

Workplace Wellness Challenges

Workplace Wellness Challenges - activities that engage people in becoming happier, healthier, and more energetic at work - are gaining popularity and changing lives at work. The purpose of these challenges is to encourage healthier lifestyle behaviours in the workplace. Workplace wellness challenges in schools have the added benefit of showcasing teachers as committed, positive role models for health. Challenges are successful when a supportive, positive climate of fun and camaraderie helps people to adopt or maintain a healthy way of living. Challenges should be designed to reward effort and allow as many people to succeed as possible. Try one of these challenges before the summer, and make it a part of your calendar every year!



1. **Set your sights** on an upcoming event. Sign up to a local 5km, 10km, half-marathon, marathon, triathlon, adventure race, etc. Develop a training plan and complete the event together. Give yourselves plenty of time to train smart, and support each other along the way.
2. Go one step further and organise a family friendly, fun event as a **fundraiser** for your school. Share the training plan with parents, neighbours and the school community, and invite everyone to take part. You never know, it might become an annual event, and the proceeds could be dedicated to the purchase of new PE equipment and resources for the school.
3. Map a **Lunchtime Mile** near your school and encourage teachers to take a stroll for a well-deserved body/mind break at least once a week. Everyone keeps a record of how often they completed the mile, and the winner at the end of the year gets a prize.
4. **Step it out** - invest in a set of pedometers and record your steps over a period of time. Use them to raise awareness of daily movement patterns or make teams within your staff and have a step-counting competition. To save on costs, team up with local schools or organisations and share the pedometers.
5. **Leave the car at home** – introduce WOW days (walk on Wednesday) or COW days (Cycle on Wednesday) for teachers as well as students! Or mix it up by challenging teachers to a car free month: over the course of one school term, can teachers clock up a total of one month (20 school days) car-free? If teachers live too far from the school to walk or cycle, they could park the car down the road and walk the rest of the way. Park and stride - every step counts!
6. **Have fun!** Plan a fun activity for co-workers – take your team to an adventure centre or wellness resort for a day, or conduct your in-service training off-site. This is a great way to boost staff morale and encourage camaraderie and collegiality amongst co-workers.
7. **Sports Day Teacher Challenges** – include options for teachers to take part in cooperative or competitive challenges as part of your school sports day or Active School Week. Check out the Active School Flag website for loads of good ideas.
8. **Healthy Staffrooms** – just as you make sure that your classroom is a health promoting environment for your students, take the time to do the same in your staffroom. Introduce challenges like 'wholemeal Tuesdays' or 'sugar-free Mondays'. Create a recipe sharing notice board or invite teachers with a flair for cooking or baking nutritious food to bring a dish to share. Most importantly, **make time every day** to enjoy and savour your lunch. Try not to eat on the go too often and drink plenty of water throughout the day to protect your voice and to keep hydrated and cool.
9. **Get Fit in Five.** Invite a teacher to lead the staff in 5-10 minutes of exercise each morning before the school day starts. Do this for one month, and then change the teacher. Alternatively, adopt a whole-school approach and get all the staff, children, parents and school community involved!
10. **Take the stress out of mornings.** For one term, on one day of the week, organise a yoga (or other) class for staff in your school for one hour, before school starts. Teachers will be guaranteed to start the day feeling cool, calm and collected!

For more tips on organising Workplace Wellness Challenges visit

https://www.durham.ca/departments/health/physical_activity/resources/workplace/wpActivityChallenge.pdf

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