



THE BENEFITS OF A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

An employee's health is important in every workplace. Since many employees spend most of their day sitting at a desk or in an office, health programs implemented in the workplace are becoming a vital factor in a healthy lifestyle.

Ideally, the office should be a place that protects the safety and well-being of its employees while providing them with opportunities for better long-term health. Chronic diseases such as depression and hypertension can lead to an overall health decline of an employee within the workplace; contributing to an increase in health-related expenses for employers and employees. Poor health can lead to lower productivity rates because of work days missed. Many organizations have realized the benefits of health promotion programs hoping to decrease the rising health care costs and [Native Americans for Community Action \(NACA\) Inc.](#) is no exception. NACA offers an Employee Worksite Health and Wellness Program to establish and maintain a culture of health within the workplace by encouraging physical activities and nutrition awareness, which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. The purpose is to recognize the importance of employee wellness in the workplace, establish a framework that promotes wellness to benefit the NACA employees, and identify resources for promoting and encouraging employee wellness.

According to the Center for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC), 69% of adult American Indians and Alaskan Natives are overweight/obese. In a recent employee satisfaction survey, 45% of NACA employees self-reported being overweight. People who are overweight, compared to those with a normal or healthy weight, are at an increased risk for many serious diseases and health conditions; including high blood pressure (hypertension), heart disease, cancer, and type 2 diabetes. Working on Wellness (WOW), a curriculum through NACA, seeks to address the importance of providing wellness programs in the workplace in order to prevent and reduce obesity.

A workplace health program aimed at keeping employees healthy is a key long-term management strategy. NACA's WOW program offers the use of the NACA Wellness Center to all employees at no charge; including fitness and nutrition classes. To encourage wellness and stress management in the workplace, NACA allows employees up to two hours per week of paid time to utilize the Wellness Center. The WOW committee also provides on-site food demonstrations, encourages "walk and talk" meetings, and offers incentives for participation. By having an effective Workplace Wellness program NACA has the potential to significantly benefit employees, employers, their families, and our community.

For more information about NACA's Employee Wellness Program contact NACA Health Promotion at (928) 773-1245 ext. 221.

