

# wellness@WORK



## Building a Culture of Wellness in Your Workplace

Controlling health care costs and keeping employees healthy, happy and productive are top priorities for Oregon businesses. The Wellness@Work initiative is a tremendous opportunity to create a culture of wellness and achieve these priorities.

More and more companies are embracing the benefits of worksite wellness—and finding that it's easy to get started. Consider these core components of an effective program, read the stories from other worksites on the back of this sheet and visit [www.healthoregon.org/wellnessatwork](http://www.healthoregon.org/wellnessatwork) for more details.

### Inspire

- Share your vision.
- Secure leadership buy-in at all levels.
- Engage middle managers and wellness champions.
- Budget time, staff and money for wellness.
- Support employee health with rewards and policies.

### Engage

- Establish a wellness committee.
- Provide social support through classes and group activities.
- Include wellness in recruitment, recognition, communications and celebrations.
- Establish partnerships in the community.

### Inquire

- Work with your wellness committee to continually ask, listen and learn.
- Assess your current environment.
  - Take the assessment at [www.healthoregon.org/wellnessatwork](http://www.healthoregon.org/wellnessatwork).
  - Talk to employees about their interests and needs.
  - Review health costs and claims.
- Monitor employee participation and make changes along the way.

### Act

- Aim for a strategic, comprehensive wellness program.
- Start with small steps and celebrate successes.
- Create an Action Plan to:
  - Set priorities based on importance, feasibility and sustainability.
  - Establish goals, objectives and activities.
  - Identify partners and resources.
- Meet regularly and keep asking, exploring and learning.

### Simple actions some Oregon employers have taken to get started

1. Offer healthy snack options to employees in lieu of vending machine snacks.
2. Make movement a priority by creating time and space for employees to walk or stretch.
3. Provide a private space for health needs like blood pressure and blood sugar checks.

To learn more about employers' wellness programs and to take a free online assessment to help your organization identify the strengths and gaps in your workplace environment, visit [www.healthoregon.org/wellnessatwork](http://www.healthoregon.org/wellnessatwork) and get started today.

# Success Stories

## GRIFFIN CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Medford's Griffin Creek Elementary School's 50-person staff got a wellness boost with an OEA Choice Trust Wellness Grant that helped the school integrate physical activity and nutrition into daily activities—with overall results:

- 4 percent drop in collective body mass index.
- 11 percent drop in body fat.
- 22 percent increase in flexibility.
- 300-pound total weight loss.

The key, says Ginny Hicks, Griffin Creek's former principal, is variety. Griffin Creek hosts staff health screenings through partner YMCA; after-school classes, including fitness, cooking, and yoga; health lectures; tasty and nutritious soup competitions; weight-loss challenges; and a library of employee-donated wellness books.

## DUCKWALL-POOLEY FRUIT COMPANY

At the beginning of the 7 a.m. shift, an exercise leader guides workers at Duckwall-Pooley Fruit Co. with 10 neck-, arm- and wrist-stretching exercises. Company president Fred Duckwall often joins them. The 15-year-old program has helped the family-owned company reduce workers' compensation premiums from \$1.50 per \$1,000 in wages to 87 cents per \$1,000.

Duckwall-Pooley's 300 employees also enjoy other wellness benefits:

- A massage therapist to help relieve employee muscle tension.
- A nurse to help them manage health, wellness and child-rearing issues.
- A set-aside room as a "new moms' station," where nursing employees can express and store milk.

"It all pays off," Kathy Nishimoto, vice president and director of human resources, says. "We're not out there trying to get attention. We're just doing the right thing because it's the right thing to do."



## ALTA PLANNING & DESIGN

The 15-year-old Portland company strives to "create active communities where bicycling and walking are safe, healthy and fun."

Employee perks reflect the mission:

- A \$125 annual bike tune-up reimbursement.
- Onsite, indoor storage for up to 50 bikes.
- A shower, washer and dryer for post-commute clean-up.
- Loaner bikes for short trips by employees or visitors.

Mia Birk, company president and longtime bicycling advocate, says, "Our culture is about active transportation—incorporating exercise into our daily life by how we get around. It reduces cost and stress, and increases productivity."

## THE BOEING CO.

Boeing's Gresham site went tobacco free in 2008, which capped a yearlong transformative effort to:

- Engage employees and leaders in the journey to tobacco free.
- Provide resources to help employees quit.
- Build employee awareness through robust communications.

Boeing was a pioneer nationally, offering employees the Quit for Life telephone cessation program in 2003, said Robin Bloom, business operations senior project manager. "The company wanted to provide a healthy workplace for employees and project a positive image to visitors, customers and the communities where our employees live and work."