



## **TOOLS FOR CREATING A HEALTHY CONGREGATION**

Your faith community can create an environment that promotes wellness for congregants, people who are involved in your programs or ministries, and the wider community. The following resources created by EMO's Congregational Wellness Project can get you started:

**The Congregational Health Index (or CHI)** — A FREE assessment tool and planning guide to help your faith community examine your food and physical activity environment and develop an action plan for healthy changes to your building and grounds, policies, practices and traditions. The goal is to create an atmosphere that makes healthy food and activity options available to everyone at your congregation as well as community members who are touched by your ministries. The CHI will also help you build a wellness team to lead your health efforts and keep them going. *Click here to download a copy of the CHI.*

**Faithandwellness.org** — The Congregational Wellness Project website will launch in September 2010 and will feature: a downloadable copy of the CHI; prayers and sermons from various faith traditions that emphasize the connection between spiritual and physical well-being; sample policies and suggested changes to the physical environment that will enhance community health; obesity statistics and how environments, neighborhoods, and inequities impact our health; and links to local and national organizations doing health ministry or chronic disease prevention work.

**Mini-grants for congregations in our region** that have used the CHI — An RFP will come out in fall 2010. Mini-grants will support action plan projects that build in lasting environmental changes e.g. a raised bed or larger garden, a new bike rack or sports equipment, or a simple playground.

**The Interfaith Wellness Coalition** — Made up of lay leaders and clergy from congregations that have used the CHI and/or are doing related health ministry, as well as health professionals from the community. The group meets bi-monthly to support and inspire one another, share information and collaborate, and engage in community projects and advocacy. Attend meetings and join the email list to receive news, hear about related events in our area, and tap into opportunities to put faith into action for health equity.

**For questions,** contact Laura Raymond, Portland Wellness Coordinator, at [lraymond@emoregon.org](mailto:lraymond@emoregon.org), (503) 221-1054, ext. 216, or Work Cell # (503) 939-7507.