

## What Works in . . . Worksites

healthy eating • physical activity • healthy weight



Worksite wellness programs that support employees and the environment that they work in have been shown to be a good return on investment. Program returns range from 2 to 10 times the cost of the program when important factors such as health care costs and productivity are evaluated. Worksite wellness programs can be extensive and sometimes expensive. However, there are ways for even small employers to make positive changes at little or no cost.

### Where to Start:







1. Download the Worksite Wellness Resource Kit at <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/Sites/Worksitekit.htm>
2. Make sure management believes in and is supportive of the wellness program.
3. Assess the worksite for both facilities and worker interest to help determine what programs to offer.
4. Create or support an employee wellness committee.
5. Make the connection with community activities to strengthen buy-in. Examples include:
  - Join or form a local coalition to address nutrition & physical activity in a coordinated manner.
  - Integrate business activities with community, school and healthcare initiatives. Form partnerships with community organizations to support or develop programs or tie into existing campaigns.
  - Integrate the family into worksite wellness initiatives by connecting worksite activities to the whole family or allowing family access to worksite facilities.

### General Strategies should include programming that is multi-faceted and includes both nutrition and physical activity components.

1. Provide employees with opportunities for individual, group, and at-home support for behavior change.
2. Provide employees with tools for self-assessment of eating and physical activity habits (i.e. food diaries and fitness logs).
3. Send supportive reminders to employees via multiple means (i.e. email, posters, payroll stuffers).
4. Provide employee incentives for participation in nutrition, physical activity, and/or weight management/maintenance activities.

### Suggested Intervention/Program Strategies:

Experts agree that the causes of overweight and obesity are multidimensional. To address this, the following page outlines strategies representing the existing evidence for change at the individual, environmental, and policy levels based on six focus areas that CDC has outlined for overweight and obesity prevention. Stronger interventions have both nutrition and physical activity strategies. Use these to help design interventions or programs in a school environment.

Evidence Level for Each Strategy:	CDC Evidence-Based Focus Areas:
Items with white backgrounds are proven strategies.	 Increase fruit & vegetable consumption
Items with light gray backgrounds are promising strategies.	 Decrease sweetened beverage consumption
Items with dark gray backgrounds are expert opinion strategies.	 Decrease food portion size (portion control)
	 Increase physical activity
	 Decrease TV and other "screen" time
	 Increase Breastfeeding

**for more information:** Department of Health and Family Services • Division of Public Health  
 Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity Program • PO Box 2659 • Madison WI 53701-2659  
<http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/index.htm> • 608.267.3694

## Nutrition Strategies

### Fruit & Vegetable Consumption

1. Provide healthy eating reminders and prompts to employees via multiple means (i.e. email, posters, payroll stuffers, etc.)
2. Offer appealing, low-cost fruits and vegetables in vending machines and in the cafeteria
3. Include a family component; provide cookbooks, food preparation, and cooking classes for employees' families
4. Ensure on-site cafeterias follow healthy cooking practices and set nutritional standards for foods served that align with the US Dietary Guidelines for Americans
5. Offer healthy foods at meetings, conferences, and catered events
6. Use point of decision prompts as a marketing technique to promote healthier choices
7. Provide healthy cooking demonstrations that teach skills (i.e. fruit and vegetable selection and preparation)
8. Provide taste-testing opportunities in the worksite cafeteria
9. Create opportunities for peer role modeling (i.e. employee led campaigns, demonstrations, or programs)
10. Offer local fruits and vegetables at the worksite (i.e. worksite farmers' market or community-supported agriculture drop-off point)
11. Use competitive pricing (price non-nutritious foods at a higher cost)
12. Provide protected time and dedicated space away from the work area for breaks and lunch
13. Make kitchen equipment (i.e. refrigerator, microwave, stove) available to employees
14. Provide an opportunity for on-site gardening

### Sweetened Beverage Consumption

1. Make water available throughout the day.
2. Offer appealing, low cost healthful drink options in vending machines and the cafeteria
3. Reduce competitive foods of minimum or low nutritional value that are sold in the worksite
4. Create opportunities for peer role modeling (i.e. employee led campaigns, demonstrations, or programs)
5. Use point of decision prompts as a marketing technique to promote healthier choices
6. Modify worksite vending contracts to increase the number of healthy options
7. Use competitive pricing (price non-nutritious foods at a higher cost)

### Portion Control

1. Label foods to show serving size and/or nutritional content
2. Provide food models, food scales for weighing and pictures to help employees assess portion size
3. Offer appropriate portion sizes at the cafeteria

### Breastfeeding

1. Support nursing mothers by providing:
  - "Mother Rooms" for expressing milk in a secure and relaxed environment
  - High-quality breast pumps at work
  - A refrigerator for storage of breast milk
  - Policies that support breastfeeding
  - Lactation education programs

2. Offer flexible scheduling and/or on-site or near-site child care to allow for milk expression during the workday
3. Adopt alternative work options (i.e. teleworking, part-time, extended maternity leave) for breastfeeding mothers returning to work
4. Educate personnel on importance of supporting breastfeeding co-workers

### TV & Food Advertising

1. Place TVs in non-eating areas of the workplace
2. Limit food advertising in the cafeteria (i.e. print and other media)

## Physical Activity Strategies

### Physical Activity

1. Allow maximum access to recreation facilities.
  - Offer and encourage participation in after work recreation or leagues
  - Allow after work and evening access to worksite recreational facilities
2. Provide cash incentives or reduced insurance costs for participation in physical activity and/or weight management or maintenance activities
3. Institute environmental changes to increase activity. Examples include:
  - Provide shower and/or changing facilities on-site
  - Provide outdoor exercise areas such as fields and trails for employee use
  - Provide bicycle racks in safe, convenient, and accessible locations
  - Offer on-site fitness opportunities, such as group classes or personal training
  - Provide an on-site exercise facility
4. Set up programs that have strong social support systems and incentives, such as:
  - Buddy or "team" physical activity goals
  - Programs that involve worker & family
  - Programs to encourage physical activity, such as pedometer walking challenges
  - Exploring discounted or subsidized memberships at local health clubs, recreation centers, or YMCAs
5. Encourage scheduling that allows for more activity, such as:
  - Offering flexible work hours to allow for physical activity during the day
  - Supporting physical activity breaks during the workday, such as stretching or walking
  - Hosting walk-and-talk meetings
6. Promote opportunities by:
  - Mapping out on-site trails or nearby walking routes and destinations
  - Having employees map their own biking or walking route to and from work
  - Posting motivational signs at elevators & escalators to encourage stair usage
  - Providing exercise/physical fitness messages & information to employees
  - Providing or supporting recreation leagues and other physical activity events (on-site or in the community)
  - Starting employee activity clubs (e.g., walking, bicycling)
7. Provide on-site child care facilities to facilitate physical activity