

Worksite Wellness at Your Site

Ready, Set, Go 5210 addresses the policies, environments, and practices that influence health behaviors in the child care setting. An important aspect of the child care setting is the employees. By providing resources and some simple steps, we hope you will be able to incorporate some of the same 5210 strategies being used at your site with your kids and families with staff as well.

Employees' physical and mental health are essential to the success of a work place. The promotion of staff members' own health helps them to become positive role models for children and increases their commitment to promoting childrens' health.

Worksite health promotion is often overlooked in many child care settings. Worksite health promotion programs for staff may not only impact the health of child care faculty and staff, but also have effects on the children, their families, and community members. Healthier staff may even save child care sites money. Some examples of health promotion programs for child care staff include: health screenings, physical activity and fitness programs, nutrition education, weight management, smoking cessation, and stress management. One of the first steps of worksite health promotion is to develop a Wellness Team to help drive the project.

Once wellness and health promotion programs are available, encourage staff to participate in these programs. Examples of promotion ideas include introducing wellness programs to new staff at their orientation sessions, presenting information at regular staff meetings, including flyers and brochures with paychecks, putting information into newsletter articles and e-mail messages, and offering health insurance discounts for participants.

Steps to Develop a Wellness Team

1. Recruit wellness team members from all areas of your child care (i.e. food service, staff, and parents).
2. Develop an action plan based on what's important and achievable in your child care community.
3. Identify resources that can facilitate implementation of your action plan and assign responsibility.
4. Take action.
5. Celebrate and share your successes and monitor your progress.



K Worksite Wellness and 5210

- Promote healthy snacks at staff meetings. Ensure at least one fruit and vegetable are served whenever food is offered to staff.

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- Staff Soup Club—Once a month a person volunteers to bring soup into the staff lounge. Others may volunteer to bring bread.
- Healthy Recipe Exchange—Share healthy recipes and perhaps compile into a recipe book.
- Encourage staff wellness team to approach vending machine company for information on their company's healthy snack program.

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- Don't forget that the more time you spend sitting watching TV or surfing the internet, the less time your body is up and moving!
- Make your free personal or family time active time.
- Work with Wellness Team to promote staff participation in Turn Off the TV Week or similar campaigns.

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- Work with Wellness Team to promote opportunities for staff to be physically active.
- Make your meetings walking meetings.
- Implement March into May or other State physical activity promotion programs for staff (see resources at end of tab).
- Calculate and post average walking distances around the school.

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- Work with Wellness Team to make sure all beverage machines in teacher lounges have water in them.
- Have water available at all meetings where beverages are served.
- Work with Wellness Team to encourage staff to model the zero message for the children.



Worksite Wellness Resources

Southern Maine Wellness Council. This membership-supported organization is designed to assist employers in their efforts to build capacity, resources, and skilled employees to support their wellness initiatives. Membership is open to employers of all sizes, profit and nonprofit alike in Southern Maine. Council benefits include networking opportunities, educational resources and professional training courses and seminars. Membership information is available through Tom Downing, Lifeline Executive Director, at 207/780-4879 or downing@usm.maine.edu.

CDC's Healthier Worksite Initiative. Information, policies, resources, and step-by-step toolkits for workplace health promotion program planners in state and federal government.
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/hwi/index.htm

The Wellness Councils of America – WELCOA Website Free Resources
www.welcoa.org/freeresources

Health Observances: www.welcoa.org/observances

Healthy People 2010 challenges individuals, communities, and professionals to take specific steps to ensure that good health, as well as long life, are enjoyed by all www.healthypeople.gov

Map Walking Routes. Type in your town or city and create a walking route near your organization.
www.gmap-pedometer.com

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center: www.walkinginfo.org

Bicycle Coalition of Maine: www.bikemaine.org

Physical Activity and People with Disabilities:

The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability, Department of Disability and Human Development www.ncpad.org

Disabled Sports USA www.dsusa.org

National Center on Accessibility www.indiana.edu/~nca

American Council on Exercise (IDEA) www.acefitness.org/fitfacts



www.multicare.org/marybridge/5210



www.lets-go.org