

Introduction

Risky health behaviors by employees cost a company. Changing those behaviors can save the employer money and increase the employee's productivity.

Because work gives an employee a stable setting and support system, worksite health promotion programs can have a great impact on reducing high-risk behaviors. This impact results in lower health claims cost, less absenteeism, and less short-term disability.

Health promotion programs can include:

- **Raising awareness:**

Single health topics addressed in newsletters and emails.

- **Health assessments:**

Screenings, health fairs, health risk appraisals.

- **Education:**

Speakers or programs at lunchtime/ staff meetings.

- **Skill building:**

Activity challenges, healthy cooking, CPR, stress management.

- **Interventions:**

Massage, smoking cessation, and skills to help you get the most out of your doctor visit.

- **Physical environment:**

Healthy items in the vending machines and cafeterias, clean air practices, ergonomics, bike racks, ex time, well-lit stairways.

- **Evaluation:**

Initial needs assessment, baseline evaluation measures, ongoing evaluation of program effectiveness.

Why Offer Worksite Health Promotion?

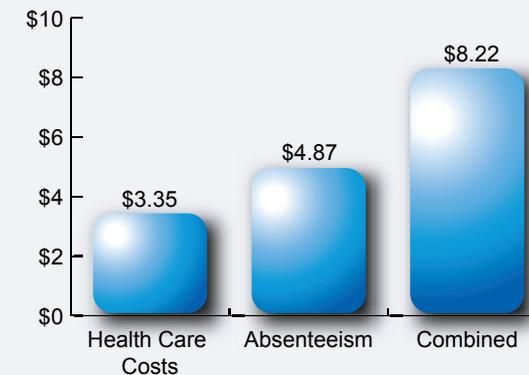
- The typical employer spends about \$8,000 a year on an employee's health care. This includes health insurance, disability and worker's compensation. As these costs climb, health insurance is expected to rise at least 10% per year.
- A 1999 study showed that corporations using health and productivity management programs had a return on investment (ROI) from \$1.49 – \$13 in benefits per dollar spent. The amount depended on the nature of the program used. (S. Aldana, American Journal of Health Promotion, 2001; 15:296-320)
- One study showed that a "stop smoking" program can save between \$404 - \$40,829 per employee, depending on the age and sex of the employee.
- The health benefits program at Traveler's Company included a self-care book, a newsletter, single-topic brochures, and videotapes. The program saved the company \$7.8 million in employee benefit costs, decreased doctor visits, and it reduced absenteeism by 1.2 days per employee per year. The estimated ROI was \$3.40 per dollar spent.
- In 1998, the Health Enhancement Research Organization (HERO) reported a study of 46,026 employees from six large employers for three years. Employees with an inactive lifestyle had 10% higher costs; employees with depression had 70% higher costs.

Benefits of Worksite Health Promotion

- **Increased Productivity**

The Canada Life Assurance Company realized a 4% increase in productivity after starting an employee fitness program.

Savings Per Dollar Invested



Source: Aldana SG. Financial impact of worksite health promotion and methodological quality of the evidence. Art of Health Promotion 1998; 2(1):1-8.

- **Increased Job Satisfaction**

According to employee opinion surveys conducted by the Silverstone Group, employees' morale increased, which helped support a more creative work setting.

- **Improved Recruitment & Retention**

In the midst of a tight labor market, health promotion programs could be a vital tool to draw new recruits.

- **Decreased Absenteeism**

Canada Life Assurance Company's absenteeism dropped 42% among employees in the health and fitness program.

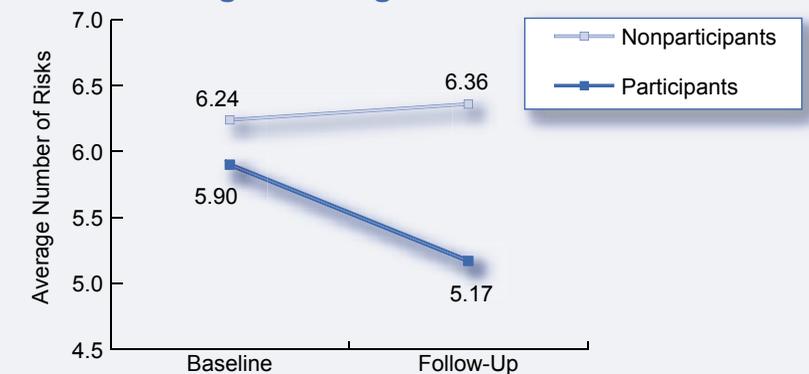
- **Decreased Workers Comp & Disability**

In one year, Boeing Company's number of back injuries decreased by 34%. Six million dollars was saved by tracking injuries as they occurred.

- **Managed Healthcare Costs**

Golden, Colorado Adolf Coors Company's wellness programs returned \$6.19 for every dollar spent.

Targeted Programs Reduce Risk



Source: Gold DB, Anderson DA, Serxner, S. Impact of a telephone-based intervention on the reduction of health risks. American Journal of Health Promotion 2000; Nov/Dec: 97-106.

Worksite Health Promotion Resources

Association of Washington Cities:
Employee Wellness Advisory
Committee
<http://awcnet.org/wellness>

Institute for Health and Productivity
Management
www.ihpm.org

National Wellness Institute
www.nationalwellness.org

Healthy Workforce 2010
[www.prevent.org/winword/Healthy_
Workforce_2010_pdf.pdf](http://www.prevent.org/winword/Healthy_Workforce_2010_pdf.pdf)

Promoting Physical Activity at the
Workplace: A Resource Guide
Alaskans Promoting Physical Activity,
DPH, CHEMS,
PO Box 110616, Juneau, AK 99811-0616
[www.chems.alaska.gov/takeheart/
publications.htm](http://www.chems.alaska.gov/takeheart/publications.htm)

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Best Practices & Success Stories

HERO (Health Enhancement Research Organization)

- Nationwide group of people and organizations that promote healthy lifestyles, and in so doing reduce health care costs, improve quality of life, and enhance productivity.

HERO
3500 Blue Lake Drive, Suite 270
Birmingham, AL 35243
(205) 969-2680
(205) 969-2142 fax
hero@the-hero.org
www.the-hero.org

Koop National Health Awards (The Health Project)

- Awards given to programs that:
 1. improve health by reducing risks
 2. reduce health care costs
 3. document effectiveness
- Past Koop Award winners:
 1. Union Pacific Rail Road, "Project Health Track 2001"
 2. Citibank, "Health Management Program 2001"
 3. San Jose Fire Department, "Wellness Program 1999"

The Health Project
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Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA)

- Sponsors the "Well Workplace Awards" for organizations working to promote the health of their employees.
- Past Well Workplace Award winners:
 1. Nebraska Methodist College, 2001
 2. Pfizer Inc., 2001
 3. Newport Hospital, 2001

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WORKSITE HEALTH PROMOTION

An Investment In Human Capital

