



**TOOLS FOR
ESTABLISHING AN
EFFECTIVE HEALTH
MINISTRY**

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BALM IN GILEAD

A Message Pernesssa C. Seele

For over 30 years, The Balm In Gilead has been a bridge between faith and public health. Health disparities and inequalities continue to impact our families, communities and our churches. These challenges are also affecting our young people. It is more important than ever that we lend our voices, time, and knowledge to help reshape our homes, churches, and communities to support today's youth to be healthy, thriving, and the best version of themselves they were created to be!

It is has been my life's work and my heart's joy to strengthen the CHURCH, the place where we have gathered for centuries to not only enrich our souls but to enlighten our minds so that we may make the right choices to live a full and productive life

The next generation is relying on us to pave the way for their future. My prayer and hope is that this guide will serve as a tool for congregations across the country to build strong effective health programs that will meet our children wherever they are.

It is in the context of prayer that people of faith believe that everything begins and ends. In prayer, let us offer our love as an ever---flowing balm sufficient enough to heal us all in MIND, BODY, and SPIRIT!

Always Abiding in Faith & Love,



Pemessa C. Seele
Founder & Chief Executive Officer
The Balm In Gilead, Inc



INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

CELEBRATING OVER 30 YEARS OF SERVICE!

The Balm In Gilead, Inc. builds and strengthens the capacity of faith communities throughout the United States to deliver programs and services that contribute to the elimination of health disparities.

The organization develops educational and training programs specifically designed to establish sustainable, integrated systems of public health and faith principles, which helps to improve health outcomes of individuals living in urban, rural, and remote communities.

The Healthy Churches 2030 National Campaign, The Southeast Diabetes Faith Initiative and The National Brain Health Center for African Americans are three unique programs of the Balm In Gilead. These programs deliver evidence-based, science-based, health awareness, understanding and interventions through the tenets of cultural competence to a broad spectrum of African Americans across the United States.

The Balm In Gilead, a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization, has developed an international reputation for providing insightful understanding of religious cultures, values and extraordinary abilities to build strong, trusted partnerships with faith communities throughout the world.

By working with national, regional, and local faith-based partners, The Balm In Gilead establish grass-roots health delivery systems, and increase the number of individuals who have the knowledge to lead in areas of health promotion, disease prevention, screening, and disease management.

This guide has been created with the faith community in mind to provide evidenced based and sound guidance to those looking to establish effective and sustainable faith-based health programs. As a leader in providing technical assistance and capacity building to churches and faith institutions this guide will provide you with the information, tools, and resources necessary to have an impactful health ministry that is equipped to meet the needs of both congregations and the communities they serve .

THE BALM IN GILEAD ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Build the capacity of faith communities to:

- ✚ Provide compassionate leadership in the prevention of life-threatening diseases and health disparities
- ✚ Disseminate prevention, treatment and care information
- ✚ Deliver supportive services to those infected and affected by life threatening diseases
- ✚ Build the capacity of community-based organizations and state and local agencies to collaborate with faith institutions to address public health issues in Black communities;
- ✚ Raise awareness in the community at-large of the unique strengths of Black faith institutions to address public health issues.

ROLE OF FAITH AND CHURCHES IN THE COMMUNITY

Throughout communities worldwide, churches are considered to be the most important institution in the community. The faith community plays a major role in shaping our lives and our communities on spiritual, socioeconomic, and political issues.

Churches are the places where the community sets and enforces social norms. Through established social systems and networks, faith communities are unparalleled in their ability to reach the masses of people across gender, all age groups, and all socioeconomic statuses.



Health ministries and other faith-based initiatives are a unique and powerful way to help empower communities to change behaviors, address a variety of health disparities, and improve the overall quality of life for individuals and communities.

PUBLIC HEALTH & FAITH

The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or injury.” This definition challenges communities and

organizations to develop and implement programs and services in a new and holistic way to truly achieve a good health. With growing health disparities and inequalities in healthcare and improved health outcomes, it is even more critical that public health organizations and faith communities come together. Both institutions share a common mission and goal to help improve the lives of communities and address health issues and needs of those they have dedicated themselves to serve.

OVERVIEW TO GUIDE

Just like a health ministry, a *Faith-based Youth Wellness Program* is a structured program within the church or religious institution that focuses specifically on providing health education, promoting the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and provide resources and services aimed at addressing the unique issues of youth in both the congregation and the community at large.

This guide will provide faith-based organizations with the information and resources to effectively plan, develop, implement, and evaluate programs and initiatives to address the health and wellness of adolescents and young adults, ages 13 – 24, within congregations and communities. This guide will help faith leaders and communities to:

- Provide compassionate and appropriate leadership in the prevention and management of the mental, physical, and social health challenges among youth.
- Provide education and information related to health and wellness that is gender specific and culturally appropriate for youth
- Increase awareness among your congregation and community about important health disparities impacting children and young adults
- Identify trainings, resources, and other tools to support the provision of youth focused programs
- Identify strategies to strengthen youth wellness program through the effective use of community engagement, communication, and partnership building

GETTING STARTED

The Balm In Gilead strongly believes in the power of the faith community and have seen first-hand what can be achieved when this community is given the tools and resources to meet the needs of its people. No matter the size of your church or community, there are key elements necessary to create an effective and impactful health program.

This guide will discuss and provide details on the following areas:

- ✚ **Identifying and Setting Program Priorities**
- ✚ **Developing Program Goals and Objectives**
- ✚ **Community Engagement and Partnership Development**
- ✚ **Evaluation and Sustainability**

ASSESSMENT: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH HEALTH CHALLENGES

A critical component to any program is an assessment. The health needs of individuals and the congregation may not reflect the wider health needs of the community.

Unfortunately, children and youth experience the same health disparities and challenges as adults. However, the barriers and reasons for these disparities can be quite different. Effective programs must understand how to specifically assess the health and wellness needs of youth and their families.

Why do an assessment?

- To get a more honest and objective description of needs from individuals and the community.
- To become aware of possible needs that you never saw as particularly important or that you never even knew existed.
- To make sure any actions you eventually take are in line with needs that are expressed by the community.
- To get more group and community buy-in and support for the activities and programs you plan to implement

Ways to Conduct a Health/Needs Assessment (for Youth) -

There are a variety of ways to conduct and collect information from both your congregation and the community. A great place to start the process is to ask yourself a few questions:

What is the current landscape of youth well-being in the target area?

What do you want to find out from the assessment and are there any gaps?

Types of Assessments-

► Surveys –

- *TIP: make these short and brief; having them available electronically is a great way engage young people*

► Focus Groups –

- *TIP: make these events fun and interactive; incorporating gamification can be helpful to maximize input from youth*

► Observations –

- *TIP: Creating safe spaces and visiting places where young people congregate is a great way to not only build trust but to glean useful information into real-life behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions*

DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN WITH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Every effective program or initiative should have a written strategic plan.

This plan needs to have the following elements:

Goals and Objectives – These should always be SMART (*Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-Sensitive*).

Be Action Oriented

On-going Review and Assessment

- Must be bi-directional to ensure you receive feedback from target population or audience
- Conduct consistent and routine engagement opportunities for the target population and/or audience
 - This could include hosting community forums, townhalls or “edutainment” style events that offer opportunities to provide education in a fun and entertaining manner

Communications and Social Media

- + Benefits
- + Best Practices & Guidelines
 - Determine best type of social media
 - Develop a strategy
 - Evaluate use and outcomes
- + Mass Communication



PARTNERSHIPS

No one church or organization can independently serve all the needs of a community alone. Building partnerships is one of the most important components of building and sustaining your wellness program.

Establishing Strong Partnerships

- Determine what other organizations or churches are in your area that you share common interests and goals with.
- Identify possible ways in which your program and potential partners can collaborate to address health issues in the community
- Identify opportunities to share and/or obtain resources through leveraging partnerships

EVALUATING YOUR PROGRAM

The work any church, health ministry, or organization requires an on-going review and analysis to determine not only the effectiveness of the work but also to determine when changes need to be made to current processes or when the work itself is no longer needed.

Evaluation is a systematic look at how well a program or initiative is doing at achieving its goals and objectives. Evaluation can be used in

every aspect of a project or activity and can work with a variety of programs including health ministries.

Framework for Good Evaluation

There are six (6) steps that are a good framework to use in creating your evaluation plan for your health ministry:

- Determine your stakeholders and ensure they are engaged in evaluation
- Have a clear description of the program and its objectives
- Ensure evaluation is focused and concise
- Gather and collect information to guide the process
- Determine what conclusions can be made
- Determine how you will use and share the information gained from your evaluation

See Appendix C for Sample Evaluation Tool

SUSTAINING YOUR PROGRAM

Now that you have established your effective and successful *Faith-based Youth and Wellness Program*, you want to make sure that you have a written plan for sustainability. Having a written plan allows the continued communication and support for your vision and mission that can be adapted to address changes within the community and within the ministry itself.

Sustainment of your program allows for long-term benefit to the community and helps to prevent the disruption in services to the community. Having a sustainability plan also helps to show the community your commitment to addressing their needs.

SUSTAINING YOUR PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES

Establish channels to distribute and disseminate on-going communication about your program and its accomplishments

Marketing Your Program

- Social media, brochures, newsletters, church bulletins, flyers

Solicit In-kind support

- Universities, local health systems, local business, other community partners and churches

Identify and Apply for Funding

- Foundations
- Corporate Businesses
- Banks
- Federal, State, local grants

APPENDICES & RESOURCES

Appendix A – Example Action Plan

Appendix B – Sample Timeline Model

Appendix C – Sample Evaluation Tool

APPENDIX A

Action Plan Template

Purpose: To help guide activities of your Health Ministry and Physical Activity Programs.

Directions:

1. Using this form as a template, develop a work plan for each goal identified through the needs assessment process and training. For each goal objective you need to provide the actions/tasks to be taken for the short, mid, and long-term. Also include the anticipated outcomes (what you want to happen when goal/objective is obtained).
2. List resources (both available and those needed) along with who will be responsible for designated tasks/action items.
3. Keep and maintain a copy to bring to trainings/meetings to review and update regularly. The Balm Program Staff will provide support and guidance throughout the process.

Goals/Objectives: Number and enter your overall goals and objectives for your health ministry here. Clearly state your goal. For each goal list the objectives necessary to achieve your stated goal

Example:

Goal #1: Greater Mt. Olive Church of God In Christ will establish a walking program for church members and residents in the surrounding community

Objective: By April 2016, Greater Mt. Olive Church of God In Christ will establish a health ministry team to develop and coordinate a weekly walking group for the community. For each objective use the table below to outline what action steps and processes are needed to accomplish your objective

Goals

You can easily customize this goal template with your own information. To replace any placeholder text (such as this), just select it and enter your own.

Actions / tasks

Short Term

Add text

Mid-Term

Add text

Long-Term

Add text

Anticipated Outcomes

Add text



Resources

Responsible Persons

How to Use This Workbook to Create a Timeline

Guide for screen readers

There are 3 worksheets in this workbook.

Chart Data

Product Roadmap

About

The instructions for each worksheet are in the A column starting in cell A1 of each worksheet. They are written with hidden text. Each step guides you through the information in that row. Each subsequent step continues in cell A2, A3, and so on, unless otherwise explicitly directed. For example, instruction text might say "continue to cell A6" for the next step.

Hidden text will not print.

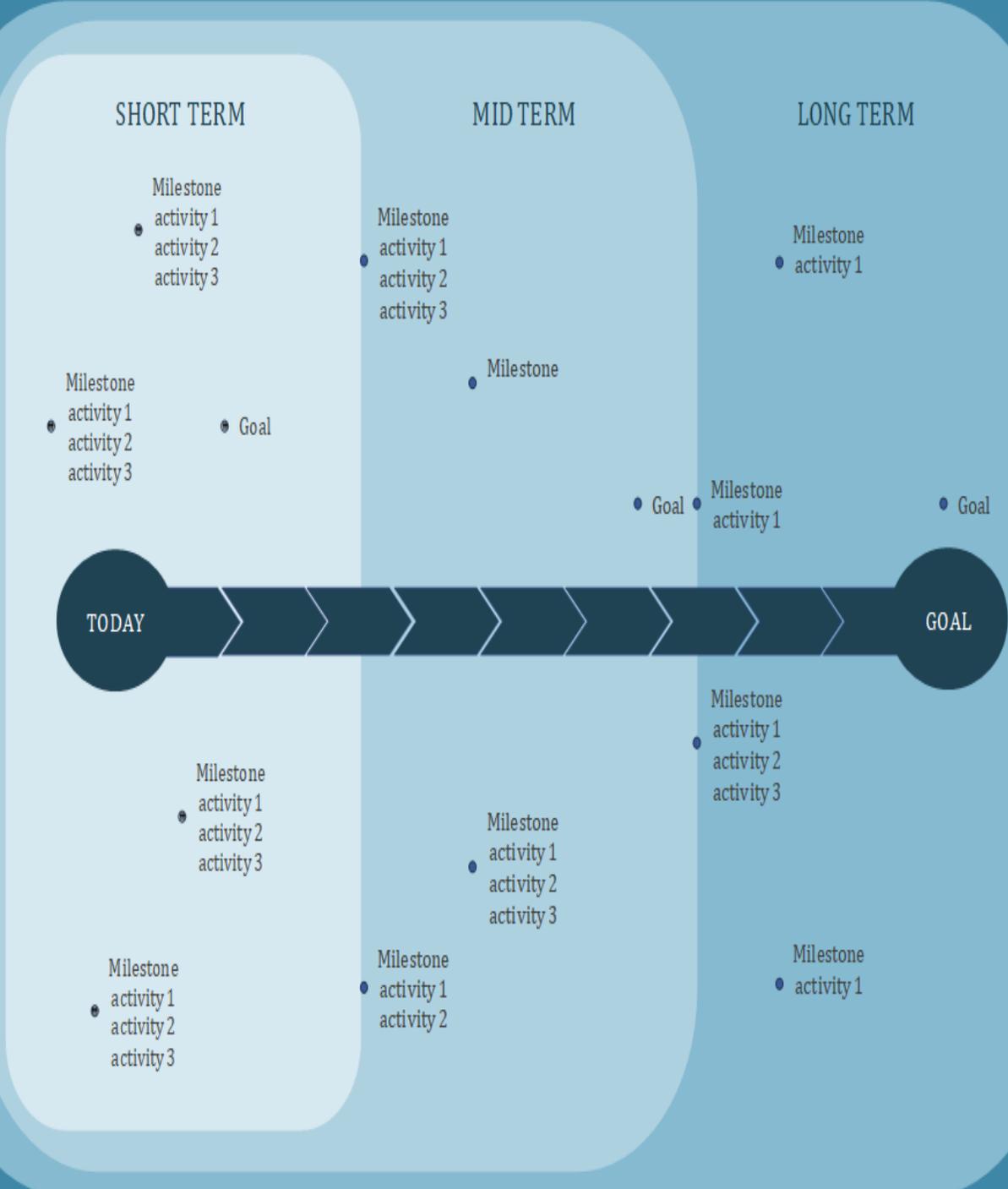
To remove these instructions from any worksheet, simply delete column A.

This roadmap uses positions to chart milestones and activities. Positions can be used to add weight to a milestone or activity. Simply adjust the values according to your weight preference. For example, milestone/activity 3 might have more weight than milestone/activity 2. To indicate this on the chart, simply make the Position value higher for milestone/activity 3 than for milestone/activity 2.

Chart Data

SHORT TERM			MID TERM			LONG TERM		
No.	Position	Milestone/Activities	No.	Position	Milestone/Activities	No.	Position	Milestone/Activities
0	1	Milestone activity 1 activity 2 activity 3	0	3	Milestone activity 1 activity 2 activity 3	0	0	Milestone activity 1 activity 2 activity 3
0	-2	Milestone activity 1 activity 2 activity 3	0	-3	Milestone activity 1 activity 2	0	1	Milestone activity 1
2	2	Milestone activity 1 activity 2 activity 3	2	2	Milestone	2	2	Milestone activity 1
2	-1	Milestone activity 1 activity 2 activity 3	2	-2	Milestone activity 1 activity 2 activity 3	2	-1	Milestone activity 1
4	1	Goal	5	1	Goal	6	1	Goal
To add more milestones, insert new row above this one			To add more milestones, insert new row above this one			To add more milestones, insert new row above this one		

PRODUCT ROADMAP



APPENDIX C

Evaluation Plan Matrix

S.M.A.R.T. Objective:								
Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data sources	Data collection methods	Data collection procedures		Data Analysis		
				Person responsible	Timeframe	Procedure	Person responsible	Timeframe

Evaluation Questions are the questions you would ask to determine if your objective is/was met. For example, if your objective was to establish community advisory board to assist with getting community input. Some example evaluation questions might be:

- How many member did you recruit to participate in your Community Advisory Board?
- Did your Community Advisory Board include members from your target population?

Indicator are how you plan to measure meeting your objective. Using the example above this might be the number of individuals that participated in an Open House you hosted to recruit potential members.

Data Sources are merely that; they are a source of your information. In the example we are using this might be attendance rolls or sign-in sheets

Data Collection is how you plan to collect your data. This could be electronically using a spreadsheet. You should and need to include the frequency of your data collection as well.

Data Analysis is how you plan to review and utilize the information/data you have collected.