



ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year
2025


Faith Based
Prevention Services

Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services,
Prevention Services Division

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Prevention Services End of Year Report 2025
September 30th 2025

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The Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences Center for Rural Health (OSU-CRH) provided prevention evaluation services for the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) for Fiscal Year 2025, which began on July 1, 2024, and ended on June 30, 2025.

Over the course of the fiscal year, OSU-CRH collected data, developed reports, and provided evaluation-focused training and technical assistance (TTA) to both ODMHSAS staff and subrecipients. This report summarizes those efforts and highlights the outcomes and impact of the Faith-Based Prevention Services sector within the ODMHSAS Prevention Division.

ODMHSAS continues to recognize the critical influence of environmental context in shaping prevention strategies. Their approach includes tailoring efforts to the specific needs of various sectors and settings. In addition to addressing broad community-level sectors, ODMHSAS emphasizes the value of reaching individuals through faith communities and family-centered interventions.

To support these goals, ODMHSAS works directly with faith communities across Oklahoma by:

- Providing training and technical assistance to faith entities to build capacity, plan and deliver prevention services in places of worship.
- Connecting Faith-Based entities to local, regional and state behavioral health resources.
- Fostering collaboration between faith groups and other community stakeholders.

These efforts demonstrate a commitment to engaging individuals within their own communities, while also working to build lasting networks of support that strengthen health and well-being across the state.



In FY 25, ODMHSAS contracted with two Faith Based Prevention Services (FBPS) providers: Oklahoma Faith Network (OFN) and Faith Partners (FP). Efforts of these organizations are rooted in the Strategic Prevention Framework and utilize five CSAP strategies.

CSAP Strategies

- Information Dissemination
- Community Based Process
- Education
- Environmental Systems Change
- Problem Identification and Referral

Faith Providers Receiving Technical Assistance (TA)

The two contracted FBPS providers received technical assistance from the ODMHSAS aimed at strengthening community-based processes, developing and improving local partnerships, and expanding interfaith collaboration to address substance use issues. Support included guidance on accurate reporting, strategic planning for the Statewide Virtual Clergy Training, and preparation of the agenda for the State Advisory Council. ODMHSAS also provided assistance with outreach strategies, recruitment efforts for the Moving Forward with Faith (MFWF) initiative, and discussions around train-the-trainer models for expanding the reach of the Faith Initiative. Additional collaboration took place with the newly established Governor’s Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (OFBCI), and planning support was offered for major events such as the Congregational Training in Oklahoma City and the statewide Faith Leader Summit.



The two FBPS providers reported 28.75 hours of Training and Technical Assistance received in FY 2025

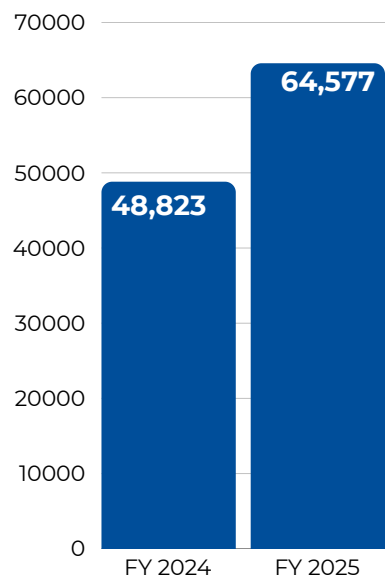


INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Information Dissemination increases awareness and knowledge of the nature of substance use and misuse as well as available prevention services. Faith-based organizations implement Information Dissemination strategies through the distribution of materials such as flyers, posters, educational presentations and social media posts. Information Dissemination can be very targeted to a specific population or group or can be more general messaging and accessible to the public.

Faith providers expanded their reach in FY 25, generating over 15,000 more media impressions than FY 24. This increase highlights the growing efforts and impact of faith-based prevention work across communities over the past year.

Media Impressions by Fiscal Year



It is important to note these measures are impressions and not unique views and allow for the potential of more than one engagement with an individual. Different strategies call for different kinds of engagement. As such, one person might be counted for viewing a poster as well as a social media post.

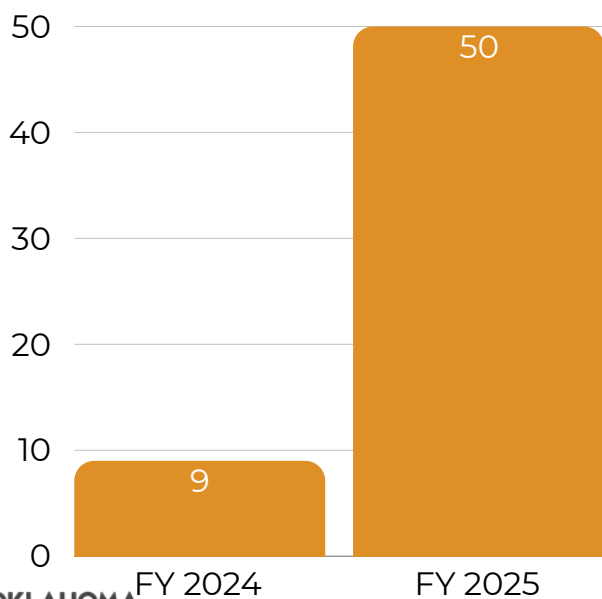
“We kicked off the month with our Youth Mental Health Conference on March 1st, where we welcomed 120 youth ages 10-21 for a day of education, empowerment, and connection. The event ran from 10 AM to 2 PM, providing a safe space for young people to learn about mental wellness, substance misuse prevention, and healthy coping strategies. We distributed informational flyers on prescription safety, the dangers of fentanyl, and practical coping skills to promote healthy living. The high turnout and strong engagement reflect a growing interest and need for youth-focused prevention programming in our community.”
-Oklahoma Faith Network

COMMUNITY BASED PROCESS

The Community-Based Process strategy helps faith communities and coalitions build the skills and structures needed to effectively prevent substance use and support behavioral health. This approach strengthens collaboration, planning, and service delivery by encouraging interagency meetings, regular coalition gatherings, and readiness assessments. Faith Partners played a key role by providing technical assistance to clergy, lay leaders, and congregants—guiding places of worship through assessing community needs, planning and implementing prevention efforts, and evaluating the effectiveness of their Congregational Ministry Teams. A strong emphasis was also placed on building sustainable practices to ensure long-term impact and continued service within the faith community.

- The Oklahoma Faith Network (OFN) hosted **14 coalition meetings** across its two scopes of service throughout the fiscal year.
- **36 interagency meetings** were held throughout FY 25 which is an increase from 27 in FY 24.

Training and Technical Assistance Provided by Faith Coalitions in Hours



Trainings and Technical Assistance hours provided by funded faith providers increased significantly over the past fiscal year.



EDUCATION

The Education strategy focuses on interactive learning that engages both the presenter and the participants—unlike simply sharing information, this approach encourages conversation, reflection, and skill-building. Within faith communities, this strategy has been used to train congregations, clergy, and community members on how to strengthen life skills that support healthy, substance-free lives. These efforts often include small group sessions, youth and adult education programs, parenting and family workshops, and peer support initiatives. Through these activities, faith leaders help individuals develop practical tools such as decision-making, setting healthy boundaries, resisting negative peer pressure, and thinking critically about influences like media and social norms.

-  **5 trainings and presentations conducted in delivering primary prevention programs in FY 25**
-  **97 people reached through trainings or presentations in FY 25**

“We are currently working on the "Lunch Break Parent Support Group", and will be starting that in the New Year as well. The parent support group will be a monthly zoom meeting where parents can come to learn how to talk to their youth about substances, and get support from other parents and share experiences and ideas.”

-Oklahoma Faith Network

EDUCATION

Family-based risk factors are highly predictive of future mental, emotional, and behavioral problems. However, families can also offer high levels of protection from risks. ODMHSAS offers evidence based prevention services targeting families in faith based settings in Oklahoma and Tulsa County through the Strengthening Families Program (SFP), as well as other parent education and support. SFP gives participants the opportunity to develop skills in communication, conflict resolution and empathy. The protective factors provided by strong, healthy, and connected families are many and ODMHSAS is invested in giving Families the tools and skills they need to thrive.

Strengthening Families Program

- 59 Families graduated from the program in FY 25 which is a large increase from 20 in FY 24.
- 60 adults and 111 youth completed the program.

“There was a parent during this cycle that struggled with a lot of behaviors from her teenage boys. She expressed that this program has saved their relationship.”

-SFP Participating Church

“The relationships from the program have brought families to the church have allowed the church to expand and create other programming.”

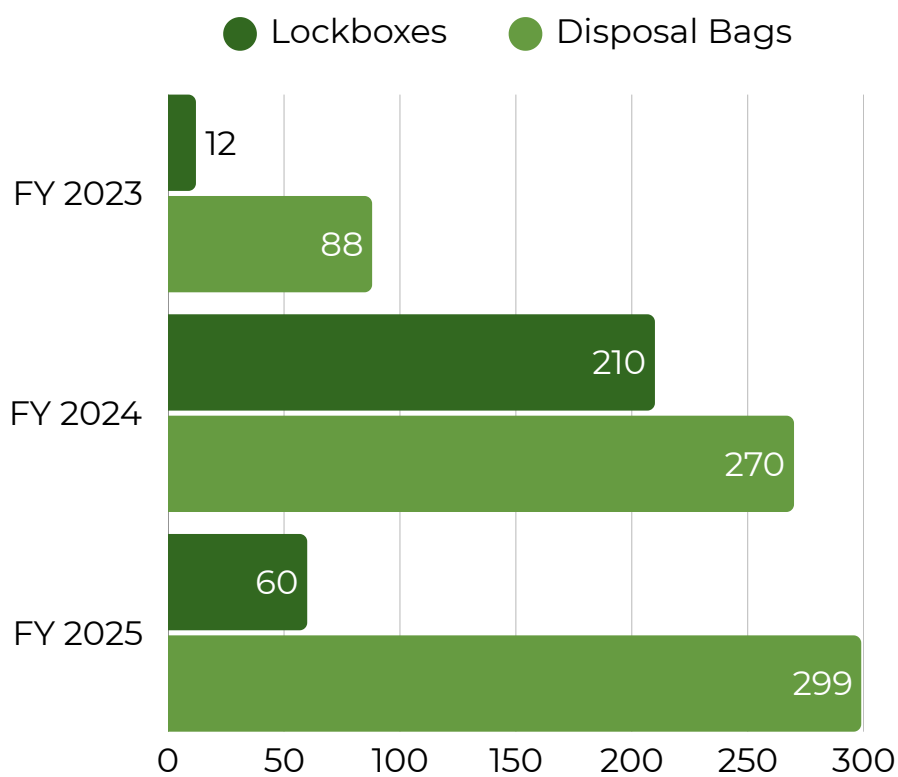
-SFP Participating Church



ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS CHANGE

Faith Based Prevention Partners contributed to systems change by focusing on practical, community-level strategies to reduce substance misuse. Their primary efforts included distributing medication lockboxes and disposal bags to promote safe storage and proper disposal of prescription drugs. These tools help limit access to potentially harmful medications, especially among youth and vulnerable populations. By incorporating these efforts into their outreach, Faith Based Prevention Partners are taking meaningful steps to create safer, healthier communities.

Number of Lockboxes and Disposal Bags Distributed by Fiscal Year



In FY 2025, faith providers increased the distribution of medication disposal bags, while distributing fewer lockboxes compared to the previous year. This shift may reflect a growing emphasis on promoting safe and convenient disposal practices within their communities. By focusing on disposal bags, which are easy to use and accessible for households, Faith Based Prevention Partners are helping reduce the risk of misuse by removing unused medications from the home. This approach continues to support the broader goal of creating safer environments through practical, prevention-focused strategies.



MICROGRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Microgrants

During the FY 2025, Oklahoma Faith Network provided microgrant funding (up to \$5,000) to five organizations dedicated to outreach, prevention, and education within Oklahoma faith communities. These organizations include:

Delaware County Community Partnership focused on youth mentoring, engaging a small pilot group of teenage boys through focus groups and group mentoring. Despite staffing challenges, the program successfully fostered trust and open dialogue about substance misuse, with plans to expand once dedicated staff are secured. The program laid the groundwork for future growth through stakeholder collaboration and strategic planning.

Jehovah Jireh Women's Christian Recovery Center made significant strides in educating the community about opioid misuse and recovery. They conducted weekly educational meetings, participated in local recovery events, and distributed Narcan, lockboxes, and disposal bags. Their efforts reached over 500 individuals, with workshops and Narcan training proving particularly impactful. The center also advanced toward Oklahoma Alliance for Recovery Resources (OKARR) certification, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring high standards for resident care.



MICROGRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Northeast Missionary Baptist Church partnered with Star Spencer High School and community leaders to address opioid misuse through workshops, surveys, and community events. They distributed lockboxes, disposal bags, and Narcan kits, while also focusing on overdose prevention and mental health awareness. The church successfully incorporated community feedback to tailor their strategies.

Operation CARE Ministries of Tillman County provided critical resources and support to individuals struggling with addiction, homelessness, and poverty. Their outreach efforts included group meetings, educational materials, and partnerships with local agencies. Despite challenges like transportation and stigma, the program restored relationships and empowered participants to seek recovery, with over 300 individuals reached during the grant period.

St. John's Missionary Baptist Church launched a series of workshops and events to combat stigma and educate the community about substance misuse and mental health. Their initiatives, which included youth-focused sessions and family forums, directly engaged over 180 individuals and distributed resources like Narcan and lockboxes.

FAITH BASED PARTNERSHIPS

Moving Forward with Faith (MFWF) Statewide Advisory Council (SAC)

The Moving Forward with Faith (MFWF) Initiative represents ODMHSAS's ongoing commitment to bringing faith communities into statewide efforts to reduce substance misuse and support mental well-being for all Oklahomans. This work is guided by the Moving Forward with Faith Statewide Advisory Council (SAC), a group of faith leaders, community partners, prevention staff, recovery specialists, mental health professionals, laity, and individuals with lived experience. Together, the SAC helps shape a coordinated approach that combines evidence-based strategies with faith-tailored supports.

- 8 SAC meetings were held in FY 25
- SAC outreach efforts connected with 67 unique organizations across the state in FY 25

The first annual SAC Summit, held in March 2025 at Reaching Our City, marked a major milestone for the initiative. During the summit, members adopted the committee's Vision, Mission, and Purpose, which emphasize connecting faith communities with prevention and recovery resources and supporting efforts to address risk factors, strengthen protective factors, and break cycles of trauma and addiction. Participants reviewed statewide behavioral health and substance use data to inform discussion and decision making. Using this information, the SAC identified key priorities for the coming year, including determining the needs of faith-based leaders and communities, creating awareness and reducing stigma, strengthening connections, expanding prevention partnerships, and developing assessments to measure outcomes. Members concluded by joining working groups for each focus area, leaving the summit prepared and motivated to move forward with coordinated action.



CONCLUSION

As Fiscal Year 2025 concludes, the current Faith-Based Prevention Providers have completed their contracts and continued to make meaningful progress in outreach, capacity building, and collaboration. Their efforts expanded the reach of prevention messaging, strengthened partnerships across sectors, and supported ongoing engagement with the Microgrant Partnership Program. These accomplishments have reinforced the foundation for faith-based prevention work across Oklahoma.

While the provider model concludes this year, the momentum does not. The Moving Forward with Faith Statewide Advisory Council (SAC) will carry this work forward, offering sustained leadership and a coordinated approach for the faith based prevention sector of ODMHSAS. With its newly established vision, mission, and priorities, and with active participation from faith leaders, community partners, prevention specialists, and individuals with lived experience, the SAC is positioned to guide the next phase of prevention and mental health efforts.

Data collection and reporting continue to present challenges, given the nuanced and often sensitive nature of prevention efforts within faith-based contexts. Stigma related to substance use, combined with privacy concerns, can limit participation in surveys and other reporting tools. Measuring prevention impact in community settings is also inherently complex, particularly as many faith communities are still becoming familiar with prevention science and the role they can play in supporting behavioral health. Building trust and understanding takes time, and these limitations inevitably shape the data that providers are able to collect.

Nevertheless, the work of Faith-Based Prevention Providers has shown meaningful impact through their thoughtful application of CSAP strategies and the relationships they have cultivated within their communities. These partnerships demonstrate how trusted, community-driven engagement can extend the reach and effectiveness of substance use and mental health initiatives. As the work transitions to the Moving Forward with Faith Statewide Advisory Council, these strengthened connections and expanding foundations position the faith sector to continue deepening its impact in the years ahead.