

# Making Worksite Wellness Work at Your School

**A**ddressing health and wellness in the school environment has become increasingly important in recent years, not just for students, but for staff, as well. Adult and childhood overweight and obesity rates continue to rise. Though parents are primary role models for kids at home, children spend a great deal of their time at school and as a result schools have been identified as places for motivating students to lead healthy lifestyles. Teachers have a unique opportunity to show students how to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors. However, it is difficult for teachers who lack good health to serve as healthy role models for their students. Now is the time for schools to consider implementing worksite wellness programming for staff. Below are some easy suggestions to get you started!

## Get Started

- Establish and maintain a staff wellness committee that includes community partners.
- Conduct surveys to assess staff needs, interests, and health risks.
- Plan your programs based on survey results. Included below are ideas for worksite wellness programming:
  - Form a Live Healthy Iowa team. Register at [www.livehealthyiowa.org](http://www.livehealthyiowa.org).
  - Start a staff walking program before or after school and invite students. Use the tool at <http://tinyurl.com/Walking-with-a-Purpose> to assess the routes around your school.
  - Designate a staff wellness bulletin board where health and fitness tips or recipes can be shared.
  - Conduct health screenings in partnership with your school nurse/local hospital.
  - Ensure foods and beverages available in the teachers' lounge and during staff meetings promote healthy choices. Use the tool at [www.NEMS-V.com](http://www.NEMS-V.com) to assess your staff vending to see how they rate!
  - Use in-service time to learn about wellness from guest speakers.

## Build Support

- Make your case for staff wellness and get support from the top – Principals, Superintendent, School Board, etc.
- Make sure your local wellness policy includes staff wellness as a priority.
- Market your programs in a variety of ways – email, pay check stuffers, bulletin boards, word of mouth.
- Evaluate to show results – track participation, conduct periodic surveys, gather success stories.
- Use the Healthy Iowa Worksites toolkit to guide your efforts – <http://tinyurl.com/HealthyIowaWorksites>.
- Incorporate short bursts of activity into classroom break times. Visit these sites for ideas:
  - Jammin Minutes - <http://www.jamschoolprogram.com/>
  - Energizers - <http://www.ncpe4me.com/energizers.html>
  - Stories in Motion - <http://tinyurl.com/motionstories>



- Ensure the overall school environment and messaging support your local wellness policy and promote good health. Pick a **better snack** & ACT™ materials are free online and work well in a school building. For information visit:  
[http://www.idph.state.ia.us/pickabettersnack/common/pdf/overview\\_components.pdf](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/pickabettersnack/common/pdf/overview_components.pdf).
- For assistance with implementing your School Wellness Policy, use “Support Materials and Resource Guide”, found at <http://tinyurl.com/policysupport>.

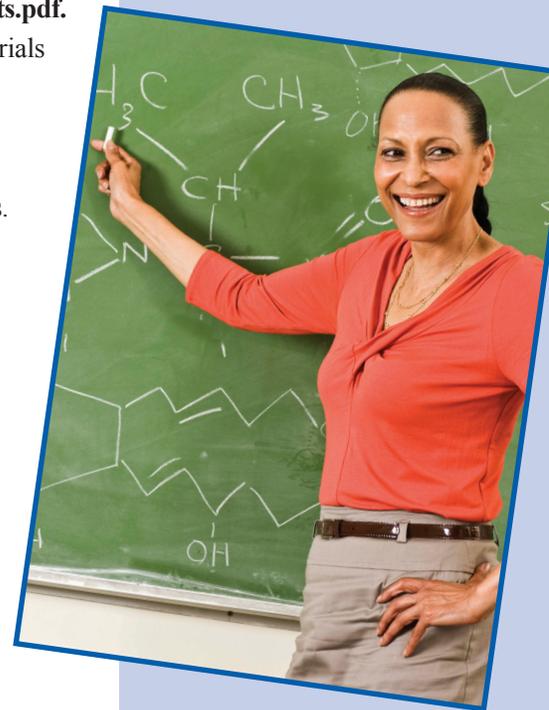
### Partner with Others

Consider working with partners in your community who can assist you in your efforts.

- Local YMCAs
- Local hospital systems
- Iowa State University Extension
- Local Public Health Agencies
- Grocery stores
- Local college/university students
- Check with your insurance provider regarding wellness services they may offer

### Other Helpful Resources

- Healthy Kids Act - [www.tinyurl.com/Iowa-HKA](http://www.tinyurl.com/Iowa-HKA)
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation - <http://www.healthiergeneration.org/>
- North Carolina’s School Worksite Wellness Toolkit -  
<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/SchoolWellnessTlkt/SchoolWellnessTlkt.html>
- Directors of Health Promotion and Education Toolkit - [www.schoolempwell.org](http://www.schoolempwell.org)
- Let’s Move! - [www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov)



*“Never underestimate that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world, indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”*

— Margaret Mead

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