Worksite Wellness Program Ideas

The following is a list of worksite wellness programs and activities that can be implemented in any company with limited resources. These are only suggestions, as any successful worksite wellness initiatives are those that best meet the needs of an individual organization. Many of these ideas have successfully helped employees of all physical abilities maintain good health.

We’re here to help you get started with wellness programs. You may contact Health & Preventive Services at (757) 687-6132.

Physical Activity

- Encourage employees to walk to a specific location and log individual miles.
- Participate in local community walks, such as Heart, Cancer & March of Dimes. Ask company to sponsor employee participants or match employee contributions.
- Develop indoor and outdoor wellness trails accessible to employees of all abilities. Convert stairwells to walking areas by increasing the lighting and adding colorful posters.
- Develop walking maps. Measure the distance in halls and around the building for setting walking goals.
- Offer flexible lunch periods/breaks to encourage individual, group or “buddy” walks.
- Arrange for far parking or switch parking lots with other companies.
- Promote the use of stairways with posters and challenges.
- Make your stairwell an attractive, safe and healthier alternative by providing good lighting, fresh paint, music and rubber treads.
- Suggest that employees stretch for one minute before work each day. Announce a one minute stretch on the overhead system, if available.
- Encourage physical activity breaks during long meetings and conferences.
- Identify places within the worksite or around the building for physical activities.
- Start a running club, biking club, or line dancing club with coworkers.
- Provide either by poster or website, information on local physical activity programs and/or facilities and walking/cycling trails in your area.
- Promote active transportation e.g. biking or walking to work.
- Encourage employer-sponsored youth athletic teams, along with employee volunteer coaches.
- Have a “Goal of the Week or Month”, such as “I will exercise every day for a week” to encourage group support. Keep a chart of exercise goals and progress in a visible place in the office or intranet.
- Negotiate corporate discounts for health club memberships.
- Place physical fitness bulletin board(s) in strategic area(s).
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Physical Activity (continued)

- Advertise an exercise equipment swap.
- Purchase exercise DVDs and create a library where employees can check them out.
- Promote a bike helmet fitting day.
- Repair and maintain sidewalks and paths around the worksite.
- Provide bicycle racks or fenced-in area for bicyclists in well-lit section of the property.
- Hold lunchtime classes such as yoga, Weight Watchers, etc. Hold a pedometer challenge or stairway challenge where employees must complete a certain distance to qualify.
- Hold clinics on various physical activities such as how-to sessions on running, walking, yoga, the ABCs of resistance training, cross country skiing, skating, cycling or information on proper footwear and equipment.
- Incorporate physical activity into company events such as picnics and conferences.
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**Nutrition**

- Create a healthy eating quiz and provide a prize for the winner, such as a gift certificate for a local grocery store or health club.
- Begin a recipe exchange of healthy meal ideas among the staff.
- Feature food of the month and provide recipes on how to cook with them.
- Fruit-a-gram sent by one employee to another e.g. job well done, bad day.
- Feature a food of the month and provide recipes on how to cook with them.
- Have a drawing to win a prize, such as a cookbook, which employees can enter when they make a specific healthy purchase in the cafeteria (for example, a piece of fruit).
- Invite a Registered Dietitian or local chef to demonstrate the preparation of healthy eating meals and/or recipes.
- Create a healthy eating quiz and provide a prize for the winner, such as a gift certificate from a local grocery store or health club.
- Arrange grocery store tour where employees learn how to read labels.
- Hold a potluck where employees prepare and bring in healthy foods to share with others (recipes can also be shared).
- Provide healthier, low fat options in the cafeteria, canteen and vending machines.
- Provide milk and juice in vending machines.
- Make healthy choices highly visible in the cafeteria by using bigger signs and placing items in high traffic areas.
- Have a home grown fruit and vegetable day in the cafeteria or lunch room.
- Hold recipe contests.
- Provide a place to eat that is comfortable, well lit and inviting to employees.
- Recommend that employees take their full meal breaks to allow them adequate time to eat their meal.
- Conduct Lunch-and-Learn sessions on various health-related topics that may promote the psychological wellness of employees (e.g. leadership, time management, relaxation, work-life balance, stress management).
- Celebrate “free fruit day” – give away apples.
- Hold low fat cooking demonstrations in cafeteria.
- Suggest that employees keep a list of healthy, low fat snacks in their cars.
- Promote “eat your greens” on St. Patrick’s Day.
- Share mocktails (non-alcoholic beverages) recipes.
- Place food pyramid charts in break room/cafeteria areas.
- Have office water coolers readily available.
- Offer a library of nutrition-based DVDs, brochures and books that can be borrowed and exchanged among employees.
- Plan company functions with heart healthy eating choices in mind.
- Conduct a support group for weight management. Sponsor a weight reduction program at worksite.
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**Stress Management**
- Provide awareness about the psychological benefits of humor. Help employees beware of what makes for appropriate humor in the workplace and give practical suggestions for using humor successfully at work.
- Offer chair massages at the worksite.
- Take stress relief breaks, such as meditation and walking. Encourage employees to take time out for themselves.
- Provide employees with a library of relaxation CDs that they can borrow and exchange among employees.
- Encourage staff to take meal breaks.
- Encourage staff to get involved with community volunteer activities.
- Hold a secret pal drawing. During the month, each employee is encouraged to do nice things for his/her secret pal (i.e., email an encouraging message, make a healthy snack and drop it off at desk, place homegrown flowers on their desk).

**Tobacco**
- Subsidize nicotine patches or gum.
- Promote smoke-free buildings/meeting rooms.
- Provide health information about tobacco cessation.
- Celebrate the Great American Smoke Out.
- Reimburse employees for enrolling in smoking cessation programs.
- Give a $50 U.S. Savings Bond to expectant mothers who agree to not smoke and avoid alcohol during pregnancy.

**Program Support**
- Provide incentives: t-shirts, caps. Arrange paid time off.
- Announce and publicize a monthly health theme.
- Provide flu shots at the worksite or make schedules of community clinics available.
- Develop a brainstorming team for ideas and to help with wellness activities.
- Create a wellness newsletter. Highlight healthy lifestyle success stories.
- Conduct a “Wash Your Hands” campaign.
- Insert health information in paychecks (payroll stuffers).
- Change and clean filters on air conditioners more frequently.
- Conduct a survey to assess what topics employees want to pursue.
- Conduct recognition activities for employees making efforts at healthier lifestyle. Send employees personally-signed letters from CEO congratulating their healthy behaviors.