

2023

W.R.A.P.

Well Resource Application Packet

Online Extended Version



FAMILY &
COMMUNITY HEALTH

THE WELL
CHURCH
INITIATIVE



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CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Well Churches, Well Families: Connecting for Health

Saturday, March 4 th , 2023	
9:00-9:05AM:	Welcome and Introductions
9:05-9:25AM:	Connecting Religion and Health with Dr. Mark D. Faries, PhD
9:25-9:35AM:	Q&A Session
9:35-9:45AM:	Break
9:45-10:35AM:	Connecting with your Faith Community: A Clergy Panel Discussion with Rev. Steve Doyle; Rev. Daryl Horton, DMin; Rev. Andrew Keuer, PhD; Pastor Robin Steele
10:35-10:55AM:	Q&A Session
10:55-11:05AM:	Break
11:05-11:20AM:	Connecting Children and Health with Dr. Jodi Nerren, PhD
11:20-11:30AM:	Q&A Session
11:30-11:45AM:	Connecting with Families for Health with Dr. Megan McClendon, PhD
11:45-11:55AM:	Q&A Session
11:55-12:00PM:	Closing Remarks

HOW TO USE THE W.R.A.P.

The **W.R.A.P. or Well Resource Application Packet** provides conference details and a guide for healthier living for your church or faith community. There are two versions of the W.R.A.P.

- *Conference Notes* on pages 5-6
- Online Extended Version

The **Conference Notes** serves as a place for attendees to take notes on practical applications and **Tips & Tasks**. We made it one-page, front and back, to limit printing. If you are hosting the conference at your church or faith community, we encourage you to **print out** the Conference Notes for you attendees to utilize during the conference.

The **Online Extended Version** contains the Conference Notes, Post-Reflection Questions, and additional resources. This content is meant to be used during and after the conference. Following the conference, your church or faith community can complete the Post-Reflection Questions to guide the healthy behaviors you plan to participate in.

WELCOME!

Welcome to the 2nd Annual Well Church & Community Conference! We're grateful and excited that you are able to jump-start your journey to health and wellness with us. Our topic this year focuses on connecting health with our church, families, and ourselves. This Conference Well Resource Application Packet (W.R.A.P.) was created from the feedback we received from attendees of the 1st Well Church & Community Conference. We hope you find this resource helpful as you navigate your health and wellness journey.

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

ABOUT THE WELL CHURCH INITIATIVE

The **WELL CHURCH INITIATIVE** of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's Family and Community Health aims to be a trusted partner with churches who are serving the health and wellness needs of their congregations and surrounding communities. We provide health education for physical and mental wellness, resources, and support for healthier living.

While we specialize in supporting local churches, we also welcome partnerships with other faith-based organizations, places of worship, non-profit organizations, healthcare, and statewide agencies who are seeking to positively impact the health and wellness of their communities.

The Well Church Initiative continues to establish new partnerships and expand resources to become a stronger source of support and education for faith communities. The Well Church & Community Conference is one of the ways we have carried out our mission. The annual conference is a free, virtual experience to improve education accessibility and encourage churches to host the conference to gather congregants with their community members together for fellowship and learning. We received constructive feedback from attendees following the 1st Annual Well Church & Community Conference, which assisted with improving and developing the 2nd Annual Well Church & Community Conference to better suit churches and faith communities.

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

The Well Churches, Well Families: Connecting for Health Conference equips clergy, congregants, and families with the necessary tools and resources to better serve and connect to meet the physical and mental health needs of families.

Topics include:

- **Connecting Religion and Health** - The link between faith and health is examined to explain how churches can establish this connection for you and your family.
- **Connecting with your Faith Community: A Clergy Panel Discussion** - You will hear from experienced clergy on ways to serve families in the church and community. The clergy will provide unique perspectives regarding geographic location (rural to urban), diverse congregations, and denominations.
- **Connecting Children and Health** - Practical tools and policies will be discussed to combat the various physical and mental health challenges our youth face today. Clergy and church leadership will gain insights on children from nursery to youth group to target foods served and incorporate active learning.
- **Connecting with Families for Health** - The church can play an instrumental role in the health and wellness of families. Discover the relevance and impact of churches connecting and supporting families as well as practical tools churches can use to better serve families.

SPEAKERS

PRESENTING RELIGION AND HEALTH

Dr. Mark D. Faries, PhD

Dr. Faries is the Director of the Well Church Initiative, an Associate Professor and Extension Health Specialist with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, and an Adjunct Faculty member at the Texas A&M Health Science Center. His research interests lie at the junction of religious beliefs, theology, and health behavior.

CONNECTING WITH YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY: A CLERGY PANEL DISCUSSION

Reverend Steve Doyle, MDiv

Rev. Steve Doyle is the Executive Director of the Brazos Valley Baptist Network, an association of sixty-five Baptist churches. In that role Rev. Steve serves as a church consultant, coach, and ministry strategist. He is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, TX and received his master's degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY.

Reverend Dr. Daryl Horton, DMin

Rev. Dr. Daryl Horton is a native of Austin, Texas and resides there with his wife of 27 years, Dr. Shalonda Horton, and serves as Pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in historic East Austin. Rev. Daryl Horton earned a BS from Texas State University, a MA in Theological Studies from Austin Graduate School of Theology, a MDiv from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and a Doctor of Ministry from Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University.

Reverend Dr. Andrew Keuer, PhD

Pastor Andrew acquired his education in California (BA at The Master's College), in Michigan (MDiv at Calvin Theological Seminary), and in Scotland, UK (PhD in Theological Ethics at the historic King's College at University of Aberdeen). He spent almost a decade in college-level and graduate-level theological lecturing and administration – first at institutions in the UK; and second, at the Greek protestant theological college in Athens, Greece where Pastor Andrew served as Professor of Theology & Ethics and Director of two academic programs. Currently, Pastor Andrew is the Senior Minister at First Protestant Church of New Braunfels.

Pastor Robin Steele, BBA

Pastor Robin Steele graduated from Texas State University in San Marcos, TX in 1998 with a BBA in Marketing. In 2001, he worked at his home church as Children's Pastor. In 2003, with the assistance of Kenneth Phillips, Robin and 30 others started PromiseLand San Marcos Church. Today, it has grown into a thriving community of over 1000 believers.

PRESENTING CONNECTING CHILDREN AND HEALTH

Dr. Jodi Nerren, PhD.

Dr. Nerren is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist for early childhood with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. She leads the agency's statewide efforts to improve the settings where young children learn, play, and grow by educating caregivers and strengthening systems that support children's healthy development.

PRESENTING CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES FOR HEALTH

Dr. Megan McClendon, PhD.

Dr. McClendon is the Program Coordinator of the Well Church Initiative, an Extension Program Specialist for Texas A&M Extension Service, and an Adjunct Faculty member with the Texas State University Public Health Program.

CONFERENCE NOTES

The Conference Notes provides a place for attendees to take notes on practical applications and **Tips & Tasks**. We encourage the use of the Conference W.R.A.P. during and after the conference in combination with the *Online Extended Version* available on wellchurch.tamu.edu.

CONNECTING RELIGION AND HEALTH

As you take notes, think about how your faith can be connected to your health.

CONNECTING WITH YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY: A CLERGY PANEL DISCUSSION

As you listen to the Clergy Panel, take notes, and think of how their methods or suggestions could be applicable to your own church or faith community.

CONNECTING CHILDREN AND HEALTH

<p>TIP 1 – Supporting healthy eating can occur through healthy food swaps for foods served in nurseries, or youth events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Examples:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Replace sugary beverages with water○ Replace fruit gummy snacks with fresh fruit	<p>TASK 1 – First, list the foods that are typically served at churches or faith communities. Next, go through each option and list a healthy alternative. No ideas? Check out the <u>'Healthy Food Swaps' located in the Extended W.R.A.P., Appendix A.1.</u></p>
<p>TIP 2 - Policies or guidelines can be created and implemented to promote healthy lifestyles in the nursery or youth events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Example: Healthy Food Policy - <i>“At youth events and services, we will serve only water and provide at least one fruit and vegetable.”</i>	<p>TASK 2 - Identify aspects in the nursery or youth events that may need a policy to promote healthier living. Then draft a policy that will suit your church’s needs. Check out the <u>'Policy Examples' located in the Extended W.R.A.P., Appendix A.2.</u></p>

CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES FOR HEALTH

<p>TIP 1 – Children can observe healthy patterns at home and learn healthy behaviors that can continue throughout their lifetime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Children’s dietary patterns mirror those of their family/parents. Shopping, cooking, and eating together is an opportunity to model healthy eating behaviors.	<p>TASK 1 – Identify healthy patterns that occur at your home including healthy dietary and physical activity behaviors. Then identify 1 additional healthy pattern that you could incorporate into your family’s daily life, such as adding 1 vegetable to each meal or taking family walks.</p>
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POST-CONFERENCE REFLECTION QUESTIONS

RELIGION AND HEALTH DISCUSSION

TIP 1 – Decades of research has confirmed the positive connection of religion and health. Particularly, religious service attendance is a strong predictor of reduced risk of premature mortality (dying before our time), including from cardiovascular disease and cancer—our two leading causes of death in the USA.¹⁻⁴

However, this benefit can vary depending on key areas:

1. The healthiness of one’s lifestyle,
2. How connected this healthy lifestyle is to one’s religious beliefs,
3. The physical, mental, and spiritual wellness of the faith community, and
4. The support congregants receive (or not) from their faith community for adopting a healthy lifestyle.

TASK 1 – Take a Well Church Check-up

1. Clergy and/or church leadership can use the **Well Church Check-up** to discover the current physical, mental, and spiritual wellness of your congregation.

This FREE resource is available from the Well Church Initiative website:

wellchurch.tamu.edu

2. Use your results and make a plan to improve one or more of the four key areas of benefit listed under the Tip section.

CLERGY PANEL DISCUSSION

List the current health needs faced by your family or families within your congregation and community.

In the past, has your church or faith community connected with families to meet their health needs? If so, please list below. If current efforts are being made, please list those.

How would you suggest your church or faith community can connect with families in the congregation and community regarding health and wellness? Are there specific ages across the lifespan that need more attention?

Are there any resources your church or faith community needs to better connect and serve families?

CONNECTING CHILDREN WITH HEALTH DISCUSSION

Support and active engagement from various people and places involved in the lives of children and adolescents is necessary to help establish and maintain healthy dietary patterns that support healthy weight and the prevention of chronic disease. ⁵

Young children may take up to 8 to 10 exposures before a child will accept a new food. ⁵

- Offering the same type of food to children multiple times, in a variety of forms, or prepared in different ways can increase acceptance and intake of healthy foods. ⁵ For instance, a child may dislike raw vegetables but may accept the cooked version.
- Using snacks as an opportunity to encourage the intake of nutrient-dense food group choices (i.e., carrot sticks and apple slices) is important during early childhood when snacking is common. ⁵

Regular physical activity can improve bone health, cardiorespiratory and muscle fitness, and cognition (including academic achievement), and reduce the symptoms of depression in youth. ⁵ Physical activity reduces the risk of excessive weight gain and helps youth maintain a healthy weight. ⁶

- Adults caring for preschool aged children should encourage active play (light, moderate, or vigorous activity) and aim for at least 3 hours per day of physical activity. ⁶
- School-aged children (6-17) need to participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous activity daily. ⁶
 - Examples of physical activity: walking, running, playing on playground equipment, or playing in sports.

List the typical foods served in the nursery, Sunday School, or youth events at your church.

List healthy food alternatives to be served in the nursery, Sunday School, or youth events at your church. For ideas use 'Healthy Food Swaps' located in the Extended WRAP, Appendix.

List physical activities, if any, that are currently available to children in the nursery, Sunday School, or youth events.

List healthy lifestyle policies established for the nursery, Sunday School, or youth events, if any.

Draft policies regarding healthy eating for the nursery, Sunday School, or youth events.

Draft policies regarding physical activity for the nursery, Sunday School, or youth events.

Intentionality is key! Incremental changes are the pathway to success and sustainability. However, one healthy change is not the endpoint, rather the starting point.

CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES FOR HEALTH DISCUSSION

The role of faith-based institutions is important for cognitive and moral development across the life cycle. Church is a place for children to learn how to obtain and sustain positive healthy relationships.⁷

Scholars refer to the term “social capital” as friendship networks fostered by religious communities. These relationships give people a sense of belonging while potentially helping cope with stress and reinforcing positive health behaviors.⁸

How does your church or faith community support and promote healthy relationships for families?

How has your social capital influenced the health of your family at home?

What healthy patterns occur at home that promote healthy behaviors for the entire family?

List church or faith community events that would promote healthy lifestyles by increasing physical activity and social interactions for families. For instance, your church or faith community can register for Walk Across Texas Adult and Walk Across Texas Youth for families to interact and exercise.

List healthy lifestyle policies established for church or faith community events, if any.

Draft policies regarding healthy eating for church or faith community events.

Draft policies regarding physical activity for church or faith community events.

RESOURCES

Find Well Church Initiative resources at wellchurch.tamu.edu

- Well Church Check-up
- Well Church & Community Conversations Series
- Well Church Initiative News

Locate your Texas A&M AgriLife Extension County Office

- Find your county in the directory using this link: <https://counties.agrilife.org/>

Use USDA Nutrition and DHHS Physical Activity Guidelines

- Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 at https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-12/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans_2020-2025.pdf
- Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition at https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf

THANK YOU!

We are extremely grateful for the speakers who shared their experiences and expertise. Thank you to all the individuals, churches, and organizations that hosted and attended the conference. Our hope is that you were able to learn and fellowship with your congregation and community members. Lastly, we would like to thank the USDA for funding the Well Church Initiative as we strive to support churches through education and resources.

ANNOUNCEMENT!

We are happy to announce the **3rd Annual Well Church & Community Conference** will be held on **March 2nd 2024!**

Stay connected through the Well Church Initiative News to receive updates and health education.

Sign up for the News and contact us through wellchurch.tamu.edu

The 2nd Annual Well Church & Conference was funded by:



APPENDIX A.1

Healthy Food Swaps^{5, 9-10}

TIPS	EXAMPLES OR ALTERNATIVES
Increase fruit and vegetable intake during snack or mealtimes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Serve fresh fruit to reduce sugar intake - Ensure at least 1-2 fruits and vegetables are served <i>*Be mindful of choke hazards for young children for fruit and vegetables</i>	Fruits and Vegetables* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cut up strawberries - Cut up grapes - Easy Peel Tangerines or Mandarin Oranges - Cut up bell peppers - Small broccoli florets - Small carrot sticks - Cherry Tomatoes
Increase whole grain intake during snack or mealtime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% whole wheat bread - Whole wheat crackers
Increase low sodium or no sodium options during snack or mealtime. <i>*Be mindful of nut allergies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low sodium pretzels or crackers - For meals that use canned vegetables or beans use low sodium or no sodium - Unsalted nuts* - Low sodium broth
Remove or reduce the amount of salt in recipes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use herbs and seasonings that do not have additional salt in them
Reduce the amount of foods high in saturated fats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase foods that are baked, sauteed, roasted or steamed
Reduce or eliminate sugar-sweetened beverages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish water as the primary beverage - Replace with sweet tea with unsweet tea - Replace with 100% juice (limit to 1 serving per day = 1/2 cup or 4oz)

APPENDIX A.2

Policy Examples¹¹

Below are examples of policies (guidelines) and actions that meet these policies.

Policy: There will be a physical activity break in all church or faith community events that last longer than 1 hour.	
Actions:	Who will implement policy:
Take a 10-minute stretch or walk break during a church or faith community meeting.	Clergy leadership or designated individual
Policy: All church or faith community events that serve food will include fruits and vegetables.	
Actions:	Who will implement policy:
Potlucks or luncheons will include at least 3 vegetable dishes and 3 fruit options.	Kitchen staff or congregation
The nursery will have at least 1 fruit and 1 vegetable option.	Nursery supervisors/teachers

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