

Tips for Promoting School Employee Wellness

Does your school have an employee wellness program?

YES? Get involved!

NO? Access [Healthy School, Healthy Staff, Healthy Students: A Guide to Improving School Employee Wellness](#) for help starting one today!



You can have an employee wellness program and follow *CDC Guidelines for Operating Schools During COVID-19.*

- Wellness is more important than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic. In a March 2020 survey,¹ teachers were asked to describe the emotions they felt most often each day. Anxiety was by far the most common.
- Physical activity can lower stress and anxiety.²
- School employees who model good physical and mental health behaviors help support students' health and academic success.
- Wellness activities can be simple and don't necessarily take a lot of time or resources.
- Wellness programs can be organized by administrators, school health teams, or even a single school staff member wanting to make a difference.

Consider trying some of these employee wellness activities³ to support physical and mental health, even in a virtual environment:

- Remind staff about employee assistance programs with access to resources, referrals, and counseling.
- Recognize staff contributions and achievements, and celebrate milestones with others.
- Hold exercise challenges (e.g., steps challenge, exercise minutes challenge).
- Find and share stress management and mental health resources and information.
- Build in physical activity breaks during the school day (can be done along with students).



Other tips you can try!

- Have mindfulness meditation breaks for staff and students during the school day.
- Hold 5-minute mindfulness conference calls for staff.
- Provide or attend professional development on social-emotional skills, trauma-informed approaches (understanding the impact of trauma on the individual), and resilience.

"I know that my students need breaks throughout the day to recharge their minds and bodies before they're ready to learn again. Teachers need brain breaks, too! Having a designated time during the work day to practice mindfulness exercises has made a world of difference in my stress level."

- K. Conway, Middle School Science Teacher



Additional Resources

- [CDC Healthy Schools: School Employee Wellness](#)
- [CDC Healthy Schools Partner Toolkit](#)
- [CDC Workplace Health Promotion](#)
- [CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard](#)
- [SHAPE America – Virtual Resources for Health and PE](#)

References

- ¹ CASEL CARES: Strategies for Being Your Best Possible 'SEL'f with Dr. Marc Brackett. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UE2mWPPj0k>
- ² Sharma A, Madaan V, Petty FD. Exercise for mental health. Prim Care Companion J Clin Psychiatry. 2006;8(2):106. doi:10.4088/pcc.v08n0208a. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1470658/>
- ³ Offerings from [Healthy School, Healthy Staff, Healthy Students: A Guide to Improving School Employee Wellness](#)

