

Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative

www.iowafoodandfitness.org

Worksite Wellness Program Update February 2008



ALLAMAKEE: GOOD SAMARITAN HOME, POSTVILLE

Karla and I are very pleased with the interest and participation so far.

- We set aside a part of our large employee bulletin board in the staff lounge and dedicated it to WELLNESS. We are taking turns putting tidbits regarding eating well and weight management and encouraging words on this board (including a healthy recipe that one of us has found somewhere).
 - We encouraged involvement in the Lighten Up Iowa program. We have ten staff participating, with Karla assuming the captain role. Others have expressed interest and we encouraged a second team to sign up—provided information from LUI website—but not sure that has happened. We hope to arrange opportunities for these and other staff to engage in short periods of physical activities during our work day.
 - We did a bit of research through Wellness Councils of America to create our own Health Risk Assessment(HRA). We requested at our monthly staff in-service in January for staff to voluntarily complete the assessment and turn it back in to either Karla or me. For a completed HRA, they received a Food and Fun 2008 nutrition calendar, sponsored by NE IA Food and Fitness Initiative and published by ISU Extension. We passed out 62 HRA copies and 60 were turned in!! (of about 100 employees, 50-60 people usually attend in-service in person). We have yet to compile the information, but have as our goal to compile and report by our February in-service.
 - There has definitely been some buzzing about this and we are hopeful we will continue to become a more visible and positive group in our Center.
 - Challenge: As we were warned by the group that provided the training for us and the other workplace wellness sites, it is rather time consuming and we have each put in some of our own time as well as some work time focused on this. However, our administrator is supportive and interested—though more indirectly and behind the scenes.
 - We might consider making a “group contact” list of all “leaders” from each of the worksites as well as the NIFF reps and provide the “list” to each person and let us interact as we need/desire to.
- Thanks for your interest and for helping keep us accountable!

ALLAMAKEE: FARMERS & MERCHANTS SAVINGS BANK, WAUKON

We are now half way through our 12 week pedometer/walking program. We have kept this program flexible by introducing only three weeks at a time to the staff. This allows us to stay in touch with what is working and what isn't and then adapt or change our program to meet those needs. For instance we have backed off on our challenges (and thus the tracking) for weeks seven through nine as our workplace has become busier as we near year end and we have gone through a major change within our bookkeeping area. There also seems to be a little more complaining on the job, so the new challenge not to complain has been introduced for the New Year. They will be given a purple bracelet to wear on either wrist to help remind them not to complain for this challenge. To learn more about this national challenge log on to: www.acomplaintfreeworld.org. We are basically following this program's guidelines. Though there are no new food and exercise challenges in weeks seven through nine, they can continue to earn points for the food and exercise challenges we have introduced in weeks one through six if they chose to follow them.

For January, February, and March we are looking at introducing some lunch and learns and taking a break from the pedometers. After that we will be on to our FMSB Workplace Wellness bingo or a new walking challenge - dividing up into teams and picking a destination within the United States to walk to. Setting individual goals, tracking each person

miles within the team, then mapping the progress of the team on a map and awarding incentives based on what team makes it to the chosen location first.

Overall our staff has embraced the program and it appears to be well received. We are working at formalizing our wellness program by getting it board approved and making it a part of new employee orientation. We are looking at organizing a little 5K walk for us and possibly partnering up with other businesses in our community. We always get our staff members a little birthday gift. This year I have ordered gym bags with the FMSB logo on them. This ties in well with our wellness program and also is useful in light of our new wellness center.

CLAYTON: ISLE OF CAPRI, MARQUETTE

We are participating in the Live Healthy America Program 100 day challenge. We have a total of 7 teams and 45 participants. Of course I always think that there should be more. However, some that have joined have never participated in any of the programs I have done so I am happy for that! Everyone seems to be having fun with it. Total stats since we began on 1/16, 100 pounds lost, 117hrs 40 minutes of activity and 470 miles. I will keep you updated as the weeks pass.

FAYETTE: TAPT OUT STEIN-N-DINE

The wellness program here is going well yet. The pedometers are really working well and it is amazing because I bet we have increased the local sales of pedometers since we started. It is a great conversation piece with the customers and they all seem to be a little more interested in wellness after talking with our staffers about what we are partaking in. This experience has been a great one for our company. It really opened the employee's eyes as well as my own, as to the current status of our own wellness. I have seen many differences on how the employees act, since the program kicked off.

I would also be interested in a monthly chat session to see what others are doing or planning to do. Keep in touch and thank you for giving us the opportunity to take part in this venture

HOWARD: REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES - CRESCO

It was pretty hectic through the holidays, so we didn't do any more than provide handouts with payroll. Our Luther students provided us with monthly handouts (Vitamins & Minerals, Steps to a Healthier Weight, Exercise Tips), so we used those, plus additional handouts (hand washing, attitude, Goal Setting and New Year's Resolutions). We also provide the ISU "Extension to Families At Work...At Home" newsletter with payroll.

This is not really physical health-related, but over the holidays we did do two employee projects: Toys for Tots and donated over 1,000 pounds plus \$100 to the Northeast Iowa Community Action food bank. I do think that generosity improves mental health!

We are planning an 8-week employee exercise competition beginning February 4th, where employees will join teams of five and keep track of their exercise. There will be bonus points for good nutrition. Information, incentives, prizes, etc.

CLAYTON: FREEDOM BANK, ELKADER

FAYETTE: FAYETTE COUNTY EMPLOYEES

HOWARD: MCNEILUS, RICEVILLE

WINNESHIEK: WINNESHIEK MEDICAL CENTER, DECORAH

WINNESHIEK: GEMINI, DECORAH