

The faith community has often seen alcoholism, drug dependence, and other addictions as simply a moral issue or a sin that separates us from God. The medical profession recognizes it as a complex disease that affects the entire family.

We at Faith Partners see addiction disease as similar to other chronic illnesses (i.e. heart disease, diabetes) which have identifiable symptoms and behavioral components, but unlike the other chronic diseases,

ADDICTION HAS A SPIRITUAL REMEDY.

The faith community is one of the principal healers for addiction and in fact has a moral responsibility to address the addiction issue by creating a safe place to start the conversation and respond to those individuals and families in need of hope and healing.

“Addiction ministry should not be seen as an optional ministry because *ADDICTION AFFECTS TOO MANY INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES TO BE IGNORED*. There are lay people in the pews with the passion and life experience to serve in this area.”

Pastor Anne Andert, Faith Lutheran Church Janesville, WI

“A Faith Partners team ministry is the link between the recovery movement and the local community of faith. These teams allow for *CONNECTIONS TO BE MADE AND BROKENNESS HEALED*.”

Dr. Thomas M. Holmes, Director, Covenant Ministry Services, Lima, OH

“I hope that faith communities become vigorous centers of prevention and healing. The Faith Partners program is the *MOST PROMISING AVENUE OF HOPE I KNOW*. Already it has proved its efficacy in numerous congregations – ingeniously, without overburdening already busy clergy.”

Jim Nelson, Professor Emeritus, United Theological Seminary, Minneapolis, MN
Author of Thirst: God and the Alcoholic Experience



Equipping people to serve

For more information visit our Website

at faith-partners.org

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HOPE AND HEALING

Equipping people to serve with an informed, compassionate response to the risk and prevalence of addiction.



About Faith Partners

OUR HISTORY

Faith Partners, a non-profit 501c3, was founded in 1995 by religious leaders seeking ways to mobilize faith communities' resources to address alcohol and drug issues. In 2004, after years of development, Faith Partners congregational team approach was elevated to a national audience with a five year collaboration with the Johnson Institute.

A national religious leaders' summit and major outreach efforts marked this time together with the endorsement of the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church USA. Today the Faith Partners Congregational Team Model is used in hundreds of congregations in twenty-three states with nineteen different faith traditions.

OUR MODEL

Faith Partners provides the leadership, training, educational materials and consultation to initiate, develop and sustain congregation teams. The structured approach strengthens the ability of the congregation to create an environment where fewer individuals and families will experience substance abuse problems and will receive support earlier in the illness.

Each congregation works to create a safe place that allows for the conversation and

encourages people to access needed services consistent with their own faith perspective and personal experience with addiction.

The Faith Partners congregational team approach consists of trained lay people who serve the congregational community. It is unique in that:

- It builds on the strengths of the congregation by involving lay people with special expertise, life experience, and a passion for this work;
- Clergy time, energy, and involvement are carefully utilized;
- Teams are trained in five areas of service including prevention, early intervention, referral assistance, recovery support, and advocacy; choosing programs to meet the needs of their congregational community;
- Teams network with other congregational teams and bridge to community resources, keeping their efforts focused on their congregation's mission and the communities' needs;
- This effort is relevant to the whole congregation, young and old, individuals and families; and,
- This ministry cultivates a compassionate response to all human problems that makes the congregation a safe, hospitable, and healing place.

It Takes a Team

WHY WE WORK IN TEAMS

Faith Partners provides a thoughtful plan to start an effective team effort to address the needs of the whole congregation. Though alcohol and other drug issues affect every congregation - informed clergy supported by committed and trained congregational members can offer real help, hope and healing.

CONGREGATIONAL READINESS

It is necessary to build readiness and capacity to establish an effective, sustainable congregational team. Building a new ministry or service in a congregation takes time, planning, preparation, and training.



A National Study of Faith Partners' teams reveals that attitudes and perceptions of self and environment, more than experience, determined an increase in readiness to address addiction issues within the congregation.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), March 2010

BUILDING YOUR TEAM IN 4 STEPS

To begin this congregational ministry, Faith Partners recommends an important four-step developmental process.

1. Build Congregational Support –

Readiness and support are critical to establish these congregational efforts.

- a. Secure Congregational Readiness Tools
- b. Use tools to introduce ministry to clergy and congregational leadership.
- c. Use support line for questions.
- d. Send leadership to training.

2. Equip the Leadership – Attend Leadership Training, a six-hour workshop for clergy, staff and lay members of congregations.

3. Develop the Team – Complete the two-day Team Training for 3-10 team members, usually scheduled 2-4 months after leadership training, giving time to assess congregational needs, identify educational opportunities, and recruit team members.



4. Sustaining the Team Efforts –

It is critical to foster clergy support, laity development, and congregational governance involvement. Enhance team development by networking with other teams, on-going education, and additional recruitment. Consultation is based on the evolution of the congregational needs, readiness, and capacity to provide a variety of services.

TEAM ACTIVITIES

Teams often start with a few simple activities. These efforts grow in relation to a congregation's readiness and receptiveness and the size, experience, creativity and commitment of team members. Often teams broaden their focus from alcohol and drugs to other addictions as the need, interest or expertise presents itself.

Awareness Activities

- Newsletter Articles
- Worship Bulletin Inserts
- Literature Racks

- Related Library Books
- Community Prevention Events

Education Activities

- Communication skills for parents
- Offer Youth Prevention Activities
- Discuss Adult Alcohol Use Guidelines
- Understand Family Dynamics

Recovery Support Activities

- Recovery Worship Service
- Show Hospitality to 12 Step Programs
- Scripture/Twelve Step Study Groups
- Community Recovery Events

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM A TEAM

People who need help

- Learn they are not alone
- Receive spiritual guidance
- Find helpful resources
- Receive confidential support
- Begin to address issues
- Equipped to prevent problems

Clergy

- Learn healthy ways to respond
- More confident in addressing issues
- Receive support of team members
- Assisted with resource identification
- More outreach to membership

Team Members

- Engaged in meaningful service
- Able to integrate their recovery and faith
- Receive the joy of helping others
- Experience congregation as a healing place

Congregation

- Becomes more relevant and caring place
- Hope and help offered regularly
- Ministry fits and fulfills the mission
- Attracts people who want to serve
- Ministry integrates body, mind and spirit



MEASURING THE TEAMS SUCCESS

Teams initiate prevention and recovery activities within the first year and within three to five years the team ministry becomes institutionalized. It is imperative that the teams be nurtured and sustained through an active process of support and on-going education. The result of these team efforts when fully mature will be:

- Fewer people will experience alcohol, drug, and other addiction problems;
- More people will receive help in earlier stages of the disease;
- Family members will receive support and assistance in leading a healthier lifestyle;
- Teams connect to local and national advocacy efforts; and
- Congregations responding with a spiritual solution.

For more information visit our Website at faith-partners.org

Faith Partners has completed a Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) Service to Science evaluation enhancement grant and recently published a research article in a peer-review journal moving our model from a promising practice to an evidence-based intervention.

