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## Worksite Wellness Enhancement Ideas

By offering classes and onsite or offsite activities, you can help change the culture of wellness within your organization. Many classes and activities offered might be taught by an employee volunteering his or her time, or a by a hired instructor or vendor. Many organizations are unaware that they have talented and certified employees in many different health and wellness areas of expertise. Many times they are willing and dedicated to volunteering their time to lead wellness program initiatives.

**NOTE:** Check with [IHM\\_Wellness@bcbsmt.com](mailto:IHM_Wellness@bcbsmt.com) for available printed educational materials for many of the activities listed below.

### 5-Week Self Defense Course

#### *Example Description:*

- Come attend our Self-Defense five-week course, offered by (name and title of instructor). The course is open to all employees and their family members. All of the sessions are two-hours and will help prepare participants for a self-defense or a physical encounter. In addition, participants will gain the benefits of greater flexibility, strength, and may get a light cardiovascular workout. Wear comfortable clothes you can move around in freely.

#### *Requirements:*

- Volunteer employee instructor (certified in martial arts/self defense) or paid certified instructor
- If no onsite studio or large room available, look into options for available studio block of time rentals around town. Rental fees vary, but the common average should be somewhere around \$20 per hour.

### Beginning Fitness Education Classes

#### *Example Description:*

Join (name and title of instructor), and learn different exercise tips, tricks and techniques on various fitness topics. This class is designed for beginners but is open to all levels of fitness. These classes are designed to be informational - - however, if you would like to learn and practice proper form for the exercises demonstrated, it is recommended that you wear comfortable and loose fitness clothes and shoes. You may get a light-to-moderate physical workout depending on what type of class is being offered. Examples of offered classes are:

- ✓ Easy Abs in 15 Minutes
- ✓ Introduction to Stretching
- ✓ Intro to Hand Weights
- ✓ How to Use an Exercise Ball

#### *Requirements:*

- Volunteer employee instructor who is certified in teaching fitness classes/CPR or a hired fitness instructor or expert.
- If enough space available, this can easily be done on site since the classes are designed to demo exercises that don't require much space.

## **Blood Pressure Checks**

### *Example Description:*

Blood pressure — sometimes it rises; sometimes it falls. But one thing's a constant — we all have blood pressure (BP). And since we all have it, seems only fitting then, we should all have the opportunity to check out our BP from time to time. Now — every other month — you'll have that chance. Blood pressure checks will be held in (insert location here). (Insert onsite nurse or vendor here) will perform these confidential BP checks, giving instructions on how to use the automatic BP cuff\* and answering any questions you may have. No sign-ups will be required and they are on a first-come, first-serve basis. \*Remember - Automatic BP machines are always available in (insert location(s) here).

### *Requirements:*

- Any health screening vendor, nurse, or trained professional can take blood pressure measurements. If you have trained staff onsite and they are willing to perform the checks, it may be a cost-effective way of providing free screenings and education to your employees.
- Many blood pressure checks are scheduled onsite in quiet locations, such as conference rooms.

## **Chair Massages**

### *Example Description:*

The Employee Wellness Team wants you to take a break and take advantage of a relaxing chair massage! Chair massages are offered on a regular basis in (insert location here). Chair massages are a simple, cost-effective way to relieve stress in the workplace. They are offered by a licensed massage therapist and will leave you feeling relaxed, refreshed and ready to return to work. Chair massages can help reduce tension and the pain it causes, calm the nervous system and increase circulation, which in turn can give you energy and alertness, and can help your mind and body relax and rejuvenate. A portable massage chair will be used and there is no need to change clothes or shower. Each chair massage is \$12 per 15 minutes and payments are collected by the massage therapist at the time of your appointment.

### *Requirements:*

- A licensed massage therapist.
- Scheduled onsite in a conference room.

## **Flexibility for Fitness Class Series**

### *Example Description:*

Join (insert instructor's name and title here) and learn a variety of stretching techniques that will complement and add to your overall fitness goals. You will soon understand the advantages of good flexibility in alleviating stiffness and increasing range of motion. In today's cubicle and repetitive motion environment, flexibility is a key tool that will help you feel better. This is a four day series of classes. All classes are located in (insert class location here).

### *Requirements:*

- Certified fitness expert/certified volunteer employee.
- If no onsite studio or large room is available, look into options for available studio block of time rentals around town. Rental fees vary, but the common average should be somewhere around \$20 per hour.

## **Healthy Cooking Classes**

### *Example Description:*

Join (insert expert and title here) to learn about healthier food choices and how to cook with healthier substitutions!

### *Requirements:*

- A professional expert in culinary arts or nutritional expert (e.g., we use our onsite cafeteria catering professional. The only thing she charges for the class is the cost of food.)
- This should be offered onsite in a large room with a sink/refrigerator nearby.

## **Introduction to Martial Arts**

### *Example Description:*

Join (insert instructor's name and title) and learn the basics of martial arts training. You will be introduced to the fundamental techniques and training principles of Taekwondo, Judo, and Hapkido. No special equipment, skills, coordination, or physical fitness is required. Martial arts are for everyone regardless of talent or athleticism. This is a four-day series of classes. All classes are located in (insert location).

### *Requirements:*

- Certified martial arts professional/certified employee volunteer.
- If no onsite studio or large room available, look into options for available studio block of time rentals around town. Rental fees vary, but the common average should be somewhere around \$20 per hour.

## **Lunch 'n' Learns**

### *Example Description:*

Come join (insert instructor's name and title, e.g., Personal Trainer and supplement expert from (insert organization)) to learn about (insert topic). Two sessions will be held, one for those who take early lunches and one for those who take normal lunches. If you are offsite and would like to be provided with a call-in # for the class, email (insert contact).

### *Requirements:*

- Lunch and Learns can be on a variety of topics. Make sure that the professional is trained on the subject matter they are presenting. Examples of instructors include: Personal Trainers, Nutritional Experts, Registered Dietitians, Nurses, Doctors, etc. Many experts are willing to offer their advice for free in exchange for the opportunity to advertise their organization to the employees.
- All Lunch and Learns should be held onsite in a large room.

## **Monitor Your Health 3-Month Challenge**

### *Example Description:*

- *Monitor Your Health* is a 3-month challenge that was designed to help you reach your health and wellness goals. You get to choose one of three different categories to compete in: Body Weight Loss, Body Fat Percentage Loss, or Exercise and Calorie Tracking. During the challenge, your Health and Wellness Team will actively support your commitment to physical fitness and nutritional awareness by providing you with valuable education, tools, and resources on how you can best achieve your personal goals within the challenge. Each participant will receive a participant guide, a daily tracking booklet, a tracking poster, and biometric testing opportunities, such as weight, body fat %, and blood pressure. As an added incentive, the top seven scoring participants in each category will win a Polar heart rate monitor watch!

### *Requirements:*

- The Wellness Team is working on providing education and materials for employers to offer this program to their employees.
- Volunteers are needed to help conduct confidential testing sessions.
- Challenges are a popular way to keep your employees engaged in wellness.
- Weekly communication updates with health and wellness tips is also a great addition.

## **Nutrition Standards 2013**

### *Example Program Description*

- In 2013, we received a grant through the Montana Cardiovascular Health Program to help encourage the use of healthy food and beverages through our internal wellness program at (organization name), whenever feasible. Effective 2013, more healthy and nutritious food options are included in the onsite cafeteria. We have teamed

up with our cafeteria vendor to meet the minimum nutrition guidelines as outlined in the Nutrition Standards document.

- To comply with the minimum requirements as outlined in the (organization name) Nutrition Standards, we are continuously working closely with the vending machine contractors.

#### *Requirements*

- Staffing and time is needed for creation of Standards/Policy
- If planning to move forward, you may need appropriate approval by executive leadership
- The wellness team can provide you with recommended minimum guidelines for creation of standards

### **Poker Walks**

#### *Example Description:*

- Stampede Poker Walk Team Scramble! Why not rope a few of your work partners into joining you for a pleasant and health-enhancing stroll through downtown Helena on (date) anytime between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Round up your team of one to five participants; then mosey on over to the Fuller North Picnic Table to begin the walk. Each team member collects a card at each station and at the end of the walk, the team's cards are pooled to compile the best hand. The winning team's hand will receive a special prize from the IHM Wellness Team! Also, you are encouraged to wear a Stampede-themed costume during the walk. The team with the best costume will win a nifty prize guaranteed to elicit a collective Yee Haw! Be sure to download your Stampede Poker Walk route map and instructions off of the Well with Blue Resources Page on the intranet.

#### *Requirements:*

- In order to put on a successful poker walk, you must have at least four to eight decks of cards and six to eight volunteers to help hand the cards out.
- Make sure you designate one staff member to coordinate the entire event.
- Four table locations must be identified. The first card table should also be the last card table.
- Incentives and prizes for participating in the event are highly encouraged.
- Refreshments (such as snack bars, fruit and/or water) are a nice offering, especially if the poker walk is on a warm day. If it is on a cold day, it is nice to offer hot cocoa and apple cider.

### **Rest and Relaxation Classes**

#### *Example Description:*

- Come experience 30 minutes of pure bliss where you can lie back, close your eyes, and just RELAX. This season, each of our Rest & Relaxation classes will offer a different relaxation technique along with comforting music that will help you feel refreshed, revived, and ready to continue on with your work day. Mats are available at the onsite classes on a first-come, first serve basis. Always feel free to bring your own mat if preferred. Chairs are available if you prefer to sit. Classes will be offered on a monthly basis during the evenings in (location) beginning in the spring.

#### *Requirements:*

- You do not have to have a certified individual lead this class. This can be lead by an interested volunteer who may have a calm and relaxing voice. Free and unlicensed scripts can be obtained from the internet.
- If you do not have a volunteer to lead the class, there are a large variety of recorded scripts available on the internet or book stores for purchase.
- It is always best to conduct this class with relaxing music and a cd player.
- You may want to purchase mats for participants to lie down. If lying down is not an option, you could always use chairs and only read scripts that do not require lying down.
- This class can easily be located in a large and quiet conference room where there is space to spread out comfortably.

## **Tai Chi Classes**

### *Example Description:*

- Join (instructor and title) to learn the basics of tai chi through posture, breathing, grace, and focused mental acuity. You will learn a new way to breathe and how to incorporate it into basic movements. You will also learn to relax your body and your mind so that the physical and mental stresses of modern life can be managed. This is a four-day series of classes. All classes are located in (location).

### *Requirements:*

- Certified fitness expert/certified volunteer employee.
- If no onsite studio or large room is available, look into options for available studio block of time rentals around town. Rental fees vary, but the common average should be somewhere around \$20 per hour.

## **The GREAT Ridge Walk/Run 2013**

### *Example Description:*

- The Wellness Team invites you to join your fellow employees for an afternoon hike or run on the beautiful Mount Helena Ridge Trail. After the initial uphill stretch, it's a fairly easy 7.5 mile trail with great views, following the ridge to Mount Helena, descending on the Prairie Trail. Participants will be bussed to the trailhead. Dates and times will be posted soon.

### *Requirments:*

- In order to put on a large event like this, you would need a team of at least 6-8 volunteers. We have leads from our employee wellness committee helping us with leading both the walking and running groups. It is important to have at least one lead certified in CPR.
- Since this hike is long and the hikers don't return to the starting trailhead, we reserved busses to take the participants to the trailhead from the ending point. However, if there is a hiking trail in your town that you can start and end at, you could eliminate the need for busses.
- Incentives, such as water bottles, hats, or sweat towels would be a great offering if budget allows.
- Employees might need to take personal time to attend, if the event takes a long time.

## **Weight Watchers 360**

### *Example Description:*

- As BCBSMT employees, you as well as your family and friends, will be offered the monthly rate of \$39.95 to join Weight Watchers — a slightly lower rate than if you joined as an individual outside the company. BCBSMT also offers weekly onsite meetings. As an added incentive, employees who attend 9 or more of the required meetings in a 12-week time frame will be reimbursed 50% of their participation fees (limited to one 12-week time frame per employee). Meetings are held weekly at (time and location). District office employees can participate in the incentive offering!

### *Requirements:*

- This will take coordination with a local Weight Watchers organization leader, willing to conduct weekly meetings at your location. There may be a minimum requirement of the number of participants required to hold the meetings on site and receive a corporate discount.