

Staff Wellness

North Carolina Middle School Conference 2009

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PE Fit

Teaching is a demanding job...so many roles to play!

Educators:

- High Expectations
- Increasing Responsibilities
- Heavy Work Load
- High Energy Level
- Extreme Organization
- Mental Strength
- Emotional Endurance
- Intellectual Creativity & Competence
- Physical Stamina
- Generous Spirit...time & resources(\$)

With all this work to do:

- Personal health and wellness is often overlooked or put on the back burner
- Family responsibilities and demands further drain time resources
- Teachers often say, "I don't have time to take care of myself..."



Have you ever wondered why most of us don't take very good care of ourselves when our stress is the highest?

- Skimp on sleep
- Consume more caffeine, sugar, etc.
- Eat more processed foods
- Skip exercise

Economic costs of ignoring health & wellness...

- **High Demand → High Cost**
 - Personal Cost
 - Professional Cost
 - School District Cost

Personal Cost...

- **Health**
 - **Overweight, obesity, poor diet and physical inactivity directly impact the development of the most common, preventable, chronic diseases in USA**
 - Heart Disease...leading cause of death
 - Diabetes...risk factor for heart disease, loss of eye sight, loss of limbs
 - High Blood Pressure...risk factor for heart disease
 - Cancer...second cause of death
 - High cholesterol (LDL) and blood lipids
 - More likely to be depressed & have anxiety
 - More likely to develop kidney disease
 - May increase risk of dementia
 - 68% of people diagnosed with arthritis are obese
 - For every one pound weight loss there is a four pound reduction in knee joint stress!

Other areas that suffer:

- Mental Health
- Relationships
- Social Interaction
- Spiritual Health
- Financial Health
- Poorer quality of life...obese individuals have a slightly lower quality of life than someone undergoing chemotherapy...due to pain & physical limitation

Weight bias:

- Rated more negatively than normal weight applicants
- Doctors view overweight patients as lazy, lacking in self-control, non-compliant, unintelligent, weak-willed and dishonest
- Teachers view overweight students as untidy, more emotional, less likely to succeed on HW and more likely to have family problems...so how do students view overweight teachers?

Professional Cost...

- **When a teacher is not managing his/her health due to stress or chronic disease, the following suffer:**
 - Motivation
 - Creativity
 - Follow through
 - Availability
 - Patience/empathy

School District Cost...

- **Since 2000 employment-based health insurance premiums increased 87%!**
- **Higher absenteeism among overweight, obese & sedentary employees**
 - Obese workers had 183 lost work days/100 full time employees compared to 14 lost work days/100 full time normal weight employees
- **Increased health care costs for overweight, obese & sedentary employees**
 - Obesity, overweight and inactivity has been linked to an increase in health care spending ranging from 36%-75% (depending on the resource)...presently more than smoking and drinking
- **Increased health care cost for obese and sedentary employees**
 - poorer overall health
 - decreased work productivity
 - increased absenteeism
 - interruption in the education process for students
- Health care costs decrease approximately \$153 with each disease risk factor decrease
- But health care costs increase approximately \$350 with each disease risk factor increase
- Improving the health of your employees will save the school district money!
- Lower health care & insurance costs
 - Should benefit district and employee
- Increased productivity
- Increased retention and MORALE
- Fewer injuries
- Fewer workman's compensation benefits paid
- Attracts new employees
- Positive community image
- Employees become role models for students

Example district...Washoe County School district in Reno

- Substantial reduction in absenteeism
- For every \$1 spent on employee wellness they saved \$16!
- Saved \$2.5 million in a 2-year period

Benefits to the individual...

- **By becoming more physically active you can lower risk of:**
 - Heart disease
 - Stroke
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - High blood pressure
 - Lower cholesterol
 - Metabolic syndrome
 - Colon and breast cancers
 - Prevention of weight gain
 - Weight loss when combined with diet
 - Reduced depression
 - Better cognitive function
 - Reduced abdominal obesity
 - Increased bone density
 - Improved quality of sleep

Physical Activity Recommendations

- Adults should do 2 hours & 30mins of moderate-intensity a week or 1 hour 15mins a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity
- Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities that involve all major muscle groups at least twice a week
- Flexibility exercises should be included several days a week

Moderate-Intensity Exercise

- Effort of 5-6
- Walking briskly
- Water aerobics
- Bicycling < 10mph
- Tennis doubles
- Ballroom dancing
- General gardening
- Pilates
- Yoga

vs

Vigorous-Intensity Exercise

- Effort of 7-8
- Jogging or running
- Swimming laps
- Tennis singles
- Aerobic dancing
- Bicycling >10mph
- Jumping rope
- Hiking uphill
- Heavy gardening

Small steps...

- Something is better than nothing!
- Even a little increase in physical activity can have benefits
- The goal is to work up to the recommendations...and even exceed them eventually
- Encourage everyone to just get moving...do something you like to do...find a friend to exercise with you!

Don't forget about sleep...

- Sleep deprivation alters the hormones that control appetite
- It can also inhibit the body's ability to process insulin...regulate blood sugar...
- Lack of sleep can cause weight gain!
- Lack of sleep also:
 - Reduces ability to concentrate
 - Causes "senior moments"
 - Causes irritability
 - Increases susceptibility to infection
 - Increase risk for death

Increased individual benefits when...

- **Small changes are made to the diet**
 - Increase fruit & vegetable intake
 - Decrease intake of processed foods
 - Decrease intake of junk food
 - Increase intake of healthy fats
 - Increase intake of low-fat dairy
 - Decrease intake of soft drinks, energy drinks & specialty coffees
 - Increase intake of "real" foods

What can you do to start a wellness program at your school?

- Generate administrative support
- Designate a wellness coordinator for your school or district...someone enthusiastic about wellness (fitness & good nutrition)
- Brainstorm about ideas that are reasonable for your district/school to implement
- Contact your insurance carrier about available discounts for wellness program participation
- Survey employees for interest
- Survey employees for input on types of activities to offer
- Offer healthier food options in cafeteria or encourage staff to participate in sharing healthy lunches
- Offer some type of physical activity for staff to participate in before or after school
- Form teams to compete in a wellness challenge...peer pressure...
- Offer incentives to employees for participation in the wellness program
- Accountability is a must...
- Support is essential for success
 - Hold lunch-time sessions offering recipes, cooking tips, exercise ideas, encouragement, etc.
 - Provide individual help if needed or encourage participant to see a doctor/nutritionist for help
 - Form workout groups
 - Encourage employees to have a physical performed by their doctor before starting the program
 - Offer a wellness fair where employees can get blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and bone density screenings

Just do something...

- Health care crisis in USA is out of control
- We cannot wait for the government to fix this problem...
...we don't have that much time...
- Health care reform will happen when Americans are actively engaged in the habits of healthy living

Help your friends, colleagues, family members & students live a healthy, active lifestyle!

Be a role model for healthy living.

Let's take back the health of Americans!

Help others take the steps to improve their health, wellness and happiness!

Thank you for your time and attention!

Please visit PE Fit at booth 700

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Betty is available for professional development workshops and consultation for improving the wellness climate of your school.



Resources:

2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Toolkit. Department of Health & Human Services.

F as in Fat: How Obesity Policies are Failing in America 2008. Trust for America's Health. Robert Wood Johnson foundation.

Larimore, W. MD, & Flynt, S. (2005). Super Sized Kids. Warner books.

Ratey, J. (2008). SPARK. Little, Brown & Co.

www.schoolempwell.org