

Wholistic Screening and Education Activities in Church Health Fairs

The Health Fair is an important event in the preventive programme for the health of your church and community. These are some suggestions for activities that you can find useful.

Screening

You can arrange for special tests to detect hypertension, diabetes, eye problems, obesity, need for dental care, and (for women) cervical cancer and lumps in the breast. Trained "health workers" from the church and surrounding community can easily carry these out.

The necessary basic equipment and reagents will have to be bought, donated or probably borrowed.

In addition, persons in whom problems are detected can be invited to come for prayer, counselling, sharing their special needs and/or concerns for socio-economic assistance, or be referred to appropriate community agencies. Depression screening is a critical prevention activity that non-professionals can also be taught to do.

Whole Person Health Education

Education and Motivation for Behaviour Change is one activity that all can partake in to help each other.

Have Whole Person Health Education activities for men, women, the youth and the elderly in your church and community.

Every church and community member as well as "church health workers" and community health workers should be able to:

- (a) understand and teach the importance of personal hygiene and instruct in the basic procedures underlying the general cleanliness of the whole body including the ears, teeth, eyes, mouth and nails;
- (b) share about effective stress management, and healthy interpersonal relationships;
- (c) promote various aspects of spiritual growth, and prayer for one's and others' healing and welfare;
- (d) promote the importance of, and need for refuse disposal, care of pit-latrines, control of rats, mosquitoes, fleas and other insects. Workers should know the common water-borne diseases and their causes and prevention. Other aspects of caring the environment can be shared. All these are important factors in the area of environmental health;
- (e) teach simple methods of treatment and storage of water for household use as well as demonstrate basic management of the home environment;
- (f) advise on healthy eating habits such as providing and preparing a proper diet;

(g) teach the importance of other useful health habits;

Table 2 illustrates some possible health habits that could be shared.

HEALTH HABITS CHECK LIST Do I engage in the following lifestyles?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ exercise for at least 30 minutes 3 times a week regularly? ✓ eat 7-10 portions of fruits and/or vegetables daily? ✓ drink one glass of skim, or low fat soy milk daily? ✓ avoid fatty meats? ✓ eat meat substitutes (e.g. soy products, legume-grain combinations)? ✓ eat mostly whole and natural carbohydrates? ✓ Take multivitamin and mineral supplements when affordable or suggested by my doctor? ✓ avoid excess fats and use "good fats" (e.g. olive, canola, peanut, fish or flaxseed oils)? ✓ avoid excess sugar and salt, and have these mainly from that which occurs naturally in food? ✓ use herbal seasoning for taste and medicine? ✓ drink 6-8 glasses of water daily? ✓ avoid smoking ✓ avoid alcohol abuse and use of recreational drug ✓ avoid unsafe sexual practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ have an annual medical check up? ✓ have regular fun, e.g. entertainment and recreation? ✓ have regular hobbies? ✓ find occasions for humour? ✓ relax regularly? ✓ promote my intellectual growth? ✓ pay regular attention to my spiritual life (e.g. devotions, fellowship, meditation, praise, forgiveness)? ✓ pay attention to my social life (e.g. family, close friends, calling, visiting and entertaining)? ✓ help others in the society? ✓ enjoy nature regularly (e.g. gardening, pets, walks, seabathing)? ✓ regularly help to preserve the environment and avoid practices that will damage it?

Table 2 Health Habits Check List

- h) identify that some of the problems related to being overweight are high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, osteoarthritis and some cancers;
- (i) motivate clients, in the area of maternal and child-care, to use available medical and social agencies in the community. They should also know the basics of caring for, feeding and cleaning infants. Families must be advised on the importance of family planning, nutrition, breast-feeding, oral - rehydration therapy and full immunization;
- (j) challenge the denials and myths surrounding HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Not only mothers, but fathers and more mature, older children should also be involved.
- (k) assist persons to develop their own health maintenance programme including:
 - i) regular personal checks e.g. breast, weight, teeth;
 - ii) regular non-professional screening and medical examinations;
 - iii) confidential HIV testing, with pre- and post-test counselling, in vulnerable persons, for example spouses or partners of infected persons, and sex workers;
 - iv) life style self-monitoring;
 - v) self-care learning;
 - vi) how to make up and use a home medicine kit.

Assist persons to support each other for behaviour change through sharing, listening, prayer and partnering with each other for joint activities (such as exercise) and for accountability agreements. The latter would involve agreeing to help monitor and encourage one another to make desired changes in healthy lifestyle behaviours.

With these activities during annual or biennial health fairs, attendees will be much better prepared for "Total Healing for the Whole Person."

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