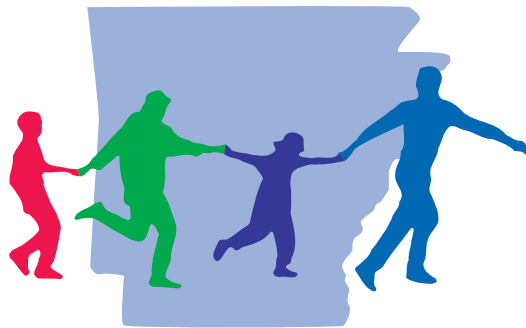


A Guide to Worksite Wellness



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Arkansas

*For a Better
State of Health*

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A Guide to Worksite Wellness

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INTRODUCTION

Identifying the Problem

The leading causes of death are usually listed as heart attack, stroke, cancer, etc. However, the leading “actual” causes of death in the United States and Arkansas are risk factors that can be modified. According to an article in the March 10, 2004 edition of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, smoking is still the leading actual cause of death, killing 435,000 Americans in 2000, up from 400,000 in 1990. However, poor diet and physical inactivity are a close second. Predicted to replace smoking as the leading actual cause of death in the near future, these two chronic disease risk factors accounted for 400,000 deaths in 2000, up from 300,000 in 1990.

Being overweight or obese can greatly increase the chances of contracting heart disease, stroke, many types of cancer, diabetes, gall bladder disorders and many other ailments. Unfortunately, Arkansas has always ranked high in the number of its citizens that carry around too many pounds.

The reasons why chronic diseases and obesity flourish in Arkansas and the U.S. are many:

- Lack of time in a fast-paced society coupled with growing numbers of fast-food outlets and restaurants, making it convenient to eat out.
- Restaurants and fast-food outlets serving extremely large portions of food with these foods being high in fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, calories and sodium while relatively low in fiber and nutrients necessary for health.
- Vending machines, snack bars and cafeterias with few, if any, healthy choices.



- Increased inactivity due to modern labor-saving devices, computers, video/DVD games, security concerns, lack of sidewalks, walking trails and bike paths.
- Using tobacco for smoking, chewing, dipping, etc.

There has been little progress during the past decade in reducing deaths attributable to the risk factors of poor nutrition, physical inactivity, obesity and tobacco use. We have always told people “they need to eat better and exercise.” This admonition has met with little success. People must live healthier lifestyles, but they need help. Communities, schools, worksites, medical centers and government need to work together to establish environments and create policies that eliminate the barriers to, and increase the opportunities for, people to live healthy.



Worksite wellness programs can help you and your employees.

Worksites are crucial to improving the health of their workers. Most adults spend more of their waking hours at work than anywhere else, making it a prime venue for promoting healthful habits. The worksite organizational culture and environment are powerful influences on behavior and this needs to be put to use as a means of assisting employees to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Benefits to employees include:

- Weight reduction
- Improved physical fitness
- Increased stamina
- Lower levels of stress
- Increased well-being, self-image and self-esteem

Employers can also benefit from worksite wellness programs. According to recent research, employers' benefits are:

- Enhanced recruitment and retention of healthy employees
- Reduced healthcare costs
- Decreased rates of illness and injuries
- Reduced employee absenteeism
- Improved employee relations and morale
- Increased productivity

A U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report in 2002 revealed that at worksites with physical activity programs, employers have:

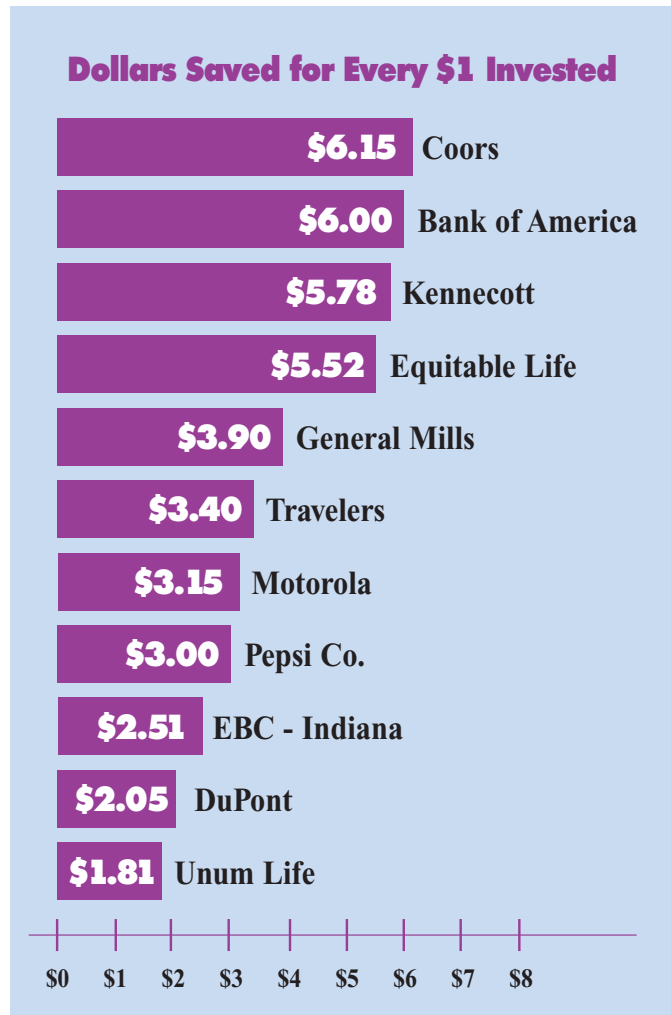
- Reduced healthcare costs by 20 to 55 percent
- Reduced short-term sick leave by six to 32 percent
- Increased productivity by two to 52 percent

Thanks to modern medicine, life expectancy for Americans has continually increased. How much we enjoy these additional years, however, depends greatly on how we have lived our lives. If our quality of life is to remain high so that we can fully enjoy these extra years, we must practice good eating habits, be active and refrain from using tobacco products.

Worksite wellness programs can help support these healthy behaviors. This guide indicates only a small portion of the existing evidence that shows worksite wellness works. Take advantage of these benefits in your organization. Start a worksite wellness program now! Use this guide to assist you and direct you to resources that you can use to create a successful program.

Let's get started!

The following chart indicates savings experienced due to implementation of worksite wellness:



Source: IRSA, the Association of Quality Clubs – 1992
Employee Benefit News, May 1997



This Guide

This guide was created for your business or organization to begin or expand your worksite wellness programs. Businesses of all sizes and types can use the guide. It provides information on a simple step-by-step planning process for establishing your worksite wellness program.

Throughout this guide you will find website listings that will lead you to additional information and resources. This guide can also be downloaded, along with the Worksite Wellness Tool Kit Supplement, at the Healthy Arkansas website at www.arkansas.gov/ha.

All the materials and tools in this guide can be used by any business.

Related Resources

More comprehensive information and examples on marketing, programmatic resources for implementation, determining the success of your program and other worksite wellness resources are provided below.

Assessment

The following assessment tools, as well as links to additional assessment information and examples, can be found at www.arkansas.gov/ha.

- Worksite Wellness Individual Interest Survey
- Organizational Characteristics Survey

Another assessment tool central to health promotion programs is the Health Risk Assessment (HRA). HRAs can be short and simple or comprehensive. Several excellent HRAs are available on the Internet.

Marketing

Information, materials and advice on strategies/activities that will increase program participation and enhance the probability of success in meeting goals and objectives can be found at www.arkansas.gov/ha. Examples include: point of decision prompts, employee commitment contract, employee readiness to change behavior, creating environmental conditions and policy to aid behavior change and numerous other promotional ideas.

Resources to Help you Get Started

Nutrition

“Worksite Challenge: Fit with 5” is a 10-week program for the workplace that focuses on increasing physical activity and intake of fruits and vegetables. The goal is for workers to do a total of at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day for five days of the week and to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Having this program at the worksite will create an environment that promotes and supports healthy behaviors. This program can be found at www.arkansas.gov/ha.

Reshape Yourself is a 15-week behaviorally-focused weight management program. Participants assess their current diet and set goals to become healthier. Throughout the program the participants learn about healthy eating. Topics taught include reducing intake of high calorie and high fat foods, label reading, fad diets, etc. The participants walk for exercise and report the number of miles walked and their weight each week. For more information, go to www.uaex.edu.

Physical Activity

Arkansas Fitness Challenge is a competitive physical activity program for the workplace that encourages employees to exercise consistently or with increasing frequency. During the “challenge period,” employees engage in eligible cardiovascular-oriented exercises to work their way through 30 virtual checkpoints in Arkansas – from Bentonville to West Memphis. Employees advance (virtually) on the Arkansas route by satisfying one daily exercise requirement from a list of eligible exercises. Call 1-800-235-0002 for a tool kit.

Working Well/Active for Life is a 10-week employee wellness program that encourages people to be more active on a regular basis. It reduces employee stress, boosts morale, and improves job performance. Increased physical activity may also help people reduce their risk of developing some cancers. Go to American Cancer Society at www.fightcancer.org/ACSWW/workplaceprograms/default.asp.

Walk Across Arkansas is a program to increase walking for fitness to help people control their weight, feel better, lower or control blood pressure, control blood sugar levels, decrease depression, improve sleeping, boost immunity and many other benefits. *Walk Across Arkansas* is an eight-week walking program with teams of up to eight people (one captain plus up to seven team members). Contact the Cooperative Extension Service, 2301 S. University Avenue, Little Rock, Ark. 72204. www.arfamilies.org/walkacrossar/default.asp

Tobacco

The *Tobacco-Free Workplace Tool Kit*, with step-by-step instructions for making a business/organization tobacco free, can be found at www.arkansas.gov/ha.

Additional programs with all materials needed and step-by-step instructions can be found at www.arkansas.gov/ha.

Supporting Materials and Handouts to Provide to Your Employees

Nutrition

- Guidelines for offering healthy foods at meetings, seminars and catered events www.arkansas.gov/ha
- Guidelines for offering healthy foods in vending machines www.arkansas.gov/ha
- Food Guide Pyramid and other nutrition handouts www.cnpp.usda.gov/pyramid.html
- Recipes and tips for getting more fruits and vegetables in your diet www.healthylarkansas.com/services/services_5aday.html
- Nutrition information and tips on healthy food preparation and choices, getting more fruits and veggies in your diet, healthy recipes, healthy eating out and how to get kids to eat healthy:
www.healthylarkansas.com/healthychef.html

Physical Activity

- Physical activity for people with disabilities www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/fun/0954.htm
- Tips for avoiding activity-induced injuries www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/life/avoiding_injury.htm
- General recommendations www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/recommendations/index.htm
- Components of physical activity www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/components/index.htm

Tobacco

- Tobacco prevention and cessation education materials www.cdc.gov/tobacco/edumat.htm
- To quit smoking call 1-866-NOW-QUIT (669-7848)

Weight Management

- Nutrition and physical activity booklet www.arkansas.gov/ha
- Body Mass Index (BMI) information/charts www.win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/tools.htm
- Choosing responsible and safe weight loss program win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/choosing.htm
- Publications and resources on nutrition, physical activity, and weight control listed by subject win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/index.htm
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) site on how to lose and manage weight www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/obesity.html

The Arkansas Department of Health can provide information on specific disease states, risk factors for disease and guidance on developing a healthy lifestyle. Call 1-800-235-0002 or go to www.healthylarkansas.com.

The following pages provide a simple step-by-step planning process for establishing your worksite wellness program. More in-depth explanation of these steps can be found at www.prevent.org/publications/Healthy_Workforce_2010.pdf.



How to Get Everyone On Board

Planning a worksite health promotion program can be a rewarding experience for company leaders and other employees. Whether a business decides to develop a comprehensive worksite health promotion program all at once or begin with a just a few ongoing health promotion activities, it will be helpful to use a planning process. This section presents a simple step-by-step planning process you can use to increase the success of any health promotion program regardless of the number of employees.

1. Establish a Planning Committee. Employee involvement is important to the planning process. Therefore, a planning committee should be formed as early in the process as possible. The committee should include potential program participants; individuals who may have a role in program implementation or evaluation (e.g., middle managers who directly control employee schedules or who have great influence on upper management, someone familiar with budgeting, the person responsible for contracting with outside vendors, etc.); and someone to represent management (if not already included in one of the above groups).

Very small businesses may not need a committee but will need someone to champion the activities.

The planning committee serves several functions. First, an employee-driven advisory board encourages “buy-in” from both management and potential program participants. Second, a representative planning committee will help assure that the program is responsive to the needs of all potential participants. And third, the committee can be responsible for carrying out or overseeing the rest of the steps in the planning process.

2. Assess the Interests and Needs of Leaders and Employees. Businesses of all sizes will want to address the questions below. The assessment chapter on the web provides examples of assessment tools that answer these questions and are appropriate for small or large businesses. The assessment may address the following questions:

- Are managers willing to take part in the program and encourage others to do so?
- What do they see as the benefits of the program for employees and the organization?
- What kinds of activities are they willing to allow?
- What is the level of employee interest in various types of health promotion activities, the most convenient times and places to schedule activities, and/or suggested organizational changes to promote a more healthful work environment?

Assessment also includes a health risk appraisal (HRA) to determine current employee disease risks, learn the level of interest in changing unhealthy behaviors and collect baseline data that can later be used to help evaluate the program. Finally, since the work environment is so influential, the planning committee may wish to periodically assess how well the organization is doing to support healthy behaviors on and off the job. Repeating the same survey over several years can help program planners evaluate the impact of specific organizational changes. It can also keep management interested in ongoing health promotion activities.

3. Develop Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives and Design the Program. It is important to think about what you hope to accomplish and who will do what, when and how, regardless of the size of the business. A program mission statement, like an organizational mission statement, briefly lists the overarching values that drive the venture and the ultimate goals or accomplishments that the project will strive to achieve. For example, if a company’s mission is to be “the best” or “among the best” in a particular field, then the mission statement for the health promotion program might read, in part: “Recognizing that employees perform their best when they are healthy and that optimal employee performance is necessary for the company to be a leader in its field, the health promotion program aims to improve employee health and well-being.”

Goals are statements of broad, long-term accomplishments expected from the program. Each goal has one or more objectives established to ensure that the goal will be successfully accomplished. Ideally, objectives should be clear, time-limited and stated in such a way that it is easy to determine whether or not they have been achieved. Examples are:

- Reduce the number of employees who smoke from 30 percent to 25 percent by the end of the next fiscal year.
- Reduce the overall use of sick leave by at least two percent from the previous year, after the first full year of program operation.
- Improve employees’ satisfaction with the company, as measured by employee satisfaction surveys conducted before and after the first full year of program operation. Increase the average score by at least 10 percent.

Action steps are statements of expected short-term accomplishments related to one or more program goals. Like objectives, they should be written in such a way that program planners can readily determine if they have been met. For example, action steps that might fall under the first objective statement listed above are: work with health plan to add smoking cessation benefits (including no-cost cessation counseling and pharmaceuticals) at plan renewal time and

participate in the American Cancer Society's *Great American Smoke-Out* this November. For each action step, a list of more detailed steps should be developed. At this point, the planning committee may wish to obtain the commitment of specific individuals or departments to carry out certain tasks.

4. Develop a Timeline and Budget. Develop a realistic timeline to apply and evaluate the program. The activities should be scheduled at times that are convenient for potential participants. Typically, an internal staff person – with input from the planning committee and management – develops the program budget. An accurate and comprehensive budget will allow the planning committee to better compare program costs and outcomes during the program evaluation. The total program budget could also be translated into a per employee cost or (eventually) a per participant cost. Employee cost-sharing for specific activities is also an option. Keep in mind that programs with moderate costs are more likely to demonstrate cost-savings.

5. Select Incentives. Incentive programs attempt to build motivation by offering individuals external rewards for taking steps in the right direction. Incentives range from recognition in the employee newsletter for participating in the company baseball team to a small monetary bonus for quitting smoking. They can also include contributions to a “health promotion medical savings account,” merchandise awards (e.g., cups, t-shirts, etc.), extra time off from work or travel awards. A common incentive for important behavior changes is discounted health insurance premiums.

6. Acquire Programmatic and/or Human Resources Support. Many high quality program materials are available free or at low cost from voluntary health organizations, local public health departments and state or national government agencies. In addition, pharmaceutical companies market disease management programs for many conditions, including diabetes, high blood pressure, weight management and depression.

Small employers can often recruit free speakers for health awareness activities (such as a monthly brown bag lunch talk) from local hospitals, public health departments, universities, voluntary health associations and private physician practices. It may also be practical to offer health promotion programs in cooperation with health plan providers. To view a variety of health promotion programs, go to the Healthy Arkansas website at www.arkansas.gov/ha.

7. Market the Program. Marketing a health promotion program is very important both to make people aware that the program exists and to motivate them to take advantage of it. The planning process itself can be a powerful marketing tool. For example, broad employee involvement in planning promotes a sense of ownership of the program. Selection of a creative name or theme for the health promotion program



often excites interest. A good needs assessment identifies health issues and program activities in which workers are already interested. Dedicated planning committee members are natural program spokespersons. An endorsement of the program from the company president, executive director and/or senior manager is an effective marketing technique and is cost-free. E-mail, bulletin board and/or newsletter announcements are also free or inexpensive. Perhaps the best marketing tools of all, however, are pleased program participants who advertise for you by word-of-mouth.

8. Implement the Program. Program implementation involves putting the plan into action. It may necessitate making arrangements with health promotion vendors, recruiting speakers, negotiating with health plans or health clubs, scheduling health promotion activities and more. To some extent, implementation, marketing, acquiring resources and evaluation can all occur simultaneously. A good rule of thumb is to begin the program slowly and to lead off with those activities most likely to succeed.

9. Determine Success. Periodically review a program to determine its efficiency and effectiveness. A good program evaluation looks at information to learn both how well the program is working (process measures) and whether or not it is achieving expected results (outcome measures). Program costs and outcomes can also be compared. Occasional modifications based on these reviews can ensure that a program is following a course that leads to success.

Adapted from Healthy Workforce 2010: An Essential Health Promotion Sourcebook, for Employers, Large and Small. 2001, Partnership for Prevention: Washington, DC at www.prevent.org/publications/Healthy_Workforce_2010.pdf.

One way to “kickoff” your program is to share the declaration on the next page with your employees and ask them to complete it.

“Healthy Lifestyle Declaration”

Declaring your intentions in writing elevates the importance of your commitment, thereby increasing the chance of success. Doing this can also help you plan strategies, then look back and evaluate progress. Check what things you are willing to do to live a healthier lifestyle. Revisit this form periodically to modify it according to your needs. You can make the contract with yourself or have someone else sign as a witness (being accountable to others can provide increased motivation).

Nutrition

- Drink fewer sodas and sugary drinks (Substitute low-fat milk, diluted juice and/or water)
- Decrease or discontinue use of butter or full-fat margarines (Substitute low-fat margarine, jelly, apple butter, etc.)
- Use less, or discontinue use of, high-fat salad dressings (Substitute low-fat or fat-free dressings, lemon juice)
- Adopt low-fat food preparation methods (Use nonstick pans and/or spray cooking oil; broil, bake, grill, microwave, roast, instead of frying)
- Modify baking recipes (Use applesauce instead of oil, two egg whites for one whole egg)
- Eat a healthy breakfast each morning (Have oatmeal, cold cereal with low-fat milk and fruit, pancakes/waffles with fruit and/or low-sugar syrup, omelets of egg substitute or egg whites containing low-fat ingredients)
- Eat smaller portion sizes
- Do not keep candy, chips, sugary drinks in the house
- Do not snack while watching TV or other distracting activity (that causes me to be unaware of how much I’m eating)
- Other _____

Physical Activity

- Take the stairs rather than the elevator
- Walk or ride a bike to many of the places where you normally drive a car
- Limit time in front of the TV and computer
- Make a commitment to do some type of physical activity with a friend, family member or coworker
- Do chores around the home requiring moderate physical activity for 30 minutes (can be three 10-minute segments) most days of the week (gardening, washing the car, cleaning windows)
- Make a financial commitment to activity by joining a gym
- Schedule time for physical activity (just as you would for other important things)
- Other _____

Tobacco (if you use it)

- Quit using
- Reduce usage
- Call a quit line
- Participate in a cessation program
- See a doctor about getting a patch
- Other _____

I, _____, agree to do the things I’ve checked above in order to live a healthier lifestyle.

Signature

Date

Witnessed

Date

We Want to Hear from You!

The Arkansas Department of Health's Healthy Arkansas Worksite Wellness Program needs your input to best serve your needs. Tell us how we can make this guide better and more useful for you. Both this guide and the more comprehensive tool kit are meant to be dynamic documents that are subject to periodic modification. That is one of the reasons why we have placed them on our website. We must remain flexible, open-minded and progressive to keep our program in step with changing times. We look to you for assistance in doing so.

Thank you for your interest in our guide and tool kit. Good luck with your worksite wellness efforts and the best of health to you and your employees.



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