

NE Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative Allamakee County Planning Team Meeting

The Allamakee County FFI Planning Team met on October 17, 2007 at 4 pm at the Allamakee County Extension office. Present: Mary Koopman, Danielle Bucknell, Mary Jo Goodman, Beth Shafer, Paul Rael, Lana Snitker, Anne Blocker, Solveig Hanson, Teresa Wiemerslage and 3 Luther College student observers.

WELCOME: Introductions were made with an additional question for everyone to answer – “Who have you taken Food & Fitness information to in your community?”

Kellogg recently updated their mission statement to read: *To create vibrant communities in which families and children eat healthy, locally grown food purchased in their neighborhoods; engage in physical activity and play with the confidence that they are safe; and live in an environment that supports family and community health, particularly in low income, minority communities.*

WEBCAST VIDEO – “WORKPLACE WELLNESS”

What do you see as the main health issues facing NE Iowa employees today?

- Business leader buy-in—not a priority, not important
- Obesity and overweight
- Stress—time and financial
- Nutritional stress—caffeine, sugar, etc
- Sleeplessness
- Back issues—related to sitting, recreation, job requirements, overweight
- Cost to have health care
- Mindset and priority
- Diet ends up hurting because we are too busy
- Cost of food can be a barrier
- Vending and convenience foods are everywhere

What are some things worksites can do if they are starting a wellness program that will help them insure success?

- Pick out the key players --“champions”
- Management support
- Focus on participation first
- Address the key barriers—give employees time to be fit
- Where is the focus? Screenings, physical activity, etc
- Offer an incentive (money, clothing items for minutes working out, pay for memberships,
- Evaluate the program regularly—is it working?

What are the benefits for businesses to start a workplace wellness program?

- Recruitment for new employees
- Reduce absenteeism
- Reduce health costs
- Improve employee retention and morale
- Enjoy work
- Productivity
- Team spirit—cheerleading, support

Do you know of any worksites in our county that have started a workplace program?

- VMH has Wellness screening
- Northgate Care Center
- Businesses just starting programs....
 - Waukon Power Sports
 - Waukon State Bank
 - FMSB
 - Good Sam Center
 - Allamakee Schools

Which worksites in our county would benefit from the Well Workplace Training that will be offered in NE Iowa this winter as part of our Food & Fitness Initiative?

Our nominations for the second worksite in the county were as follows.

1. Good Sam in Postville—Ann Mansfield—Dave Hjortland has already expressed interest in participating.
2. Kitchen Krafts—Mary Jo will contact Dean or Lynn

Other suggestions:

3. Northern Engraving—Anne Blocker will contact if needed—Perry Norton
4. County Courthouse—Lana Snitker will contact if needed—Board of Supervisors

Farmers & Merchants Savings Bank in Waukon is one worksite selected for this assessment. Mary Jo reported on the visit from the Luther students and Dr. Lonning. Students observed the employees in the working environment. They took lots of photos – snack areas, food areas, lounge, and bulletin board space. The students discussed the wellness program. Three 3 models were proposed and the bank decided to go with most aggressive model. Mary Jo said having a co-coordinator is helpful. FMSB has 100% participation at this time. Employees have completed a HRA (deadline Oct 11, 30-40 minutes to complete). A third party did the data collection online. Students will be back on Nov 1. Mary Jo reports that Phase 2 (monitor eating and exercise habits) will be more challenging. It was suggested to have a farm do a food drop-off for the wellness sites to experiment with different foods.

What are some potential policy changes for worksites related to wellness?

- \$10/mo toward membership to fitness center
- Membership costs come directly out of payroll
- ½ membership costs, prorated membership based on participation
- Converting sick leave into memberships
- Establish a drop-off site for fresh produce for employees
- Offer more time for breaks and lunch to exercise

REGIONAL PLANNING TEAM: RT members summed up notes from the regional planning team from the Sept. 26th meeting.

- Counties are still discussing which assessments to do in the county.
- RC&D is willing to have an intern do the county mapping
- Very confusing meeting...lots of options. Unclear as to what options to do.

The group decided that we will participate in SRTS grant as written—no schools are ready to assess on their own. Allamakee County would like to continue the suggestions for community

nominations—Lansing for Walkable/Bikable and Waukon and Postville for Barrier mapping (or all communities if that is an option).

The following idea was submitted as a future meeting topic: What resources are there that people are not aware of (Asset Mapping)? (track, playgrounds, etc)

Allamakee County still needs two youth representatives. Please send suggestions to Teresa. Emily Neal has resigned as Alternate Regional Team member due to a conflict with the meeting time. Suggestions for a new RT Alternate should be send to Teresa.

As a result of this meeting, what will you do differently and who will you talk to about it?

- Interesting to hear that wellness in the workplace is a possibility. Talk to boss and ask if we can participate.
- Made me look at our farm as an employer and what we can do for our employees. Can we help worksites by giving access to local food, box lunches or catered lunches? Everyone is invited to the Vegetaball on Oct 21.
- Want to get the youth involved.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm. Submitted by Teresa Wiemerslage.