



Is your congregation a Healthy HotSpot?



Faith communities are gathering places where people pray, worship, learn, serve and spend time in community with each other. The practices of our traditions help us understand what it means to be whole and healthy in our minds, bodies and spirits and how to live in ways that promote justice and equity in the world. A faith community that is intentionally applying the commitments of its tradition and teachings to support the health of its members and community is a Healthy HotSpot!

There are many ways that faith communities can help to create a culture of health --- not only for their own members, but for the larger community, as well. Does your faith community share meals or offer refreshments? Do you have open space or collect food for the community? Some faith communities have made their facility 100% smoke-free or have required healthy food options to be offered whenever food is served. Some have started walking clubs or exercise groups for their members and neighbors. Still others grow food on their land in order to donate fresh food to the local food pantry, offer building space to community exercise groups, or join with other partners in making community improvements like bike paths, farmers' markets, or better sidewalks. Some faith communities lead efforts to eliminate hunger and poverty in their neighborhoods. Almost every congregation brings people together in meaningful and supportive relationships.

All of these initiatives can have a positive impact on the health of faith community members and the health of the larger community.



Led by the Cook County Department of Public Health in collaboration with many partners, Healthy HotSpot aims to build healthy places in suburban Cook County through community partnerships. Made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Learn more at www.healthyhotspot.org.

Which can you check off?

✓ Tobacco Free Living

- **Develop internal policies** to encourage tobacco-free living. (ex. *Tobacco Free Campus*)
- **Offer programs** to help people quit smoking. (ex. *Tobacco Cessation programs, education for youth on impact of tobacco use or e-cigarettes*)
- **Build community partnerships**, collaboration and education for more tobacco-free living. (ex. *Support smoke-free multi-unit housing in the neighborhood*)

✓ Connect to Healthy Eating

- **Develop internal policies** to offer healthier food and beverages during congregational functions. (Ex: *Fresh food options at events; Less sugary drinks offered*)
- **Offer programs** to increase healthier options for the community. (Ex: *Bring healthy options to community dinner or food pantry; Grow & donate garden produce; Use kitchen facilities for healthy cooking events*)
- **Build community partnerships**, collaboration & education for healthier options. (Ex: *Adopt a corner store to request and reinforce fresh food sales; Build bridges with other congregations, social service and civic agencies to impact local food and beverage offerings; Encourage local restaurants to include health information or healthier dishes on their menu*)

✓ Connect to Active Living

- **Develop internal policies** to make active living options easier to access. (Ex. *Make joint use agreements with community organizations to make congregation space available for physical activity; Adopt "Instant Recess" policies in congregational meetings and institutes*)
- **Offer programs** for the community to increase physical activity opportunities. (Ex: *Start a walking group or fitness class; Use outdoor space as an activity lot for community; Use congregational property for community gardening*)
- **Build community partnerships**, collaboration & education for better physical activity. (Ex: *Join in a city-wide effort to improve streets, sidewalks, bike paths and intersections; Encourage outdoor youth activities*)

✓ Prevent Chronic Disease

- **Develop internal structures** to help people with chronic disease manage their conditions. (ex. *Start a Health Ministry or Wellness Council, start a Support Team, build community and support networks*)
- **Offer programs** for education and health promotion. (ex. *hold health fairs or screenings, offer trainings, link to expert advice and resources*)
- **Build community partnerships**, collaboration and education to prevent chronic disease (ex. *Provide a site for a Chronic Disease Self-Management class, advocate for access to health care.*)

✓ Connect with Each Other/ Fostering Positive Relationships

- **Develop internal structures** to make sure that people are connected with each other in positive relationships (Ex. *Intergenerational programs, crisis support teams, small groups*)
- **Offer programs** that connect people in the congregation and community who need extra support. (Ex. *AA meetings, Companionship, Respite Care, Support Teams, Bichor Holim, Stephen Ministry*)
- **Build community partnerships** to nurture relationships across the community (Ex. *Participate in community networks, hold community dinners, host conversations about important issues affecting the community.*)

To be designated as a Healthy HotSpot, your congregation should take at least one action at any level in each of the five areas. Complete the application form and provide us with some detail on what you are doing.

Your application will be evaluated, and a staff person will follow up with you to do an interview and take photos for your profile. Please return the enclosed completed application and Healthy Hotspot Worksheet to Healthy HotSpot, Mission and Spiritual Care, Advocate Health Care, 3075 Highland Parkway, Downers Grove, IL, 60515.