local culinary volunteers or recruit a member of your congregation known for their cooking skills to teach the demos. Encourage those who are teaching to start with the basics of food preparation and food safety as well as to prepare recipes that are considered healthy. In terms of cost, your wellness committee might want to cover the costs of this event or collect a small fee from those who participate to cover the cost of food. You can also direct members of your congregation to cooking demos that are already happening in the community.

#### **Cooking Matters and Shopping Matters**

Cooking Matters® and Shopping Matters® are programs offered by Share Our Strength through the Capital Area Food Bank in the Metro D.C. area. To learn about hosting a class at your congregation or how to volunteer visit: <http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org/cookingmatters/>.

## **Section 4: Physical Activity with your Congregation and Beyond**

To balance calories from food and beverages, avoid gaining weight, and maintain healthy blood pressure and overall health, one needs to be physically active. Physical activity alone cannot lead to weight loss without reducing calorie intake and selecting healthier foods. Another way to promote the health of the body of your congregation is to offer opportunities and encouragement to be physically active at their place of worship. Before your congregation embarks on changes in physical activity, individuals should always be encouraged to talk with their physicians.

### ***General Physical Activity Promotion***

Regular physical activity helps improve one's overall health and fitness, and reduces the risk for many chronic diseases. Fitting regular exercise into your daily schedule may seem difficult at first, but the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* are more flexible than ever, giving you the freedom to reach your physical activity through different types and amounts of activities each week. It just might be easier than you think!

Physical activity can help control weight, reduce risk of diseases like cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and some cancers, strengthen bones and muscles, improve mental health and mood, improve ability to do daily activities and prevent falls. For older adults, exercise increases the chances of living longer and living independently.

Below are some simple changes to make physical activity happen in your faith-based community.

- Provide an on-site fitness facility or convert a room for dance, yoga, or strength and conditioning classes
- Take walking or stretching breaks at meetings
- Form walking clubs or biking groups
- Install bike racks
- Initiate a "take the stairs" campaign and make stairwells accessible
- Plant and maintain a garden with help of parishioners
- Create walking routes and map them out
- Encourage exercising from the pulpit or in newsletters

For more information and recommendations, visit <http://www.sc.edu/healthycarolina/physact.html> and <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/factsheetprof.aspx>

### ***Physical Activity Recommendations throughout the Ages***

The following chart will give you some information to share with parishioners of all ages. Additional sections provide details about exercising for your congregational members who are pregnant women and new mothers, adults with disabilities or older adults.

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Intensity Level of Aerobic Activity*</b>	<b>Recommended Amount of Time</b>
Children and Adolescents	Moderate or vigorous	At least 60 minutes a day; at least 3 days a week <b>and</b>
	Muscle & bone strengthening	Do exercises daily that build muscles and are weight-bearing
Adults	Moderate	At least 150 minutes a week; at least 10 minutes of exercise at a time, <b>or</b>
	Vigorous	At least 75 minutes a week; at least 10 minutes of exercise at a time <b>and</b>
	Muscle Strengthening	At least two or more days a week work all muscles.
Older Adults	--	Follow the same guidelines as adults if without any health limitations or be as physically active as abilities and conditions allow
Women during Pregnancy	Moderate	At least 150 minutes a week; at least 10 minutes of exercise at a time
Adults with Disabilities	Moderate	At least 150 minutes a week; at least 10 minutes of exercise at a time
	Vigorous	At least 75 minutes a week; at least 10 minutes of exercise at a time
People with Chronic Medical Conditions	--	Using guidance from a health professional, engage in regular physical activity as much as possible.

Aerobic or "cardio" activity increases breathing and heart beats. Moderate intensity aerobic activity means working hard enough to raise the heart rate and break a sweat and includes water aerobics, hiking, skateboarding, bicycle riding, pushing a lawn mower and brisk walking. Vigorous intensity aerobic activity means breathing hard, not being able to talk with someone, and fast and raising the heart rate significantly. Vigorous activities includes swimming laps, jumping rope, jogging, biking on hills, and playing sports like soccer, tennis, or basketball. Muscle strengthening should be done at least twice a week, working legs, hips, back, chest, abdomen, shoulders, and arms and includes lifting weights, working with resistance bands, digging or shoveling, and yoga. Because being overweight already taxes your heart and lungs, it is important for individuals carrying 50-100 extra pounds to talk to their physician and, perhaps, a trainer about selecting the safest exercises and appropriate activity schedules.

The recommended amount of time may seem like a lot, but it all doesn't have to be done at one time. Not only is it best to spread your activity out during the week, but breaking it up in smaller chunks of time during the day may make it easier to accomplish, as long as the effort is moderate or vigorous and

at least 10 minutes at a time. Exercising beyond 300 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity or 150 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity activity results in more health benefits.

Every effort counts. Here are some activities that will easily allow anyone to incorporate physical activity into the day.

- Don't just walk the dog, put some effort into it and really walk the dog.
- Set a goal for 30 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week and break it up into 10-minute increments.
- Take 10 minutes on your lunch break to go for a brisk walk.
- Take a 10 minute walk in the morning, at noontime, and before or after dinner.
- Get off the bus a few blocks before your stop and walk briskly the rest of the way.
- Keep up with the chores. Being active around the house: sweeping the garage, vacuuming the floors, mopping, mowing the lawn, or trimming the shrubs all count.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Try new activities like line dancing, roller blading, ice skating, or even salsa dancing.
- Count every step. Get a pedometer and keep track of your "steps" everyday.

For more information on various activities and tips on getting active, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website for Physical Activity for Everyone at <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/getactive/index.html>. Also, *Be Active Your Way: A Guide for Adults* provides some information on being active (<http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/adultguide/default.aspx>).

#### *Healthy Pregnant or Postpartum Women*

As the chart above indicates, it is perfectly ok to be physically active during pregnancy as it helps keep weight gain to the right amount and keep the lungs and heart healthy. Physical activity does not increase your chances of low-birth weight, early delivery, or early pregnancy loss. After having a baby, a mom benefits from exercise that can hasten weight loss and control mood swings. But, if a mom begins physical activity during pregnancy, it should start slowly and increase gradually over time. Pregnant women should avoid doing any activity that involves lying down or increase the chances of falling or abdominal injury, such as horseback riding, soccer, or basketball. The faith community can offer special exercise classes for pregnant women and new mothers.

Healthy women who already do vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, such as running, or large amounts of activity can continue doing so during and after their pregnancy provided they stay healthy and discuss with their health care provider how and when activity should be adjusted over time. According to scientific evidence, the risks of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, are very low for healthy pregnant women. It's also not likely that the composition or amount of breast milk or the baby's growth will be affected by physical activity. Unless you have a medical reason to avoid physical activity during or after your pregnancy, you can begin or continue moderate-intensity aerobic activity.

#### *Adults with Disability*

Adults with a disability benefit from regular physical activity which strengthens the heart, lungs, and muscles, improves mental health, and improves ability to do everyday tasks. It's best for these adults to

get guidance from health care provider or physical trainer before beginning a physical activity routine. Faith-based organizations should include exercise classes which permit those with disabilities to participate, as often as possible. For additional information, visit The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability at <http://www.ncpad.org/>.

### *Older Adults*

Physical activity can help to prevent many of the health problems that seem to come with age. It also helps muscles grow stronger and one live independently. Not doing any physical activity can lead to unnecessary weight gain, raise blood pressure, and hasten the onset of other chronic diseases. Some physical activity is always better than none at all. Just like for adults with disability, faith-based organizations should plan to offer exercise classes that older adults will want to attend.

Adults 65 years of age or older who are generally fit and have no limiting health conditions can follow the physical activity guidelines for adults. Because everyone's fitness level is different, the level intensity of an exercise like walking differs greatly depending one's health condition, skills, endurance level, and personal preferences. Offer as many types of physical activities to appeal to many ages and physical conditions.

For more information on various activities and tips on getting active, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website for Making Physical Activity a Part of an Older Adult's Life at <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/getactive/olderadults.html>.

### ***Facilities/Access***

If your faith-based organization has a facility, basketball court, or other recreational area, consider sharing it with the community so that everyone may take advantage of having an area to be physically active and get the exercise they need to be healthy. There are special agreements for shared use that require a group to carry insurance can minimize your organization's liability. If no facility exists on your grounds, is there a school nearby that has recreational facilities? There may be an opportunity to share in either case. Schools or other nearby community organizations can offer safe, clean facilities. They may even have tracks, gymnasiums, fitness rooms, pools, or playgrounds that could benefit your organization.

The Public Health Law and Policy has created a toolkit that provides model agreements, case studies, funding options, as well as other information on implementing joint use agreements. Joint use agreements allow school districts, local governments, and community-based organizations to share costs and responsibilities for recreational areas. The materials offered by Public Health Law and Policy are specific to opening school grounds to the community after hours, but it is a good place to start in looking at joint use agreements. Joint use agreements to open spaces for exercise can help your organization as well as your community increase physical activity and better health and wellness. For more information, visit [http://www.phlpnet.org/healthy-planning/products/joint\\_use\\_toolkit](http://www.phlpnet.org/healthy-planning/products/joint_use_toolkit).

**Group Activities**

Group activities are a great way to get the entire congregation involved. Getting started is simple and can be customized to suit the needs and/or likes of the group.

- Organize fitness classes and include the schedule as part of the weekly bulletin
- Develop fitness guides and offer them to members of the congregation
- Organize a walking group or club
- Organize intramural sports teams like basketball and softball. Reach out to surrounding organizations to see if they will do the same; then you can compete against one another
- Set challenges and goals (like walking a certain number of miles per month)

The opportunities are endless. Group fitness can be a fun and effective way to get your members up and moving and maybe even create some friendly competitions.

**Equipment**

Equipment for physical activity can be everything from a hula hoop to a treadmill. Assuming that you need expensive fitness machines to promote physical activity is a common misconception. There are numerous easy inexpensive tools you can acquire that are fun and promote physical activity in your faith-based community. Below are some easy ideas for working in physical activity for kids or adults, without relying on bulky equipment and without spending a lot of money.

<p><b>Item: Hula Hoop</b>          Obstacle course with / hoops          Jump through hoop          Maze          Roll &amp; return with spin          Circular movements with arm and legs          Hula-hoop (head, arms, waist, neck, wrist)          Walk on it hoops          Jump (through hoop)          Balance (hoop on hand and head)</p> <p><b>Item: Bean Bag</b>          Throw thru hoop          Balance (on hand or head)          Toss to each other          Hot potato</p> <p><b>Item: Paper plate</b>          Balance on head          Frisbee          Use as a mask          Set the table          Balance (Hoop on hand and head)</p>	<p><b>Item: Basket</b>          Toss bean bags into basket          Relay          Balance on head          Clean up destination          Identify color (put items in the basket)</p> <p><b>Item: Brown Bag</b>          Use as puppet          Add cotton balls &amp; toss into basket          Treasure hunt bag          Sensory development          Surprise grab bag          Puppets          Arts &amp; Crafts</p> <p><b>Item: Long Tube / Noodle</b>          Limbo          Waterplay          Relay running          Wave in the air          Balance on hand          Limbo</p>
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<p><b>Item: Pom Pom</b>  Cheerleader (Jump/Hop)  Dance-Creative  Exercise  Dance  Pom Pom (wig)</p> <p><b>Item: Streamer</b>  Limbo  Expressive Dance  Twist (crepe paper)  Scarf  Arts &amp; Crafts</p>	<p>Stretch the noodle  Jumping games (over noodle)  Tug o war</p> <p><b>Item: Ball</b>  Roll on stomach  Catch  Throw  Dodge ball  Kickball  Basketball  Bounce on the ball</p>
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If specific equipment is desired and your organization has the space to house it, consider reaching out to congregation members or the local community for donations of used and unwanted equipment.

There may be one or more fitness clubs in your community. Inquire about discounted rates if multiple people within your organization are interested.

## Section 5: Health Care

Inadequate health care access may affect a number of members of your congregation. Besides preventing disease through promoting healthy eating and physical activity, your role in wellness may include helping these individuals find coverage for the health care they need. Changing eating and exercise habits, especially if they have existed a long while, will take steady work and requires one successful step at a time. Even modest weight loss can bring a blood pressure or blood sugar into normal range. Overtime, we need to consider that just like an automobile that requires a specific type of gasoline and constant use to run normally, our bodies require appropriate foods and regular exercise to work well.

### ***Prevention Education across the Lifespan***

Prevention is key when it comes to health and teaching the members of your faith organization about prevention is important. Chronic diseases – such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and arthritis – are among the most common, costly, and preventable of all health problems in D.C.

Four modifiable health risk behaviors—lack of physical activity, poor nutrition, tobacco use, and excessive alcohol consumption—are responsible for much of the illness, suffering, and early death related to chronic diseases.

- More than one-third of all adults do not meet recommendations for aerobic physical activity based on the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, and 23% report no leisure-time physical activity at all in the preceding month.
- In 2007, less than 22% of high school students and only 24% of adults reported eating 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day.
- According to the American Heart Association, over 99 percent of the U.S. population has less than perfect cardiovascular (heart) health, primarily due to poor dietary habits and physical inactivity.
- More than 43 million American adults (approximately 1 in 5) smoke.
- In 2007, 20% of high school students in the United States were current cigarette smokers.
- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death, and cigarette smoking causes almost all cases. Compared to nonsmokers, men who smoke are about 23 times more likely to develop lung cancer and women who smoke are about 13 times more likely. Smoking causes about 90% of lung cancer deaths in men and almost 80% in women. Smoking also causes cancer of the voicebox (larynx), mouth and throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, pancreas, cervix, and stomach, and causes acute myeloid leukemia.

- Nearly 45% of high school students report consuming alcohol in the past 30 days, and over 60% of those who drink report binge drinking (consuming 5 or more drinks on an occasion) within the past 30 days.
- A large number of studies provide strong evidence that drinking alcohol is a risk factor for primary liver cancer, and more than 100 studies have found an increased risk of breast cancer with increasing alcohol intake. The link between alcohol consumption and colorectal (colon) cancer has been reported in more than 50 studies.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The CDC has a section on its website dedicated to recommendations, best practices, and guidelines for chronic disease prevention and health promotion. To learn more about the materials and resources offered and to find those that will best suit your organization's needs and goals, please visit this website: <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/guidelines.htm>.

Locally, there are a number of prevention programs that are available to members of the faith community: [YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program](#) helps individuals learn about and adopt the healthy eating and physical activity habits that have been proven to reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. For more information, visit <http://www.ymca.net/diabetes-prevention/>.

### **Health Screenings**

Health care is slowly shifting from “sick care” requiring treatments to a “prevention-based care” approach. Discovering an illness before symptoms develop can improve the potentially poor outcomes associated with that illness. The key to prevention is screenings- as they can catch a disease in development, though no symptoms or other indications of an illness may be present. Screenings typically include blood pressure, blood cholesterol, body weight. Body Mass Index (BMIs) and blood sugar checks. Also included are lab tests that check for abnormal values related to heart health, cancer, and sexual transmitted diseases. Many of these tests are quick, non-invasive, and relatively inexpensive.

Hosting a health screening in your place of worship may not be the first step in your wellness efforts. But, if you conduct a screening, be sure to have a place or list of health care professionals and programs to refer those who have elevated tests. Also provide them key information gained from the American Heart Association or other voluntary health organizations. Start by promoting the message of prevention to your congregation. There are many community initiatives that already offer health screenings right here in the District. Encouraging members of your congregation to go to these screenings is important. See below for some health screenings available:

**Washington Hospital Center (WHC)** is a key community partner for health promotion in the District. WHC offers education opportunities and several screenings throughout the year for little or no cost to participants. WHC offers a variety of community programs and is also looking for ideas and suggestions for community outreach. Visit their website for more information and

see how your organization can become involved:

[www.whcenter.org/communityevents](http://www.whcenter.org/communityevents)

**Left Line Screening** in partnership with George Washington Hospital offers screening packages with held frequently throughout the District. Packages are broad, require appointments, and have costs associated with the services. See website for more information:

<http://www.gwhospital.com/Community-Health-Screenings/Community-Events/Life-Line-Screening>

As your wellness initiatives continue to develop, you may find that you now have the resources to host your own screening or can organize a screening through community partnerships in your place of worship. There are a few things that your organization should consider when starting to plan a health screening:

- What screenings should we offer?
- How will the screening be paid for?
- At what cost will this be to our members, if any?
- How can we utilize health professionals in our congregation?
- What equipment and other resources will you need (tables, hazardous waste removal, electricity for medical equipment)?
- What will the follow-up process consist of to help ensure participants take effective action once screened?

### ***Health Fairs***

Another way to spread the message of prevention is to host a health fair. The main purpose of a health fair is to increase awareness regarding overall wellbeing through demonstrations, activities, and education materials. Health fairs also offer the opportunity to inform members of your congregation about health services and resources in the community. These type of events require a lot of preparation, but, with thoughtful planning, can be carried out by your faith-based organization! It is recommended to begin planning your health fair at least six months before you will have it.

The most important tasks to consider are:

- Identify target audience
- Decide what activities and events to include
- Create a theme
- Outline timeline
- Determine budget
- Plan for date and schedule of event

As mentioned previously, there are many tasks associated with planning a health fair. Designating tasks to smaller groups within your wellness or health care committee can be helpful. You may also want to

recruit outside members from your congregation as well as from the community. Areas of focus should include:

- Location (space, permission to use, tables, chairs, bathrooms, food preparation areas)
- Supplies (education materials, door prizes/give-a-ways, donations, decorations)
- Food/Food Safety
- Volunteers
- Health professionals from congregation or community
- Advertising and promotion
- Safety/Crowd Control
- General logistics

There are several resources available to help your faith-based organization plan a successful health fair. Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension offers a complete guide with step by step instructions for planning a health fair and includes customizable forms (for soliciting donations, thank you notes to sponsors, and marketing materials). Be sure to use this valuable resource when your organization is ready to plan a health fair: <http://fcs.tamu.edu/health/hfpg/>

### ***Health Services Directory***

As your faith-based organization works to increase awareness of health and access to preventative and treatment services in your community, consider developing a health care directory. A directory of health care professionals within the congregation and community will serve as a great resource to your members by providing information about physicians and other health professionals including: locations, hours of operation, services offered, methods of payments, credentials, etc.

There are health directories available online such as the Medline Plus, which is at: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/directories.html>. The District of Columbia's Board of Medicine provides additional information about practicing health professionals: <http://app.hpla.doh.dc.gov/weblookup/>

For a more personalized and local directory, your faith-based organization can create your own! Often information can become out of date quickly, therefore the best option, if available, is to have the health services directory posted on your organizations website. Consider the following:

- Provide web-based and/or print copies
- Update list and schedule
- Start with members of your congregation that are health professionals
- Have directories available during and after health screens/fairs for members of your congregation to use

## Section 6: Take Action

### *Opportunities for Success*

Remember the first thing you can do is serve as a role model. Having the clergy practice the healthy eating and physical activity habits sends a powerful message.

Rejoice! Celebrate! Commemorate all the success your organization has made. Celebrate even the smallest of achievements to keep you and the members of your organization motivated to do more. Your success means that everyone has joined together to improve their health and wellness. Everyone should be proud.

There are various ways to celebrate, just remember how far you have come. Some examples include:

- Recognition of the group or committee during a service for their planning and efforts
- Certificates for those that have participated in a program or activity
- Healthy breakfast, luncheon, or dinner
- A picnic or cookout (with games and physical activities planned too!)

## Resources and Tools

Content in this guidance was adapted from:

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3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cigarette Use Among High School Students—United States, 1991–2007. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report [serial online]. 2008; 57(25):686–688 [accessed 2009 Jan 10].
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Prevalence of self-reported physically active adults—United States, 2007. MMWR 2008;57:1297–1300. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5748a1.htm>
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2007. MMWR 2008;57(SS-04):1–131. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5704a1.htm>
6. Naimi TS, Brewer RD, Miller JW, Okoro C, Mehrotra C. What do binge drinkers drink? Implications for alcohol control policy. American Journal of Preventive Medicine 2007;33:188–193.
7. National Center for Health Statistics. Health, United States, 2007. With chartbook on trends in the health of Americans. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics; 2007. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus07.pdf>  [PDF-6MB]
8. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: A Report of the Surgeon General—Smoking Among Adults in the United States: Cancer*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2004.

### Faith Based Community Wellness Toolkits

North Carolina Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/AfricanAmericanChurches/AfricanAmericanChurches>

Whitehouse Faith Based Toolkit

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/faithbasedtoolkit.pdf>

FNS Promising Practices <http://www.fns.usda.gov/outreach/promising/>

USDA center for Faith Based and Neighborhood partnerships Together we can partnership series

## Community Gardens and Farmers Markets

Let's Move Community Garden Resource Guide

<http://www.letsmove.gov/sites/letsmove.gov/files/pdfs/LetsMoveCommunityGardenGuide0411.pdf>

Tanikka Cunningham, Director, Healthy Solutions Group,

<http://www.healthysolutionsgroup.org/>, [tcunningam@healthysolutionsgroup.org](mailto:tcunningam@healthysolutionsgroup.org) – they run farmers markets and cooking classes in SE and NE among other healthy food access projects and sometimes partner with local faith groups.

Janet Stone, Director of Development and Marketing, THEARC, [www.thearc.org](http://www.thearc.org), [jstone@thearc.org](mailto:jstone@thearc.org), a community center that is focusing on health and food access for the Congress Heights community.

For free seeds for your gardens, The America the Beautiful Foundation is a great resource and they are a national organization that is DC-based: <http://www.america-the-beautiful.org/>

Farmers Market Promotion Program <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/FMPP>

D.C. Hunger Solutions congratulates the three D.C. farmers markets that received [2011 Farmers' Market Promotion Program grants](#) from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These awards are a testament to the dedication of District farmers markets to increasing access to affordable, healthy food for low-income residents.

- [Aya Community Market](#), a project of Dreaming Out Loud, received a grant to begin accepting SNAP (food stamps) at its market, and to offer nutrition education and other programming.
- With its grant, [Columbia Heights Community Marketplace](#) will expand its Festibucks program, which doubles the value of SNAP, WIC "Get Fresh" checks and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) purchases - up to \$10 each week.
- The [Ward 8 Farmers' Market](#) will use its grant to expand the number of SNAP users shopping at the market by increasing outreach and education. Ward 8 Market also doubles the value of SNAP, WIC, and Senior FMNP purchases.

These farmers markets are building on existing efforts to increase access to healthy foods for low-income families in the District. Nineteen of the District's 31 markets accept SNAP payments – a huge jump from fewer than 10 accepting SNAP just a few years ago. Eight of the 19 markets accepting SNAP offer bonus or double dollars for SNAP, WIC "Get Fresh," and Senior FMNP purchases.

[D.C. Farmers' Market Collaborative](#), a coalition of market managers, advocates, and city agency staff that works to support farmers markets and address barriers to bringing more fresh produce into

underserved neighborhoods.

Food Desert Locator <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-desert-locator.aspx>

### **Food Assistance Programs**

D.C. Central Kitchen prepares 25 million meals for our low-income and at-risk neighbors in Washington, DC. [www.dccentralkitchen.org](http://www.dccentralkitchen.org)

Healthy Corners <http://www.dccentralkitchen.org/healthycorners/>

Help Us Feed Kids During the Summer <http://www.summerfood.usda.gov/>

Join the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to learn more about how you can help feed children next summer and hear the benefits to being a part of the Summer Food Service Program!

### **Healthy Eating on a Budget**

Healthy Eating on a Budget <http://www.eatright.org/bom/>

EWG healthy eating on a budget <http://www.ewg.org/goodfood/>

### **Health Screening**

The Mayo Clinic website offers suggestions for screenings based on age and gender. See website for more information: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/health-screening/WO00112>

The American Kidney Fund offers free medical screenings and follow-up services (including medical referrals and public education materials). These services are provided at a variety of venues including churches. Visit their website for more info:

<http://www.kidneyfund.org/get-tested/find-a-screening/washington-dc.html>

Understanding and Calculating the Body Mass Index (BMI)

[www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6844#.UEkS9KAs18E](http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6844#.UEkS9KAs18E)

<http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6845>

<http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=6844>

Find Insurance Options <http://finder.healthcare.gov/?audience=cond&state=VA>

YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program <http://www.ymca.net/diabetes-prevention/>

UMD Prevention Research Center <http://www.sph.umd.edu/umdprc/>

### **Information for Pregnant and Breastfeeding Mothers**

*Text4Baby* is a free texting service that provides health tips and reminders to support healthy pregnancies and babies. Text4Baby was developed through a broad public/private partnership, including government, private and nonprofit partners. <http://www.text4baby.org/>

### **Joint Use Agreement**

<http://www.nplanonline.org/nplan/products/playing-smart>

[http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org/asset/g19776/btg\\_joint\\_use\\_agreements-2-10-12.pdf](http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org/asset/g19776/btg_joint_use_agreements-2-10-12.pdf)

### **Physical Activity**

Let's Move Campaign Resources for Getting Active

<http://www.letsmove.gov/blog/2012/02/09/resources-getting-active>

The National Recreation and Parks Association works with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to plan for and implement policy strategies that promote healthier lifestyles. A variety of resources including issue briefs, webinars, and online training can be found here:

<http://www.nrpa.org/Grants-and-Partners/Recreation-and-Health/Healthy-Communities/>

### **Videos**

The Weight of the Nation <http://theweightofthenation.hbo.com>

Introductory video on YouTube about how to get started with MyPlate, based on the consumer brochure, developed by an outside organization:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87xBZisdodY>

The Fruits and Veggies More Matters campaign is doing great work through the Produce for Better Health Foundation. They have a Fruit and Vegetable Video Center:

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/video/VideoCenter.php>

Kids Eat Right is a resource produced by registered dietitians through the American Dietetic Association. Their collection of videos is available here:

<http://www.eatright.org/kids/videos.aspx>

# Appendix 1 - Work Plan for Faith Based Wellness Activities and Programs

DRAFT Work Plan for Faith Based Wellness Activities and Programs							
Strategies for Faith-Based Institutions							
Strategy	Type of Strategy	Action Steps	Evaluation	Responsible Party	Resources	Timeline	Related Policies and Plan
<b>Goal 1: District of Columbia residents are able to maintain healthy eating and physical activity at their faith-based institutions to support a healthy weight.</b>							
<b>1.A. Objective: Each year, an increasing number of faith-based institutions will promote healthy eating and physical activity.</b>							
<b>Objective 1.A. Indicator:</b>							
<b>* Number of faith-based organizations that report development and implementation of wellness programs.</b>							
6.A.1. Develop and implement sustainable wellness programs and policies.	<p>Changing Organizational Practices</p> <p>Mobilizing neighborhoods/communities</p>	<p>1) Develop a template wellness programs that can be adopted and tailored by a broad range of faith-based institutions that promote healthy food service, physical activity, and worship services with health messages</p> <p>2) Conduct training workshops and develop materials (i.e. Healthy Ministry Best Practice Guide) for faith leaders on how to introduce and sustain a wellness policy in their churches.</p> <p>3) Conduct parishioner needs assessments</p> <p>4) Foster partnerships with health professionals, hospitals, and other groups.</p>		DOH, Coalition of Faith-based leaders, Mayor's Office of Faith-based Affairs, AHA, DC Hunger Solutions	DCPS Local Wellness Policy, Search Your Heart, Body and Soul, Health-e-AME	2010	CDK - Objective 5A
6.A.2. Encourage the use of health impact assessments when new facilities are designed or built.	Changing Organizational Practices					2011	
6.A.3. Extend to non-members in the community access to healthy living activities and recreational spaces through joint use agreements.	<p>Fostering coalitions and networks</p> <p>Changing organizational practices</p>	Develop guidelines for establishing partnerships between faith-based organizations and workplaces, child care programs, and other community-based organizations that address liability issues.	Existence and use of guidelines	DOH, DPR, faith-based institutions, DC Board of Trade, DC Chamber of Commerce, DC employers	Model agreements are available at <a href="http://www.nplanonline.org">www.nplanonline.org</a>	2013	Section: Parks, Recreational Facility, and Fitness Programs
6.A.4. Enhance the ability of faith-based communities to form partnerships with health professionals to deliver preventive services to residents.	<p>Fostering coalitions and networks</p> <p>Changing organizational practices</p>	Develop guidelines for establishing partnerships between faith-based organizations and workplaces, child care programs, and other community-based organizations that address liability issues.	Existence and use of guidelines	DOH, DPR, faith-based institutions, DC Board of Trade, DC Chamber of Commerce, DC employers	Model agreements are available at <a href="http://www.nplanonline.org">www.nplanonline.org</a>	2013	Section: Parks, Recreational Facility, and Fitness Programs

## Appendix 2 - Sample Community Health Assessment Survey

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Faith Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

By answering the following questions, you will be able to better understand 1) what your faith community is doing, 2) what your faith community would like to do to improve health through nutrition and physical activity, and 3) what is important to your community.

***Instructions: Please read each statement carefully and place a check next to the statements that best describe your faith community.***

**Which of the following does your faith community presently offer (or has offered in the past year)? Please check all that apply.**

### **Health Promotion and Services**

- Active Health/Wellness committee or ministry
- Person in charge of health related activities
- Health fair
- Health screenings (blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar/diabetes, etc.)
- Leadership promote wellness (nutrition and physical activity) in a public speech or sermon in the past year
- Promote nutrition and physical activity information on bulletin boards and/or in the bulletin, program or newsletter
- Parish nursing program
- Directory of health services in your area (doctors, dentists, nutritionists, physical trainers, etc.)

### **Nutrition**

- Kitchen or place to prepare meals
- Food Pantry
- Vegetable Garden on-site
- Healthy cooking classes
- Nutrition classes
- Farmers Market
- Information on federal nutrition programs (SNAP, WIC, free/reduced school lunch, etc.)
- Guidelines for faith community meals/snacks require that:
  - Fruits and vegetables be offered
  - Whole grain foods be offered
  - Limit soda and high sugar beverages that are offered

- 100% fruit juice be offered
- Water be offered
- Limit the amount of high fat and fried foods that are offered
- Limit high sugar foods
- Limit foods high in salt
- Limit candy
- Limit portion sizes of food/drinks served
- Healthy eating guides or healthy recipes and/or cookbooks
- Weight loss support groups
- Other health related support groups (diabetes, heart disease, etc.)
- Breastfeeding support group
- Having a private nursing mother's room available in our facility

**Physical Activity**

- Playground
- Walking groups/clubs
- Exercise classes
- Organized sports team activities
- Ball fields or courts
- Exercise room or equipment
- Physical activity at meetings and functions such as exercise breaks
- Fitness guide
- Walking path/trail
- Relationship with fitness club to offer discounted rates
- Shared facility with community (Joint use agreement)
- Access to stairs as an alternative to elevators

Other things that you are doing to promote health and wellness in your faith based community.  
Please list \_\_\_\_\_

None of the above

**What are your community's top three wellness goals?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

*Adapted from Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More Resource Guide*

## Appendix 3 - Sample Faith Community Member Health and Interest Survey

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Faith Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Please read each statement carefully and place a check on the line that best describes your interests.

1. I am interested in taking the following steps to improve **my health**: (check all that apply)

- \_\_\_\_ Learning more about healthy food choices
- \_\_\_\_ Adding more fruits and vegetables to my diet
- \_\_\_\_ Learning ways to manage my weight
- \_\_\_\_ Learning more about physical activity
- \_\_\_\_ Increasing my physical activity level
- \_\_\_\_ Walking to increase my physical activity level
- \_\_\_\_ Participating in team activities and sports
- \_\_\_\_ Learning about places in my community where I can be physically active
- \_\_\_\_ Participating in health activities with our faith community before services
- \_\_\_\_ Participating in health activities with our faith community after services
- \_\_\_\_ Learning about the benefits and how-to's of breastfeeding

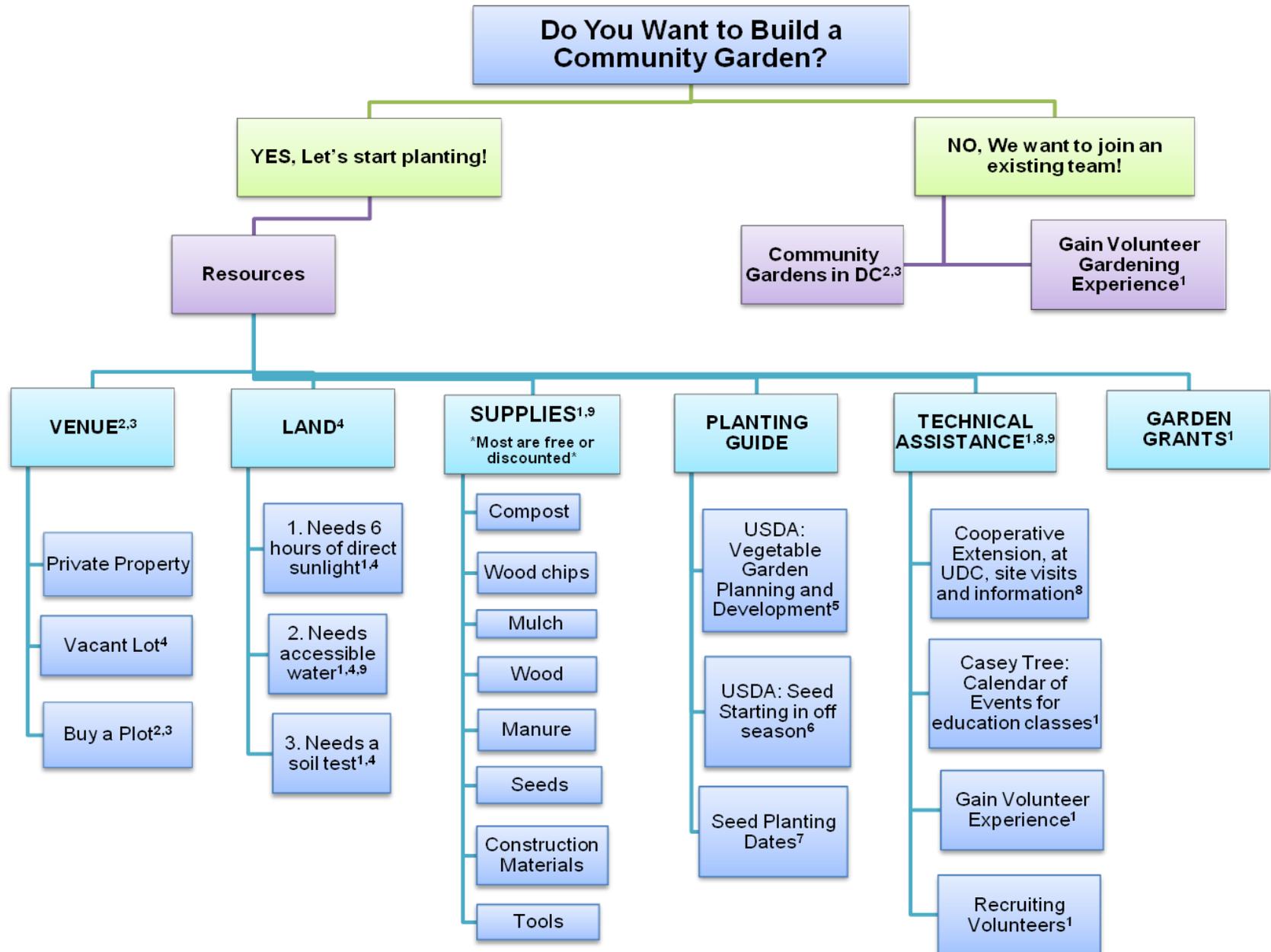
2. I am interested in having the following available to **our faith based community**: (check all that apply)

- \_\_\_\_ Tasting events to sample healthy foods
- \_\_\_\_ Healthy cooking classes
- \_\_\_\_ Having healthy meals and snacks available
- \_\_\_\_ Having a kitchen or place to prepare meals
- \_\_\_\_ Community garden in our faith community
- \_\_\_\_ Farmers Market
- \_\_\_\_ Nutrition classes
- \_\_\_\_ Healthy recipes and/or cookbooks provided to community members

- \_\_\_\_\_ Weight loss support groups
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other health related support groups (diabetes, heart disease, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Walking groups
- \_\_\_\_\_ Exercise classes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Playground
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ball fields or courts
- \_\_\_\_\_ Organized team activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to see more places to be physically active in our faith community
- \_\_\_\_\_ Learning more about the benefits of physical activity and learning how much physical activity I need to be healthy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Health fairs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Health screenings (blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar/diabetes)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Leadership promote wellness in a public speech or sermon
- \_\_\_\_\_ Health information in our bulletin, newsletters and/or posted on bulletin boards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Directory of health services in your area (doctors, dentists, nutritionists, personal trainers etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Information on federal nutrition programs (SNAP, WIC, free/reduced school lunch, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Receiving health information that I can read, listen to or watch on my own
- \_\_\_\_\_ A private room for nursing mothers available in our facility
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please list)\_\_\_\_\_

***Adapted from Faithful Families Eating Smart and Moving More Resource Guide***

# Appendix 4 - Community Garden Flowchart



## Community Garden Flowchart Resource List

### 1. DC Gardens Services Survey, Field to Fork Network:

Includes a plethora of information on gardening information including: supplies, instructional information, local gardens, markets, related events, and related stores.

[http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/DC-Garden-Services-Surveys-final\\_MayUpdate.pdf](http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/DC-Garden-Services-Surveys-final_MayUpdate.pdf)

*Supplies- page 1 & 14*

*Water- page 5*

*Soil test- page 6*

*Recruiting Volunteers- page 6*

*Garden grants- page 7*

*Instructional/Informative services- page 9 & 11*

*Gardening Volunteer Opportunities- page 10*

### 2. All Community Garden Data, Field to Fork Network:

Chart including all of the existing gardens in DC and information on plot availability for purchase/rent and also volunteer opportunities. The data sheet also provides you with their location/ward information and contact information. Whether you want to build your own garden or join an existing team- this is a great resource for finding a venue near your faith-community! If a community wants to help maintain a neglected plot, some people may be happy to share their existing plot which would avoid a waitlist.

<http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/community-gardens/chart/>

### 3. Community Gardens Map, Field to Fork Network:

Here is a map that has divided the District of Columbia by wards and includes streets and neighborhoods. The gardens are shaded in red. On the right side of the page there is a list of all the gardens that link to their respective information biography. This tool may help you identify gardens near your faith-based community. <http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/community-gardens/>

### 4. Community Garden Census 2010 Report, Neighborhood Farm Initiative:

“Best Practices for Community Gardening” section includes information on verifying your water supply, testing for safe soil, organizing your community garden structure, partnering with other

organizations to benefit the neighborhood, and collaborating with other community gardens to share resources and keeps costs down. <http://fieldtoforknetwork.org/community-gardens/2010-report/>

**5. Community Garden Guide: Vegetable Garden Planning and Development, USDA:**

USDA's Community Garden Guide provides easy to follow instructions on starting a garden from scratch! It includes information on garden shape, garden preparation, garden row orientation, and fertilization, types of crops, and example plots and planning guides. It is important to note the crops are ones typical of Michigan, so you should verify that the crops that you plant are specific to the season and DC location. <http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/pubs/mipmcot9407.pdf>

**6. Community Garden Guide Season Extension: Seed Starting, USDA:**

Often times we are ready to begin gardening before the weather allows us! Although there are plants for each season, there is also a way to be ahead of the curve by planting seeds indoors and then transplanting them to outside once the temperature is favorable. The USDA has a great guide in providing information on seed starting. <http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/pubs/mipmcar9781.pdf>

**7. 2012 Best Spring Planting Dates for Seeds, The Old Farmer's Almanac:**

The Old Farmer's Almanac site provides information on when to plant for the spring including particular dates for each crop based on geographical location. <http://www.almanac.com/gardening/planting-dates/DC/Washington>

**8. Cooperative Extension Service, College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability & Environmental Sciences (CAUSES) at the UDC:**

The Cooperative Extension Service provides training for both gardening and nutrition including a hour long class, as requested, and can often visit your gardening site. Please feel free to contact Mary Farrah by email at [mfarrah@udc.edu](mailto:mfarrah@udc.edu) or by phone at 202-274-6682.

**9. Technical Materials, D.C. Schoolyard Greening**

This section of the DCSG website provides information on gardening and horticulture support groups as well as local nurseries, hardware stores, and other suppliers. <http://www.dcschoolyardgreening.org/training/techmaterials.html>