



Health Fair

Planning Guide

**For faith-based
organizations**



Public Health



Health Fair Planning Guide

for faith-based organizations

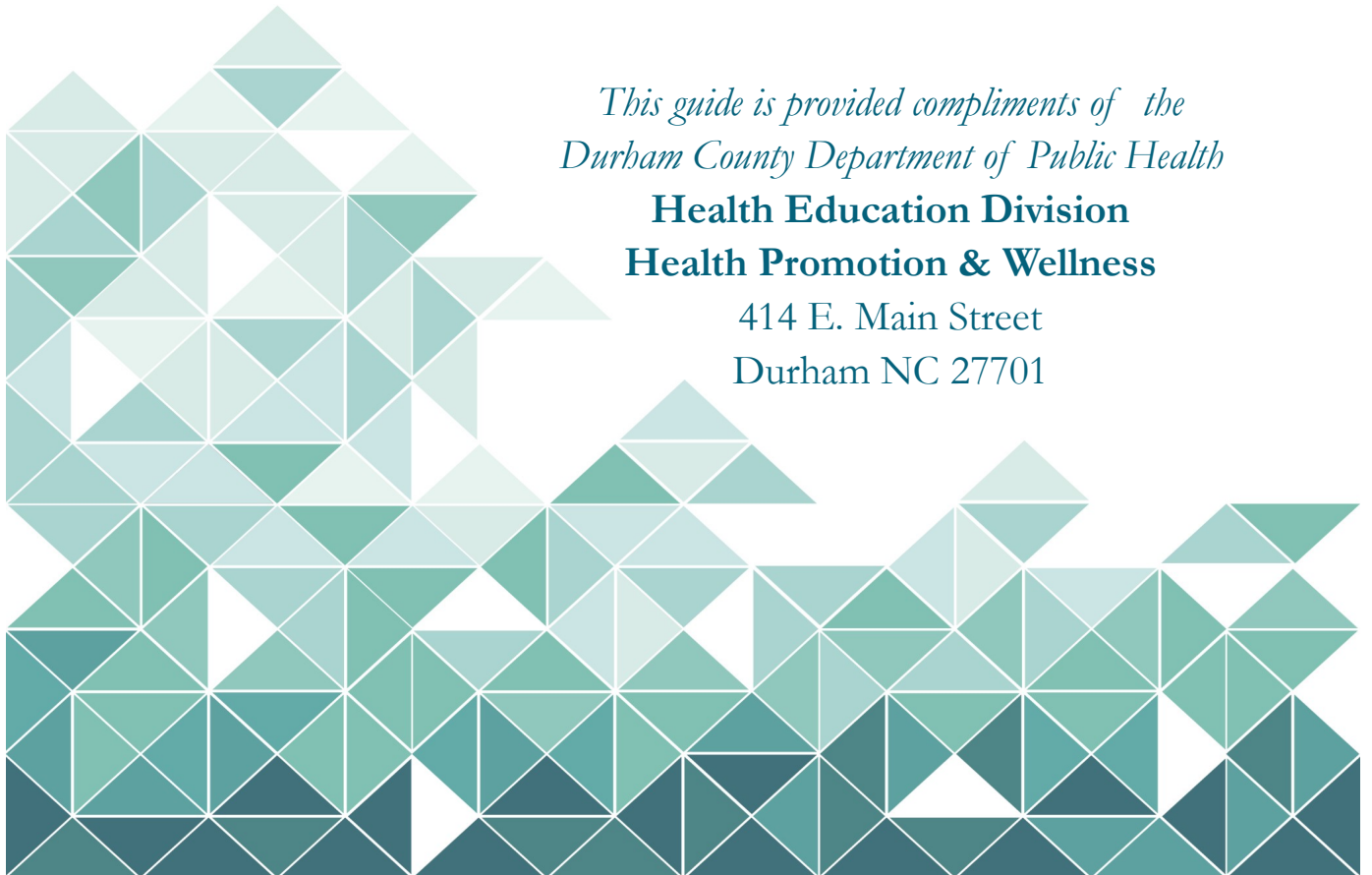
Table of Contents

- *Getting started*
- *Themes & Content*
- *Health Fair topics*
- *Event Exhibitors*
- *Marketing*
- *Budget & Provisions*
- *Evaluation*
- *Sample Correspondence*
- *Tools & Templates*
- *Resources*

*This guide is provided compliments of the
Durham County Department of Public Health*

**Health Education Division
Health Promotion & Wellness**

414 E. Main Street
Durham NC 27701



Getting Started

Health fairs are a way to educate on health topics and encourage participants to take advantage of local resources and become aware of issues that are important to a community. The better planned the event is, the better turn out of participants.

This guide while not all inclusive of all steps to take for a successful health fair, provides the basic information to get you started. Use your creativity to plan and implement you event and if willing share with us what worked and did not.

1. While planning, keep in mind potential concerns such as available parking, utilities- inside or outside, time of year (weather), the number of participants, activities of participants (movies, physical screenings, etc.) all of which can impact the event.
2. Consider a central information booth and welcome table or area. This helps to reduce confusion and helps the exhibitors get set up quicker. Some event planners have experienced exhibitors arriving and displaying at their health fair that were not invited. This is of particular importance when they may be soliciting items that are not in line with the purpose and promotion of the event.



Themes & Content

As you begin to plan your event, consider incorporating a theme for your health fair. Utilize the **National Health Observances** (<http://healthfinder.gov/nho/>) monthly themes in addition to your own ideas. For example, if your health fair will be in October, consider breast cancer, cancer, domestic violence or something similar for the basis of your theme.

If your event is a health fair in general covering all types of topics, consider a general theme that incorporates scripture or the mission and/or goals of your organization.

Types of health fairs

Generally, health fairs can be divided into three categories:

1. **Awareness:** Health risk, first aid, women's health, men's health, oral health, back care, driving safety, stress management, elder care resources, AIDS, cancer prevention, diabetes, heart disease, substance abuse, smoking cessation, teen issues, child abuse and family violence
2. **Screenings:** blood pressure, total cholesterol, blood glucose, vision testing, hearing testing, stress testing, mammography, oral cancer checks, skin cancer checks, foot screenings, fitness assessments, spinal screenings, bone-density screenings
3. **Demonstrations:** healthy cooking, CPR, First Aid, AED training, Self-defense, exercise -equipment demonstrations, martial-arts, aerobic dancing, Tai Chi, Yoga, Upper body massage, ask the doctor/nurse booth.



Considering the health fair you desire to plan, which of the above categories do you think you are likely to choose?

- Awareness
- Screenings
- Demonstration
- Combination of the three types of health fairs

Event exhibitors

Health Fair Exhibitors:



Before making a request, it is best to be familiar with the services offered by an agency. Avoid calling an exhibitor requesting “any topic” or “anything” they have to offer. Websites are a good way to find information about an agency’s services.

A better approach is to explain the event you are planning and examples of what you would like offered. If you prefer no solicitations, make that known if it is likely the organization plans to do so.

The **Durham County Department of Public Health** has made health fair planning and requests simple. One person coordinates requests from the community for the entire agency. For more information or to request assistance regarding health fairs, call 560-7760

Below is a list of organizations that may be available to exhibit at your event:

- Senior Citizens agencies (Council for Senior Citizens etc.)
- Chamber of Commerce/Visitor Bureau
- Emergency Medical Services, Fire Department
- Local Dental, Medical, & Nursing Societies, Auxiliaries, Associations (try Old North State)
- Cancer Groups (American Cancer Society, Triangle Sister’s Network etc.)
- Heart Groups (American Heart Association etc.)
- The American Red Cross
- Cooperative Extension/Extension Groups
- Business and professional organizations (Fitness clubs such as Curves, YMCA)
- Scouts (boys & girls) other youth groups
- Local hospitals (Duke, Durham Regional)
- Local college or universities (Durham Tech Duke & NC Central)
- Local pharmacies and/or drug companies
- Support groups on the topics that will be exhibited
- Health care specialists (e.g. podiatrists, opticians, dieticians/nutritionists)
- Food suppliers
- Insurance companies (e.g. Blue Cross/Blue Shield)
- Local chiropractors etc.
- Lincoln Community Health Center
- Community Health Coalition

Check local listings or the Internet to find these and other organizations in Durham County. If you would like to contact a potential exhibitor via correspondence, an example is provided in this guide.

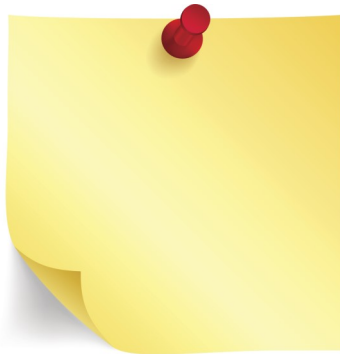
Exhibitors (people displaying at your health fair) will need to know booth space, times of operation, and what is furnished (number of tables, table cloths, chairs, etc.).

Topics

Popular topics at health fairs

- Nutrition-low salt diets, diabetic diets, and use of vitamins.
- Drug or Alcohol use/abuse
- Chronic Disease-cancer, heart disease, tobacco use, physical activity, injury prevention
- Immunizations (adult and child)
- Information for and about senior citizens.
- Communicable diseases, sexually transmitted infections, prevention-education, testing and counseling
- Parenthood and childcare information (SIDS, car passenger safety)
- Stress management
- Lead education
- Teen pregnancy prevention
- Obesity
- Gun Safety
- Domestic Violence

Screenings: stations for taking of blood pressure, lead, cholesterol, body fat %, BMI. *Unfortunately, due to a state mandate, the Durham County Department of Public Health cannot provide blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar screenings.*



Use the space below to narrow down your topics of interest:



Marketing

Marketing

Suggestions for marketing your event with your congregation:

- Ask your pastor to introduce/encourage persons to attend the fair
- Have the fair announced during the morning service announcements as well as printed in the church bulletin
- When speaking about the fair, be sure to mention that it is for all church members of the congregation and/or visitors
- Emphasize that there will be free screenings, demonstrations, and educational materials
- Encourage members to attend with the family and friends

When engaging media sources, make sure the information is sent a minimum of three weeks prior to the event.

Flyers

Templates for flyers are free and can be downloaded using Microsoft Office. Keep it plain and simple and don't overload the flyer with numerous graphics.

Technology at your fingertips

Consider social media, does your organization have a Facebook page or Twitter account? Ask the administrator in charge to post your activities. Even if you don't have an account, others do and will likely share the event with others.

Email still works. If you are able, have an email sent announcing your event to improve participation. If you want other organizations to participate, send the same information via flyer and email.

Extend an "e" invitation. Free software such as "Evite" can help you send and track key participants you would like to attend your event.

Durham County Department of Public Health offers a free webinar on "Getting the Word Out" about your faith-based events. Participants also receive a few basic e-resources to help get started. For more information, contact Willa Robinson Allen at 919-560-7771.



Budget & Provisions

Budget & Expense Considerations

A budget is an important consideration, especially when planning large events. Exhibitors may volunteer their time and services, but there often are some other expenses for the event. Although some of these may not apply to your event, here are some things to consider:

Consider what your budget will be even if you don't have an actual budget. Estimate the values of donations to help determine the overall cost of your event even if you did not spend any money.

- Publicity and promotion (mailings, printing of flyers, paid advertisements, brochures, guides, raffle prizes etc.)
- Equipment and supplies (tables, chairs, partitions, displays, tents. Etc.)
- Educational materials (brochures, displays etc.)
- Refreshments and other expenses (snacks, parking, music etc.)
- Permits if applicable (check with local city government to identify the requirement)
- Costs related to screenings
- Entertainment (band, clown etc. if the services are not donated)

Also discuss:

- Who will be responsible for writing/signing checks and paying invoices?
 - How will records of expenditures be maintained? Who will maintain them?
 - Will there be a petty cash fund (if so, who maintains and authorizes withdrawals)
 - What is the deadline for final submission of bills and expenses after the event?
-

Budget & Expense Considerations

This example budget lists potential expenses that might be incurred when planning and implementing a health fair. Use it only as a guide — each fair is different and will incur different expenses. Dollar values for the items listed were not accessed since prices will vary, and some items may be donated.

Expense Item	Anticipated Amount
Rental of facility	
Liability insurance	
Refreshments (including cups, plates, napkins, forks, spoons, knives) for committees, exhibitors and volunteers	
T-shirts for planning committee and volunteers (cost varies depending on vendor and information on t-shirts)	



Evaluation

Evaluation

Evaluation

The best way to determine “what worked” and “what didn’t work” during your event is to evaluate on several levels:



- The number of participants, if this is your first event, how many participated?
- If it is not your first event, was there an increase or decrease from the previous year.
- What can be done to improve the event?

Ask the participants in **written form** what they liked and how the event can be improved. The planning committee should review this information following the event and keep the suggestions in mind for planning later events.

Need assistance with evaluation? The Durham County Department of Public Health can make available copies of evaluations or assist you in planning your unique evaluation tool. For more information contact Willa Allen at 919-560-7771 or email wrobinson@dconc.gov

*A Microsoft Word document can be requested for this form.
Contact Willa Robinson Allen via email at wrobinson@dconc.gov*

Health Fair Evaluation Example

To help improve this health fair and other events, please let us know what you think about today's event. Please complete this form at the end of the health fair and return.....(instructions for returning the form)

Why did you attend this health fair? (Please check or circle the 2 most important reasons)

Health screenings	Seemed like fun
Learn about health issues	Incentive prizes
Free food	
Other (please specify)	

How did you hear about the health fair? (please check all that apply)

posters	flyers
Email	Someone told me

Please rate the following aspects of the health fair on a scale of poor to excellent.

	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Volunteers/staff at the booths	1	2	3	4	5
Set up/organization of the fair	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of topics covered	1	2	3	4	5
Explanation of screening results	1	2	3	4	5
Overall impression of the fair	1	2	3	4	5

Please list 3 booths you liked the best:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Please comment on the time, length and location of the health fair

As a result of this fair, will you do anything differently regarding your health behavior?

Please make any other comments or suggestions about the health fair.

Sample Exhibitor Station Visit

Create a form or table to encourage participants to visit each exhibitor's table.
The exhibitor can initial their square.

Blue Cross Blue Shield	Kelly's Chiropractic	Jude's Dentistry
Fitness Connections	Durham County Department of Public Health	Durham County Department of Social Services Foster Care
Sickle Cell	Durham Area Transportation Association	Durham Bulls
Church Health Ministry	Happy Feet Foot Care	Mary Kay Cosmetics

Sample Exhibitor's Evaluation

Exhibitor/Organization _____

Your Name: _____

Please rate the following aspects of the event:

	Excellent	Fair	Poor
Attendance			
Pre-planning			
Management			
Facilities			
Location of booth/table			
Publicity			
Comments or suggestions for change			

2. If another health fair was held, would you participate? ___ Yes ___ No
3. Please estimate the number of participants with whom you actually spoke:
4. Please estimate the number of publications handed out from your booth:

Thank you for your participation in the health fair.

Sample Correspondence

Sample health fair invitation correspondence

The Health and Wellness Ministry of the *(name of organization)* would like to extend an invitation to your agency to partner with us to promote health and wellness in our community. The challenges of getting important information, screenings and resources to individuals and families are too great for any single organization to address; yet together we can make a difference. It is our intent to provide an opportunity for a diverse group of health providers and service organizations to offer their services.

Our 20XX health fair event will occur on Saturday, (date) at (Name of organization) located at (address) Durham NC 277XX. The event is part of XXXXX (optional)

Whether you have participated in the past, or would be a new participant, we sincerely hope you will give us your support, We are recruiting health professionals and community agency representatives to provide education, screenings, sample products, resources etc for both youth and adult populations. If you can participate, please contact _____ by date at phone number.

Thank you in advance for your support and we look forward to seeing you at the 20XX event.

Sincerely,

Name

Position

Internal Sample Letter to ministry leaders

This correspondence is to let other ministries in your organization know about the event and garner their support.

Date: _____

To: _____ (name of ministry or committee)

From: _____ (name of your ministry or committee)

Subject: _____ (name of your event or health fair)

The _____ (name of ministry or committee) would like to extend an invitation to your ministry/committee to partner with us to support this event. There are several ways your group can be involved:

- help us promote the event-share information with ministry and other church members; share with other friends and family (flyers are available to promote the event)
- Choose to exhibit at the event, share information about your upcoming activities and perhaps recruit for others to join your ministry
- Volunteer to help at the event, whether to set up, break down or run errands during the event
- Any other way you feel may be helpful that we may not have considered

If you are willing to support this event in any capacity, please contact _____ (coordinator for the event) by _____ (date) at _____ (phone number)

Thank you in advance for your support and we look forward to seeing you at the 20XX event.

Sincerely,

Name

Position

Sample letter to Exhibitors

Date: _____

Memo to: Prospective _____ (name of Exhibitor)

Subject: _____ (specific event name)

The _____ (ministry or committee name)

The (name of organization) is hosting the 2nd annual (optional) Health and Safety Fair (or name of your event) on Friday (day), October 1 (month/date) from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M (provide your event's title, date/time). This event will be held in the fellowship hall and the south lawn (provide your event's location). The target audience for this event is the Barely Nothing neighborhood and church members (provide your target audience); however, the community will be welcome to participate. The objectives of the fair include (see example below; concisely list your event's objectives):

- To increase health awareness and disease prevention for county employees by providing health screenings, educational information, and related activities.
- Provide disaster preparedness information.
- Increase awareness of local, state, and national health services and resources.
- Motivate participants to make positive health behavior changes.
- Teach self-care practices.

Your agency or business is invited to showcase your services at this event by providing educational information, screenings, or health awareness activities. Booth spaces are available for \$XX or free (which ever applies).

If you are interested in participating, please complete and return the enclosed, self-addressed postcard by _____ (date). *Or have them reply via email or phone.*

For more information, please contact _____ (contact person's name) at _____ (address & phone number).

Sincerely,

Your Name

Organization with which you are affiliated

Sample Donation Request

This correspondence is intended for businesses and social/civic organizations for donation of items that can help support your event.

Date

Name of Potential Donor

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____:

In response to the growing epidemic of childhood overweight/obesity (specify your target audience), (name of organization) is conducting a health fair that will be held on _____ (date) in _____ (city). I would like to request the donation of _____ and/or your monetary sponsorship of this educational event. *(If you are asking for a donation of items and/or money, provide as much detail as possible to let the potential donor know how the donation will be used.)*

We hope you can attend and participate in the health fair to witness all of the hands-on educational activities that will be conducted throughout the day. It will be a great time of learning for the entire family.

Thank you for your willingness to assist with this valuable project. (Describe how person/business will be acknowledged for their contributions – sponsorship wall, promotional flyers/posters, or t-shirts, for example.)

Sincerely,

Your Name

Organization with which you are affiliated

(Enclose any promotional flyers.)

Sample Thank You Letter

Date

Exhibitor's Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____:

On behalf of St. Thomas Baptist Church (list any other planning partners here, too), I would like to thank you for your contribution to the _____ (specific name) Health Fair that was held on _____ (date) in _____ (city). We appreciate your willingness to offer your information and services during the event. The health fair was planned and implemented in response to _____ (reason for target audience, e.g., obesity epidemic, rising diabetes, etc.), and we believe it was a great success, with over _____ (insert number) attendees.

(Example paragraph) Currently, the rate of overweight children is at an all-time high in the United States. During the last three decades, the number of children who have become overweight has doubled; the increases occur across all ages, races, and gender groups. It is well documented that overweight children become overweight adults, and overweight individuals are at risk for numerous diseases.

Once again, thank you for your support and for your willingness to make a difference in the lives of our children (target audience). Please be assured that you played an important part in addressing the growing problem of overweight children.

We appreciate your support of St. Thomas Baptist Church (organization name) programs in _____ County.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Organization with which you are affiliated

(Enclose any promotional flyers.)

Sample Donation Request Form

(Print this form on your letterhead, and include it with your donation request letter [see previous page]. Personalize the information below to reflect what you have requested in the letter [financial contributions only; request for items for door prizes, food, etc.; or both]).

Thank you for agreeing to be a sponsor of the _____ (specific name of the event). Contributions to the event will be acknowledged in our advertisements, program, and throughout the fair.

If you are making a financial contribution, please complete and return this form, along with your check made payable to: _____ (name and address) by _____ (date).

If you are donating items for our health fair, please complete and return this form by (date), with the items you are donating listed in the area below. We will contact the person listed below to make arrangements to receive the items being donated.

For more information, please contact: (contact's name, title, telephone number, and e-mail address).

Name of Sponsor/Organization:
(as you want it to appear in written information/materials)

Contact Person:

Title:

Mailing Address:

City, State, Zip:

Telephone:

Fax:

E-mail Address:

Amount of Financial Contribution:

- Platinum Sponsor \$5001 and above
- Gold Sponsor \$2501 - \$5000
- Gold Sponsor \$2501 - \$5000
- Bronze Sponsor \$1000 and below

Special Designations for Your Contribution:

- Booth Rental, Stage Setup
- Food
- Demonstration Supplies
- Posters and Supplies
- Liability Insurance
- Advertisements
- As Needed

In Kind Contribution (specify):

Sample Thank You Letter to Volunteers

Date

Volunteer's Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear _____:

On behalf of Name of organization (list any other planning partners here, too), I would like to thank you for volunteering your time and energy to the _____ (specific name) Health Fair that was held on _____ (date) in _____ (city). The health fair was planned and implemented in response to _____ (reason for target audience, e.g., obesity epidemic, rising diabetes, etc.), and we believe it was a great success, with over _____ (insert number) attendees. This could not have been accomplished without volunteers like you working to make it all happen.

(Example paragraph) Currently, the rate of overweight children is at an all-time high in the United States. During the last three decades, the number of children who have become overweight has doubled; the increases occur across all ages, races, and gender groups. It is well documented that overweight children become overweight adults, and overweight individuals are at risk for numerous diseases.

Once again, thank you for your efforts and for your willingness to make a difference in the lives of our children (target audience). Please be assured that you played an important part in addressing the growing problem of overweight children.

We appreciate your support of United Gateway Methodist Church 's programs in _____ County.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Organization with which you are affiliated

(Enclose any promotional flyers.)

Tools & Templates

Health Fair Timetable & Checklist

12-6 MONTHS BEFORE	1 MONTH BEFORE-2 WEEKS BEFORE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish goals and objectives of the health fair ○ Define audience, health fair focus and theme ○ Determine services, information and activities to be offered ○ Determine best strategies for reaching audience ○ Determine best time of year, week, and day for the fair ○ Determine physical space/location ○ Prepare budget and obtain approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Publicize the event ○ Send press release and invites to local papers <p>1 WEEK-DAY BEFORE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set up ○ ‘dry run’ of fair and services on location ○ Confirm with all exhibitors
6-3 MONTHS BEFORE	DAY OF THE HEALTH FAIR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish timetables ○ Engage support from healthcare providers and volunteers ○ Decide upon and prepare health screening services ○ Decide upon and prepare demonstrations and activities ○ Decide upon and prepare awareness booths ○ Invite participating sponsors ○ Solicit vendor participation ○ Reserve rental equipment (if applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set up ○ Be ready at least one hour early ○ Have plenty of readily identifiable help ○ Clean up ○ Estimate attendance ○ Deliver photo and press release to local papers
3 MONTHS BEFORE	FOLLOW-UP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Order educational and promotional materials ○ Prepare paperwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintain contact with exhibitors ○ Ensure that appropriate clinical follow-up occurs when necessary ○ Build on and enhance the positive community relations that occurred ○ Follow-up on “damage control” if any unfortunate events occurred ○ Document overall results of health fair ○ Determine possible improvements





Health Fair Checklist

Although this is not an all inclusive list, it is a good start for planning your event.

Add your tasks to the list and make it one that works for your event and organization.

	Obtain support and approval	
	Establish “budget” needs	
	Establish a date for the event	
	Establish location/capacity of event	
	Establish theme of health fair	
	Gather resources	
	Plan organization meeting with committee	
	Contact providers/vendors	
	Solicit donated items, gifts, freebies	
	Plan games, giveaways, raffles, etc	
	Design floor plan	
	Organize refreshments (if applicable)	
	Promotion of the event	
	Create an evaluation tool	
	Prepare name tags and signs	
	Organize electronic/electrical needs	
	Arrange registration table	
	Arrange for breaks, refreshments and meals for volun-	
	Send thank you letters to providers/vendors	
	Have evaluation meeting to analyze results	



Helpful planning tools

Planning: Will this be an annual event? ___Yes ___No

If yes: Establish a consistent time of year and month. For instance, the second Saturday in September. This will help to prevent a delay in planning because your event can be set on the calendar early.

Choose a theme for your health fair. Try to stay within the theme for the event. For instance if the focus is heart disease, choose only things that relate to heart disease (a wide variety). Contact us if you need assistance deciding on a theme.

If no: A one time event is perfectly fine. Who knows, the event may go so well that you may consider holding it annually.

Start your planning 6 months or more in advance. Form a committee and start the discussions with a tentative date and the type of activities desired.

Place a check next to the items your organization would like to include in your health fair.

_____ **Activities:** Establish what activities and educational information will be offered. If there is a specified theme such as a Diabetes Health Fair, make sure to include activities that relate directly to the chosen theme.

_____ **Screenings** can be an added bonus. Several can be handled “in-house” such as by the nurses that may be a part of your organization (for blood pressure). Below are some screenings and possible resources.



Planning Committee Task~list

Tasks	Responsibility	Completed by when
<p>Publicity</p> <p>Members are responsible for publicizing the event internally and externally if chosen to do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement-church/community via bulletin and/or community publicized calendar in newspapers and on television • flyers 		
<p>Exhibitors/Materials</p> <p>Members will identify people to be invited to participate, send invitations, confirm participation and follow-up with a thank you note.</p> <p>Be sure to find out about needs such as tables and chairs, and most importantly, if an electric outlet is needed.</p> <p>Provide directions and information on parking unloading and loading.</p>		
<p>Set Up/Break down</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up tables and chairs • Mark the tables for the exhibitors • Supply name tags for exhibitors if needed 	All committee members	
<p>Screenings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening committee will contact and organize professionals for chosen screenings 		
<p>Incentives & Door Prizes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask exhibitors to bring an item for a door prize • Ask local businesses to donate items for a door prize 		
<p>Evaluations</p> <p>Distribute and collect evaluation forms at the fair (try to avoid evaluations being return-mailed at a later date)</p> <p>*The DCHD can provide a sample evaluation</p>		

Sample Exhibitor Information Form

Exhibitor Registration & Information Form	
Exhibitor Information	
Organization Name	
Organization Address	
Brief Organization Description	
Name of representative	
Contact Number & ext.	
Email Address	
Names of additional people that will also exhibit at your table	
Brief description of what your organization will be exhibiting:	
Equipment requirements	
Do you need electrical connection? ___yes ___no	
other <i>(please specify)</i>	
# of tables needed:	# of chairs needed:
Lunch Preferences	
Vegetarian lunch # of vegetarian lunches requested _____	
# of lunches requested:	



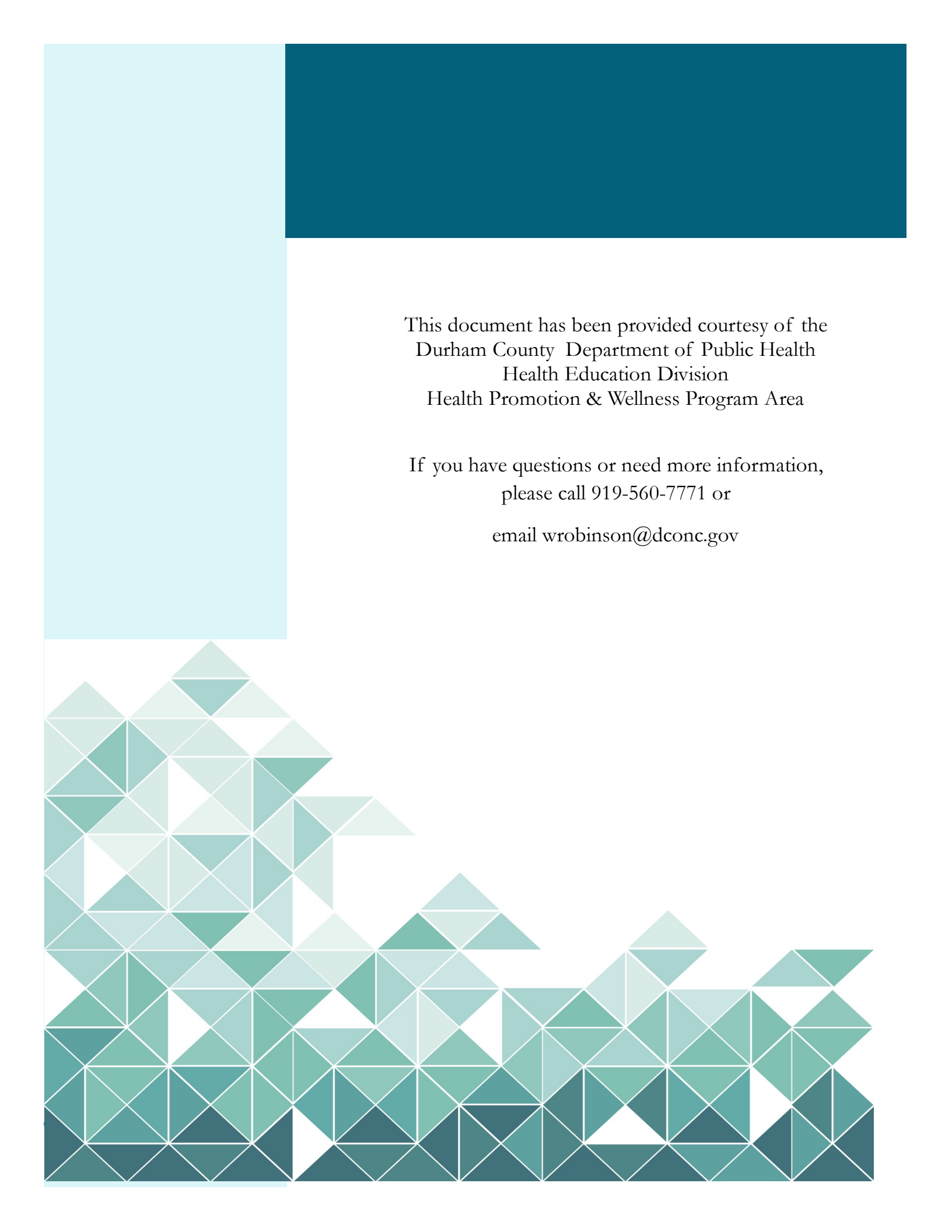
Resources

Resources

Trainings available for Durham faith-based organizations, free of charge. If interested in any of the trainings below, contact Willa Robinson Allen at 919-560-7771 or via email wrobinson@dconc.gov

- Starting or Rebuilding a Health Ministry
- Starting a Physical Activity Program at YOUR faith-based organization
- Event Planning Basics
- Resistance to the CORE
- Hands Only CPR
- Fitness Leader training
- Grant Writing
- Marketing your events (with little or no budget) -webinar
- Event planning basics- webinar

Durham County Health Ministry Network is a group that meets quarterly sponsored by the Durham County Department of Public Health. Faith-based organizations are invited to send a representative to the meetings, which are free of charge. The Network meets the second Monday of September, November, January, March & May. To join or get more information, contact Willa Robinson Allen at 919-560-7771 or email wrobinson@dconc.gov



This document has been provided courtesy of the
Durham County Department of Public Health
Health Education Division
Health Promotion & Wellness Program Area

If you have questions or need more information,
please call 919-560-7771 or
email wrobinson@dconc.gov