

Work Well, Be Well, Live Well

WIC Worksite Wellness - A Commitment to YOU

You, along with 3,500 other WIC workers dedicated to helping others live healthier lives, are the heart of the WIC Program. From receptionists to office managers, from nutrition counselors to lactation specialists, you are the reason WIC programs in over 650 sites successfully serve 1.4 million women, infants and children each month. You are the reason WIC changes lives!

The irony is that you are often so busy serving our participants that you may put your own wellness needs at a lower priority. You work hard at your WIC job, but you may also be a busy parent or student, or you may be caring for elderly or sick family members, so finding time for yourself is a challenge.

Health is much more than the absence of disease. Wellness is a complex balance of physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual health. Wellness, that sense of well-being, that elusive life-work-family balance, is the result of involved, daily decision making. When the daily work routine embraces stretch breaks, walking meetings, and the work environment includes healthy snacks and a variety of wellness activities, those daily decisions turn into healthy actions—and wellness becomes the norm.

Can your WIC workplace become a center of wellness?

This year, California WIC is introducing WIC Worksite Wellness, a program designed to make every California WIC site a wellness center for both staff and participants. This new initiative has been in the making for almost a year. Led by a State WIC and Local Agency Advisory Committee, CWA and its 82 member agencies have created a multi-layered workplace wellness program to help all staff members achieve wellness goals. When wellness is the office culture, the benefits are lifelong.

WIC Worksite Wellness is based on responses from over 1500 of you to a statewide survey about wellness concerns, awareness, and workplace involvement. We actively sought your ideas, advice, and recommendations to guide us, and then designed a program geared to fulfill the program's vision "to create and sustain a healthy and thriving WIC community."



Workplace Wellness is not new. How will WIC's be different?

Each WIC site will identify the specific needs and wellness interests of its particular staff members and ask them to help determine the make-up of their WIC Worksite Wellness program. While there will be similarities from site to site, not every program will be exactly the same.

Using the **Ten Steps to a Well WIC Worksite** as a guide, each agency will add its own policies and mechanisms to make wellness an integral part of its worksite culture. This may mean time for lunchtime talks, meditation, walks, rewards for healthy recipes, whatever staff members deem important, and each staff can set individual wellness goals as well. Then, later in the year, WIC will provide a sponsorship toolkit to help agencies solicit local support from participating business that will help fund incentive awards and build community partnerships. Another toolkit in development focuses on media tools and tips designed to help the agencies publicize success and sustain the program over the long term.

Once your agency has achieved your goals, the agency will be visited by a Wellness Team, and certified as a Well WIC Worksite. This official designation will come with statewide recognition and official signage, so that your staff will be encouraged and reminded that they are part of a statewide movement. CWA will assist you in sustaining your Well WIC Worksite program by seeking corporate and organizational sponsorships to support ongoing site and individual incentive items and staff engagement activities.

Are you ready to sign up?

Read the accompanying guidelines, procedures and suggestions for your agency's ten-step goals, and begin now to develop your workplace wellness program.

Some agencies have already begun the qualifying process. Among the many enhancements and activities that have begun to flourish in WIC sites across California are fresh fruit Fridays, flu shots, walking meetings, meditation times, lactation rooms, exercise equipment, community healthy picnics, guest speakers and whole grain recipe contests. Programs in Monterey and Shasta counties, to name just two, demonstrate that inclusive, collaborative wellness programs work. CWA's original program, WIC Walks the Talk showed us how WIC statewide initiatives can be effectively implemented site-by-site. With your participation WIC Worksite Wellness will be a success.

**By making staff wellness a priority at every level,
we will Work Well, Be Well, Live Well.**