A photograph of a smiling woman with dark hair, wearing a dark pinstriped shirt and jeans. She has her hand on her chin. A red hatched rectangular box is overlaid on the lower part of the image, containing white text.

**INTRODUCTION:
WHY HAVE A
WORKSITE WELLNESS
PROGRAM**

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Worksite Wellness: a way to improve your bottom line and employee morale while decreasing chronic disease.



If you are extremely busy and don't have time to read another multi-page manual and you are about to put this aside and likely never get back to it again
... skip immediately to the next page.

IF WE KNOW THAT...

- ❖ Employees spend approximately 36 percent of their total waking hours at work, and
 - ❖ More employees are becoming overweight from poor eating habits and physical inactivity, and
 - ❖ Heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes are all linked by common risk factors associated with poor eating habits, physical inactivity and tobacco use, then ...
- As employers, it makes sense for us to get the most out of our employees by creating a work environment that supports and encourages good health.

EMPLOYEES WHO IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH CAN...

- ❖ Improve their overall fitness and mental alertness
- ❖ Enjoy improved morale
- ❖ Reduce their absenteeism and presenteeism due to sudden illness or chronic health issues
- ❖ Live healthier, longer lives.

THIS WORKSITE WELLNESS RESOURCE KIT WILL HELP YOU...

- ❖ Identify the strengths and weaknesses of your wellness and health promotion policies,
- ❖ Develop an action plan to implement or improve your worksite wellness program, and
- ❖ Provide a multi-faceted payback on your investment.

HERE'S WHAT OTHERS THAT HAVE USED THE TOOLKIT HAVE TO SAY:

- ❖ "It's a great resource with lots of good information!" Linda Lee, LaCrosse County
- ❖ "Very well laid out - - especially for those who need more basic assistance with program implementation." Laura Graney, Sheboygan County
- ❖ "As the coordinator, I think the resource kit is very good. It is well organized and easy to read. I appreciate that the surveys, recommendation table, action plan worksheet, and worksite wellness assessment are thorough and easy to use/duplicate if needed." Alecia Neuroth, Wood County

BUT WILL IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE? HERE ARE SOME STORIES FROM USERS:

- ❖ "We were successful in instituting a wellness committee 24 members strong. In addition, we completed the distribution of the wellness survey and the tabulation of responses. Connections are being made and projects are getting rolling. There seems to be a great amount of enthusiasm for this project!" Lori McMillan, Rock County
- ❖ "Human resources staff and management are very committed to providing wellness opportunities for their employees. They are open to new ideas and trying new things. Free fresh fruit offered all day long in break room to company employees. Food vendors are providing more nutrition information on products and to display in the break room." Bev Hall, Waupaca County
- ❖ "Staff morale is visibly improved. Staff is accustomed to serving the health needs of program participants, often neglecting their own health and nutrition, to sit at computer terminals for long periods of the day. Staff conversations involve statements such as "I'm going to the YMCA tonight" or "My husband and I are starting an exercise routine/walking plan." I consider it a great success." Amanda Kugel, Brown County

If you're sold, let's begin!

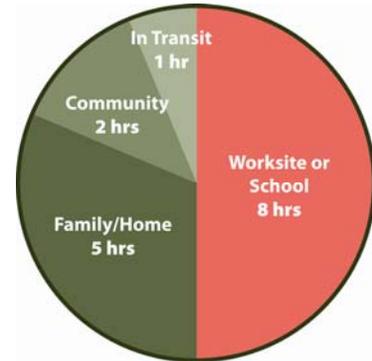
INTRODUCTION: WHY HAVE A WORKSITE WELLNESS PROGRAM?

What is Worksite Wellness?

For the purposes of this resource kit, worksite wellness refers to the education and activities that a worksite may do to promote healthy lifestyles to employees and their families. This resource kit focuses on risk factors that affect obesity and chronic diseases. Examples of wellness programming include health education classes, subsidized use of fitness facilities, internal policies that promote healthy behavior, and any other activities, policies or environmental changes that affect the health of employees.

Why the Worksite Setting is Key

Worksites are a great place to focus on changing behavior for a variety of reasons. First, people spend more time in the work setting than any other setting in an average day. Second, the work setting lends itself to policy and environmental changes that encourage and support healthy habits. Lastly, combined with incentive programs, worksites provide a rich environment to change behavior and increase the number of employees with good health habits and a lower number of health risk factors. The diagram at the right shows the average number of waking hours spend in various settings.



How Wellness Affects Your Company's Bottom Line

Here are some key benefits of wellness program:

- ❖ Decreased health care costs
- ❖ Provide a return on investment
- ❖ Increased productivity
- ❖ Reduced absenteeism
- ❖ Improve morale and retain key staff

If any or all of these factors are sufficient justification and you already believe they are likely outcomes of a wellness program, skip right to Step Two. If you need more convincing or background information, read on.

Control Healthcare Costs

Rising healthcare benefit costs are a significant concern and poor health habits and unnecessary medical care costs consume portions of our corporate resources as well as the employee paycheck. An investment in your employees' health may lower health care costs or slow the increase in providing that important benefit. In fact, employees with more risk factors, including being overweight, smoking and having diabetes, cost more to insure and pay more for health care than people with fewer risk factors.

Health related concerns are not only an issue for employees, but for the nation's employers, too. Health care premiums have doubled for the employee and employer. Employer profits are being consumed by healthcare costs. In 2000, private business expense for health services as a percentage of profit was **40%** before tax and **58%** after tax (Cowen, 2002).

Raise Awareness of the Benefits of Good Health and See a Positive Return on Investment

An employee wellness program can raise awareness so employees with fewer risk factors remain in a lower-cost group. A program also can encourage employees with health risk factors to make lifestyle changes, to seek help for mental health programs and to improve their quality of life and lower costs. The payoff in dollars as well as in quality of life can have a big impact on your company's bottom line. The average cost/benefit ratio for wellness programs based on a summary of 28 articles was \$3.48 saved per \$1 invested (Aldana, 2001). A good summary analysis of return on investment (ROI) can be found in the issue brief entitled *Employee Health Promotion Programs: What is the Return on Investment?* <http://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/publications/issueBriefs/issueBriefv06n05.pdf>

Increase Productivity

Healthier employees are more productive. This has been demonstrated in factory settings and in office environments in which workers with workplace wellness initiatives miss less work. Presenteeism, in which employees are physically present on the job but are not at their most productive or effective, is reduced in workplaces that have wellness programs.

Direct costs from lost time totaled nearly 15¢ on every dollar spent on payroll. (Strum, 2002)

Reduce Absenteeism

Healthier employees miss less work. Companies that support wellness and healthy decisions have a greater percentage of employees at work every day. Because health frequently carries over into better family choices, your employees may miss less work caring for ill family members as well. The cost savings of providing a wellness program can be measured against reduced overtime to cover absent employees and other aspects of absenteeism.

Obese employees are almost twice as likely to be absent from work as normal weight employees because of their higher rate of weight related diseases. (Tucker, 1998)

Improve Morale and Enhance the Organization's Image

A company that cares about its employees' health is often seen as a better place to work. Those companies save money by retaining workers who appreciate the benefit of a wellness program and they can attract new employees in a competitive market.

Still Not Convinced? Chronic Disease Related Healthcare Costs

The cost to employers of obesity-related health problems in 2003 was \$13 billion per year, including \$8 billion in medical claims, \$2.4 billion in paid sick leave, \$1.8 billion in life insurance, and almost \$1 billion in disability insurance. In addition, an estimated 39 million workdays are lost to obesity-related illnesses each year (DHHS 2004).

Percent of Adults with Lifestyle Health Risk Factors

<i>Risk Factor</i>	<i>State of Wisconsin</i>	<i>United States</i>
Obese: Body Mass Index (BMI ≥30)	29%	27%
Overweight (BMI ≥ 25 < 30)	36%	36%
Overweight and obese combined	65%	63%
Diabetes	8%	8%
Current smoker	19%	18%
High blood pressure	28%	29%
High cholesterol	36%	38%
Lack of physical activity (< recommended level)	47%	49%
Less than 5 servings of fruits or vegetables	77%	77%

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2009

The relationship between health risks and health costs has been well documented. A major goal of your worksite wellness program is to get employees involved in program activities as well as taking care of themselves outside of company-sponsored activities. One prominent study looking at this issue assigned a relative cost to several risk factors illustrating the large potential costs for each risk factor. Their estimates were:

Cost Per Risk Factor	
Depression	\$2,413
High Glucose	\$1,450
Overweight	\$1,194
Stress	\$1,132
Tobacco	\$713
No Exercise	\$709
High Blood Pressure	\$650
High Cholesterol	\$454

Source: HERO-Risk-Cost Research: The relationship between modifiable health risks and health care expenditures. Goetzel, et. al.

The reality is that employers are already “paying for” health related issues. On average, a company can expect to pay an estimated \$10,000 or more per year for things such as:

- ❖ Medical benefits
- ❖ Short & long term disability
- ❖ Workers compensation
- ❖ Disease Management
- ❖ Absence Management
- ❖ Staff Recruitment and training
- ❖ Human Resources

Many of the above costs are related to chronic diseases and many of the chronic diseases are related to obesity. This

resource kit will look at health factors and will emphasize strategies that prevent conditions that are chronic disease-related and that lead to higher healthcare costs.

The majority of the risk factors for chronic diseases are both preventable and modifiable. Step 1 will provide information on how to get started at your worksite.

Need Help Using This Resource Kit

There is a list of certified trainers that may be available to help you use this kit. Those trainers are listed by five regions in Wisconsin and the list is posted at:

<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/Sites/Regions/regional.htm>

Approved trainers have completed training on the WI Worksite Wellness Resource Kit and have expressed willingness to train worksites on the use of the kit as part of their other outreach activities to worksites. Availability of these trainers is up to the individual trainers and their schedules.

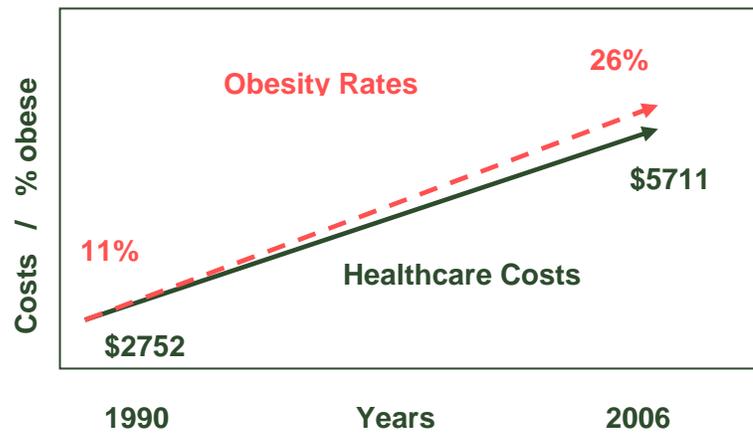
🔍 Looking for a Way to Estimate Your Obesity-related Costs and Potential Cost Savings from a Worksite Wellness Program?

CDC's Obesity Cost and Return on Investment Calculator

<http://www.cdc.gov/leanworks/costcalculator/index.html>

Wellsteps also has an ROI calculator, but it now has an associated cost to use it.

<https://www.wellsteps.com/roi/>



Two-thirds of the increase in health care spending is due to increased prevalence of treating chronic disease

Source: CDC BRFSS data & Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. *OECD Health Data 2006*

