

Faith
responds to AIDS

A red AIDS awareness ribbon is integrated into the design, with its two ends crossing to form an 'X' shape that passes through the word 'Faith' and the text 'responds to AIDS'.

This tool was developed as a guide to assist any faith denomination, church, mosque, Synagogue, temple, or other faith based institution in implementing the Faith respond to HIV/AIDS (FRTA) Initiative. The information provided can serve as a step-by-step guide for implementing FRTA and to offer tips to faith leaders and Communities.

Please contact: Kiyanna Williams., via electronic email at Kiyanna_williams@doh.stat.fl.us with any comments or questions.

"The particular faith that motivates each of us can promote a greater good for all of us. Instead of driving us apart, our varied beliefs can bring us together to feed the hungry and comfort the afflicted; to make peace where there is strife and rebuild what has broken; to lift up those who have fallen on hard times.

-- President Barack Obama

Faith Responds to AIDS

Faith Responds to AIDS (FRTA) is an all inclusive initiative, which was developed in recognition of the significant role faith communities play in HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support efforts. HIV prevention programs must be broad-based and cost effective; therefore, faith settings are ideal for the implementation of HIV programs serving hard-to-reach populations. The vision of FRTA is to advance HIV prevention efforts in communities that are hardest-hit by the HIV epidemic through information sharing, collaboration and partnerships between faith-based organizations (FBO) and community based organizations (CBO). Through FRTA, it is hoped that communities of faith and their leaders, regardless of race, ethnicity, or behavior, will mobilized to appropriately respond to the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in Florida.

What are the Goals of Faith Responds to AIDS?

The goals of FRTA are:

- To create a safe place for community members to go for HIV-related information and linkages to resources, regardless of religious denomination or affiliation
- To reduce stigma and discrimination by mobilizing FBOs and communities to have regular dialogues regarding the HIV/AIDS crisis in their communities
- To support the development and enhancement of health ministries by FBOs that address HIV/AIDS
- To encourage FBOs to participate in national HIV/AIDS observance days

Why Are Faith Communities the Key?

HIV/AIDS can be a difficult subject for faith-based organizations and leaders to discuss. However the impact that HIV is having in communities is too great to ignore. Addressing HIV requires the collective efforts of individuals, groups, and organizations within communities. In many communities, FBOs are well respected and important institutions, and they have a long history of collaborating with other faith and social organizations to address a wide range of social issues. Given the influential role that many FBOs and their leaders have in communities, there is a unique opportunity for them to encourage and support communities to take action to address HIV/AIDS; help reduce HIV/AIDS-related stigma, disseminate HIV prevention messages, and support linkage to care and adherence efforts.

What can Faith Communities Offer?

Addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Florida presents several opportunities for FBOs and their leaders to become involved in HIV prevention efforts. Historically, FBOs have served support systems for communities, and have provided for those in need. In supporting HIV prevention efforts, FBOs and their leaders can mobilize their communities into action; build partnerships; and identify resources to address HIV/AIDS in their communities. Faith communities can also:

- Provide resources (facilities, volunteers, health professional within congregations, etc.)
- Conduct community outreach (health ministry, health fairs, social activism,)
- Meet with religious leaders, coordinators of youth pastorals, youth leaders and parents to discuss the relevance of HIV prevention in their communities.
- Provide support information and education on HIV prevention and linkage to care
- Encourage men's participation in HIV prevention programs
- Foster community dialogue on ending stigma towards people living with HIV
- Encourage advocacy on the rights and responsibilities of people living with HIV
- Break the silence around HIV/AIDS through sermons
- Provide pastoral guidance and support
- Partner with other FBOs, CBOs, the local county health department, and the Department of Health's FRTA initiative

How to Get Involved in FRTA?

The only thing that it takes to become involved in FRTA is to make a commitment to making HIV prevention a priority. FRTA meets organizations and leaders where they are and provides opportunities to become involved by selecting one of three (3) levels of project engagement: endorsement, support, or participation. Once a level of engagement is selected, FBOs and/or leaders will be asked make a one-year commitment to keep the project logo and materials visible.

Endorsement

- FBO agrees with project goals and signs project commitment letter
- FBO agrees to display project logo and print materials
- FBO completes an evaluation form

Support

- FBO agrees with project goals and signs project commitment letter
- FBO agrees to display project logo and print material

- FBO distributes project materials
- Faith leader agrees to talk to congregants and local neighborhood community members about the HIV/AIDS crisis
- FBO participates and/or supports health department sponsored HIV/AIDS events and activities
- Faith leader completes an evaluation form

Participation

- FBO agrees with project goals and signs project commitment letter
- FBO agrees to display project logo and print material
- FBO distributes project materials
- Faith leader agrees to talk to congregants and local neighborhood community members about the HIV/AIDS crisis
- FBO participates and/or supports health department sponsored HIV/AIDS events and activities
- FBO agrees to enhance or develop a health ministry that includes HIV/AIDS outreach, education and linkage referrals
- Faith leader completes an evaluation form

In return for the faith-based organizations' willingness to participate in the FRTA project, they will receive the following benefits based on the level of commitment selected:

- Faith materials
- Basic HIV/AIDS 101 training for leaders and congregants
- HIV/AIDS information and resources
- FBO and participation will be highlighted in press releases, on website and in electronic correspondence
- Recognition as a "safe space" and/or supporter of FRTA

Potential activities at the endorsement level may include, but are not limited to:

- Placing printed material (posters, pamphlets) in annex, restroom, classrooms, and/or other areas
- Reading the commitment letter to the congregation, members, or groups
- Handing out educational/informational packets or linkage to care resources

Potential activities at the Support level may include, but are not limited to:

- Placing printed material (posters, pamphlets) in annex, restroom, classrooms, and/or other areas
- Reading the commitment letter to the congregation, members, or groups
- Inviting persons affected by HIV/AIDS to speak before the congregation
- Handing out educational/informational packets or linkage to care resources
- Planning activities in observance of HIV/AIDS Awareness Days; including World AIDS Day, National HIV Testing Day, National Latino HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, and/or National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- Hosting commemoration events in remembrance of those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS
- Hosting community dialogue to discuss the local HIV/AIDS epidemic
- Hosting educational workshops on HIV
- Hosting HIV testing events with local health department or community based organizations

Potential activities at the Participation level, may include, but are not limited to:

- Placing printed material (posters, pamphlets) in annex, restroom, classrooms, and/or other areas
- Reading the commitment letter to the congregation, members, or groups
- Participating in the National Week of Prayer for the healing of AIDS
- Hosting a health fair and including HIV/AIDS education and testing information
- Hosting commemoration events in remembrance of those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS
- Planning activities in observance of HIV/AIDS Awareness Days; including World AIDS Day, National HIV Testing Day, National Latino HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, and/or National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- Hosting musical events in recognition of the impact of HIV/AIDS in the community
- Hosting a inter-faith service for the community on HIV/AIDS Awareness Days
- Hosting a pray vigils for those impacted by HIV/AIDS

- Becoming an HIV testing site
- Hosting educational workshops on HIV
- Start health ministries within the church and other faith-based organizations

*** Example of FRTA products and ways to incorporate their usage in faith based activities**

Activities	FRTA Products
Food bag ministry	grocery bags, tote bags(limited)
Health fair	brochures holders, cups, fans, buttons, decals
Observance days	red ribbons, fans, buttons, decal, facts sheets, brochures
Group session on Abstinence	decals, open dialogue
Prayer Breakfast, Prayer visual	napkins and napkins holders, red ribbons



Date: _____

Name of FBO: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Title: _____

Why we need you?

The faith community is a very important part of the community. We would like you to join other local faith communities as a partner in the Faith responds to AIDS project by making HIV prevention materials available to your community and congregation.

What you agree to do as a project endorser:

- Faith institution agrees with project goals and sign project commitment letter
- Faith institution agrees to display project logo and print material
- Complete an evaluation form

What you will receive as a project endorser

- Faith materials
- Recognition as a “safe space” and/or supporter of FRTA

YES, My FBO Commits to Endorse this Project

X _____
Signature



Date: _____

Name of FBO: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Title: _____

Why we need you?

The faith community is a very important part of the community. We would like you to join other local faith communities as a partner in the Faith responds to AIDS project by making HIV prevention materials available to your community and congregation.

What you agree to do as a project supporter:

- Faith institution agrees with project goals and signs project commitment letter
- Faith institution agrees to display project logo and print material
- Faith institution distributes project materials
- Faith leader agrees to talk to congregants and local neighborhood community members about the HIV/AIDS crisis
- Faith institution participates and/or supports health department sponsored HIV/AIDS events and activities
- Complete an evaluation form

What you will receive as a project supporter

- Faith materials
- Recognition as a "safe space" and/or supporter of FRTA
- HIV/AIDS information and resources
- Faith institution and participation will be highlighted in press releases, on website and in electronic correspondence

YES, My FBO Commits to Endorse this Project

X _____
Signature



Date: _____

Name of FBO: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Title: _____

Why we need you?

The faith community is a very important part of the community. We would like you to join other local faith communities as a partner in the Faith responds to AIDS project by making HIV prevention materials available to your community and congregation.

What you agree to do as a project Participant:

- Faith institution agrees with project goals and signs project commitment letter
- Faith institution agrees to display project logo and print material
- Faith institution distributes project materials
- Faith leader agrees to talk to congregants and local neighborhood community members about the HIV/AIDS crisis
- Faith institution participates and/or supports health department sponsored HIV/AIDS events and activities
- Complete an evaluation form

What you will receive as a project Participant

- Faith materials
- Recognition as a “safe space” and/or supporter of FRTA
- HIV/AIDS information and resources
- Faith institution and participation will be highlighted in press releases, on website and in electronic correspondence
- Basic HIV/AIDS 101 training for leaders and congregants

YES, My FBO Commits to Participation in this Project

X _____

Signature

References

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UNFPA.2004. Engaging Faith-based Organizations in HIV Prevention: Training Manual for Programmes. New York:UNFPA.

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www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/aids/trends/trends.html

The Black Church and HIV: The social Justice Imperative.