

IMAGINE: Prevention Committed and Recovery Friendly

- Imagine every faith congregation being prevention committed and recovery friendly on alcohol, drug and mental health issues.
- Imagine people in your congregation being just as comfortable bringing casseroles to a family whose mother is in alcohol/drug treatment as one who is hospitalized for cancer.
- Imagine youth knowing that your congregation provides safe people to discuss their questions about drugs, alcohol and mental health issues.

PROBLEM: Families are hurt by alcohol, drug and mental health issues every day. Last year there were 100,000 overdose deaths over 85,000 from alcohol and nearly 1 in 5 adults sought professional help for a mental health issue. These problems also impact faith congregations. In recent surveys of 13 Nebraska congregations (N=1,012), 44% of respondents said that they were currently affected by or concerned about the alcohol/drug use of someone close. These problems also have a spiritual impact becoming a false god. Yet, few congregations address this issue directly and consistently.

OPPORTUNITY: Faith congregations could act...

- In the Nebraska survey, 78% agreed that their congregation should be helping families with both prevention and recovery.
- When asked if they would be willing to serve, 11% endorsed the response “Yes. Sign me up” and left their names.
- Most congregations have members who are ready and able.

...but key pieces are missing.

MODEL: Faith Partners fills in the missing pieces by providing...

- 1) Help in identifying** interested individuals.
- 2) Multiple training events** to help identify team members, train them and introduce them to 6 ways they can serve in helping with alcohol/drug & mental health issues.
- 3) Comprehensive materials** including a 100-page handbook, “How to Launch a Faith Partners Team.”
- 4) Long term professional support.** Staff personally engages Teams through conversation, frequent attendance at team meetings, quarterly networking meetings and “The Casserole Bite” e-newsletter.

UNIQUE APPROACH: Helps congregations become prevention committed and recovery friendly.

- It builds on the strengths of the congregation by involving lay people with special expertise, lived experience, and a passion for this work.
- The level of clergy engagement is up to the individual.
- Teams network together and build bridges to prevention and recovery resources; keeping their efforts focused on their congregation’s mission.
- This approach cultivates a compassionate response to all addiction and mental health issues.

COST: Costs are minimal, and no one is turned away.

- Major support is through SAMHSA Partnership for Success Grant (PFS# 79-SP08090988) DHHS Division of Behavioral Health and Region V Systems.
- This grant pays for training, materials and staff support.

FAITH PARTNERS: Our Story

We were trained by the national Faith Partners organization which has over **30 years of experience** in this work. They have trained 100's of congregations **from 22 faith traditions** in this model. Faith Partners Nebraska began in 2018. We now have **over a dozen teams from 6 denominations**. There are also partners in over 30 other congregations. This is an interfaith project under the management of Region V Systems.

FAITH PARTNERS OF NEBRASKA: Our Foundation

Mission: To help faith communities develop a team approach to prevention and recovery.

Purpose: To grow capacity in faith communities to respond with grace to alcohol, drug and behavioral health challenges.

Goals: To have faith communities play their full role in prevention and to reduce stigma and isolation by openly addressing alcohol, drug and behavioral health issues.

Vision: hundreds of faith communities across Nebraska that are prevention committed and recovery friendly.

MORE INFO:

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Faith Partners of Nebraska

*Helping Faith Congregations
Take a Team Approach to Alcohol, Drug &
Mental Health Issues*