

Boosting Employee Wellness

Engagement in wellness program lowers health claims costs and improves work productivity

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), productivity losses related to personal and family health problems cost U.S. employers \$226 billion annually. Employee wellness programs like Humana's data-driven wellness and rewards program, Go365®, can help reverse this trend. A three-year study of Go365 shows that employees engaged with the health incentive program had fewer unscheduled absences, lower overall health claim costs, and fewer visits to the hospital and emergency room.

Go365: A Workforce Wellness and Rewards Program

Go365 helps members create highly personal paths to health and earn points for steps taken toward better health — including activities like: yearly flu shots, workouts, and vision and dental exams — and measurable milestones achieved. The points can be redeemed for rewards from major retailers, fitness equipment, and personal electronics; the points can even be used for charitable donations.

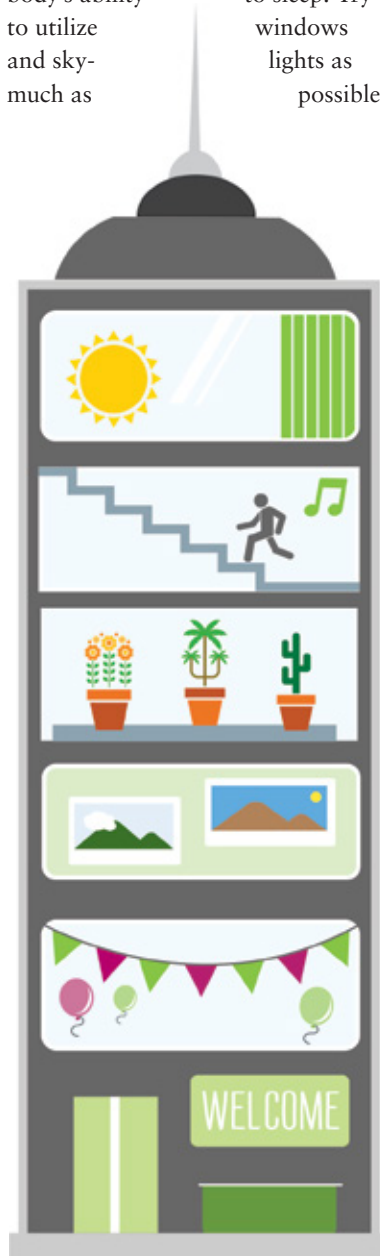
Go365 can help school administrators and faculty make healthier decisions and guide them on their well-being journeys. At the same time, the district could be rewarded with increased productivity, fewer sick days, and lower medical claims.

Creating a Healthier Work Environment

There are many ways employers can engage employees to help drive a culture of well-being, and one of them is to create a healthier work environment. The following are a few ideas districts could use to

enhance administrator and faculty well-being, productivity, and morale.

Natural light. Exposure to natural light can support the body's internal regulatory processes, such as circadian rhythms, which drive the body's ability to sleep. Try to utilize windows and skylights as much as possible.



Movement. Sitting too much has been linked with a higher risk for heart disease, diabetes, and shorter life expectancies. One company we worked with installed inspirational messaging (along with upbeat music) in its stairwells to make taking the stairs more interesting.

Plants/Nature. Add plants to the work environment, which have been shown to reduce stress and increase productivity and creativity. Some plants can also help with the air quality. If you can't have plants, images of nature, like landscapes and flowers, can boost mental well-being. We added images such as the sun shining through the trees to our own office walls. As for wall paint colors, stay away from whites and grays, instead, try blue to promote calmness and green for innovative thinking!

Be creative in promoting wellness programs in the workplace. Install wellness messages on desktop screensavers or on walls. Ask employees to wear a certain color to commemorate the kickoff of a wellness activity. Post how-to posters in faculty break rooms showing stretches employees can do at their desks.

All of these wellness ideas involve the work environment, but remember that they work best when aligned with your district's goals and policies. A partner in wellness such as Go365 can provide you with resources and tools to evaluate a worksite and to help you with your ongoing wellness initiatives. ■

Want more ideas on how to create an environment that supports wellness? Contact Jason Shanda at 920-343-1731 or email jshanda@humana.com.