

SAMHSA.gov

The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

## Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI)

### Background

#### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT, MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, RECOVERY AND SPIRITUALITY: PARTNERSHIPS THAT WORK**

*The beneficial role that faith and spirituality play in the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse and in programs designed to treat and promote recovery from substance abuse and mental disorders has long been acknowledged. The work of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), serves as a model of how effective partnerships can be forged between Federal programs and faith-based and community organizations to benefit people with or at risk for mental and substance abuse disorders. Only through such partnerships designed to build resilience and facilitate recovery can SAMHSA achieve its vision of a life in the community for everyone.*

#### **The Role of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

Since its inception in 1992, SAMHSA actively has engaged and supported faith-based and community organizations involved in substance abuse and mental health services. For example, the Community Substance Abuse Prevention Partnership Program alone included over 800 faith-based community partners among its grantees. SAMHSA's Block and Formula Grant program funds - made available to States - in turn are available through the States to countless faith-based organizations that engage people with or at risk for mental and addictive disorders. SAMHSA-supported training programs and curricula not only support substance abuse prevention, addiction treatment, and mental health services education for multi-denominational leaders of the faith community, but also help create integrated, sustainable collaborations at the local level nationwide.

In 2000, SAMHSA became the first HHS agency to undertake a specific Faith-Based and Community Initiative. The initiative emphasizes the key role Faith-Based and Community organizations play in the delivery of substance abuse prevention, addiction treatment, and mental health services, particularly to underserved communities and to culturally diverse populations. Today, SAMHSA's Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Workgroup also coordinates the Agency's work in support of the President's Faith-Based and Community Initiative, including the identification and elimination of barriers to these groups' participation in SAMHSA funding opportunities.

SAMHSA's long experience with faith-based and community organizations to support resilience and recovery in substance abuse prevention and treatment, and mental health services has demonstrated the effectiveness of local, grass-roots programs in eliciting positive changes in people's lives, paving the way for individuals to become full partners in American society.

## **Building on Success**

**Promoting Partnerships and Best Practices:** Through a variety of funding mechanisms SAMHSA supports programs in mental health services, substance abuse prevention and addiction treatment that are undertaken with community and faith-based organizations at the national, state, and local levels.

**Youth Violence Prevention** - SAMHSA's Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) School and Community Action Grants/Youth Violence Prevention Cooperative Agreements grant programs promote community-wide efforts to prevent youth violence and substance abuse and to promote healthy youth development. A number of faith-based organizations, including Catholic Charities and the Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation, are recipients of these funds. A key component of this program is the promotion of community coalitions and partnerships to address youth violence and encourage positive youth development. Representatives of the faith community are integral members of these coalitions in a significant number of the grantee programs.

### **Increasing Access to Substance Abuse Treatment and HIV/AIDS Services -**

Through the Targeted Capacity Expansion HIV/AIDS program, SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) is working to increase the availability of substance abuse treatment and HIV/AIDS-related services in African American, Hispanic/Latino and other racial or ethnic minority communities affected by the twin epidemics of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. Many faith-based organizations are grantees, such as AIDS Interfaith Network, Inc. of New Haven, CT, and Metro Interdenominational Church of Nashville, TN.

SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) also has provided funding to faith-based and community organizations to address the problem of HIV/AIDS in minority communities, primarily to help build capacity in minority communities for sustained effective efforts to combat substance abuse use and HIV/AIDS. In addition, CSAP has provided funding to support the work of the Metropolitan Organizing Strategy Enabling Strength (MOSES) Village Builder's Project, a faith-based coalition of forty Detroit, MI, congregations providing culturally-appropriate substance abuse prevention services to families and youth.

**Reducing Homelessness** - The Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) provides funds from SAMHSA's CMHS to States and Territories that, in turn, allocate these dollars to local agencies, for services to persons with serious mental illnesses including those with co-occurring substance abuse disorders who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Many of the organizations that receive PATH funds are faith-based. The PATH program is unique since all locally funded agencies must coordinate their services with faith-based and community organizations serving homeless people with serious mental illnesses.

**Crisis Counseling** - The faith community played an important role in responding to the tragedy of September 11, 2001. In the past, faith organizations have participated in SAMHSA disaster response programs, among them, Catholic Charities during the Oklahoma bombing; Lutheran Social Services in tornado-related disasters; and the

Virgin Islands Baptist Church in responding to hurricanes and other disasters.

**Trainings/conferences:** SAMHSA continues to host numerous conferences and training programs that help faith-based and community organizations enhance their work in substance abuse prevention, mental health services, and addiction treatment.

In September 2002, SAMHSA began its **Grassroots Training Initiative**, a series of over 40 training and technical assistance meetings to provide training in grant writing and capacity building and introduce SAMHSA and its policy and program priorities to grassroots organizations throughout the country.

In August 2002, SAMHSA held its **Sixth Annual Symposium for Faith and Community-Based Organizations**, which focused on strengthening collaborations, expanding local resources, and building capacity to provide substance abuse prevention, treatment, and mental health services, as well as program management and successful grant writing. This SAMHSA-wide Symposium grew out of a 2001 substance abuse prevention-oriented national interfaith meeting sponsored by SAMHSA's CSAP that drew over 150 members of faith and community organizations and explored promising practices and model substance abuse prevention programs, highlighted the experience of faith organizations involved in prevention, and provided training on the SAMHSA grant application process.

Since 1998, CSAT has hosted numerous conferences linked to faith-based efforts. A 1998 **CSAT National Faith Initiative Conference** was held to establish links between substance abuse treatment programs, the National Association of Chaplains, and the One-Church, One Addict (OCHOA) organization, followed by a series of four conferences and technical assistance workshops in 2000 that also involved the Johnson Institute Foundation and the National Congress of Black Churches. In 2001, both national and regional focus groups worked to identify and propose ways to eliminate barriers to grassroots organizations successfully competing for SAMHSA funds. Several training and technical assistance conferences on grant writing and best practices were convened; supplemental grants were made to 24 Targeted Capacity Expansion (TCE) grantees to collaborate with faith-based organizations for the provision of ancillary services. In 2002, CSAT continues its technical assistance efforts, hosting sessions on promising practices, capacity building, grant writing and evaluation that support and extend the broader SAMHSA training initiatives.

**Substance Abuse Resource Guide: "Faith Communities"** - This guide serves a starting point for parents, teachers, researchers, and program directors seeking a review of information available on substance abuse prevention and treatment and the role of faith-based organizations. It contains information on booklets, brochures, fact sheets, reports, magazines, newsletters, videos, posters, studies, articles,

organizations and Internet sites available.

**Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Abuse Challenges and Responses for Faith Leaders** -This instructional tool on substance abuse treatment for clergy and lay persons was designed with two goals in mind. The first is to educate clergy about the nature and extent of alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse; the process of becoming addicted; and current approaches to preventing, intervening with and treating substance abuse. The second is to encourage clergy to take an active role in confronting substance abuse by sharing the experiences of other faith communities that have already done so.

### **Toward the Future**

SAMHSA is committed to a policy of respect for and cooperation with faith-based and community organizations. It will continue its work to -

Continue training for smaller grassroots and faith-based organizations.

Convene meetings with faith leaders to address issues involved in funding substance abuse treatment grants to the faith community.

Establish and maintain a planning group to build strategic alliances with faith-based and community groups.

Develop a curriculum for seminary students in counseling parents and children of alcoholics, in collaboration with the Johnson Institute Foundation and the National Association of Children of Alcoholics.

Host dialogues between a small group of congregations and families around issues of mental health, support and recovery.

Develop regulations responsive to States, local governments, and religious and provider organizations that will be implementing SAMHSA's Charitable Choice provisions.

### **Funding Opportunities**

Information about grant opportunities is and will continue to be made available on the SAMHSA website at [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov). Click on "Grant Opportunities." Visit regularly for updates. Interested parties also can call SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) at 1/800-729-6686 (1/800-487-4889 TDD) for substance abuse grant applications, or SAMHSA's National Mental Health Information Center for mental health grant applications, at 1/800-789-2647 (or 1/800-443-9006 TTY).

[Back to FBCI Home Page](#)



United States Department of Health and Human Services  
**Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration**  
*"A Life in the Community For Everyone"*



FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES