

“We Choose Health” Press Release

November 5, 2012



“We Choose Health” Team for South-Central Illinois Health Coalition.

The “We Choose Health” team was created in September of 2012 to complete the mission of transforming the health of communities by working with employers, schools, hospitals and other cooperating agencies to initiate lasting changes.

The team for South-Central Illinois Health Coalition has the following core focus areas: Worksite Wellness, Smoke-Free Public Places, Coordinated School Health and Baby Friendly Hospitals.

The initiative is geared to create sustainable change through making the healthy choice the easy choice in our communities and environments.



Worksite Wellness.

Considering how much time adults spend at their worksites, workplaces are an ideal place to promote a healthy lifestyle. Worksite wellness programs give employees opportunities to eat healthy foods, be physically active and live tobacco free. Employers also benefit from these programs through increased productivity as a result of having happier and healthier employees that use less sick days.

The worksite wellness coordinators Sarah Coleman and Jodi Schoen are currently working to make initial contacts with local employers to provide education and obtain information on the level of interest in the value of having a wellness policy.

Sarah and Jodi's goals involve assisting employers with the development or improvement of worksite wellness policies that are specifically designed for the work environment. A well formulated worksite wellness policy will contribute to improve employee health and well-being. Studies have shown that worksite wellness programs and policies improve health, morale, productivity as well as reduce absenteeism and health care cost.

The wellness coordinators will work with employers to develop policies and programs that are designed to improve the health of the employee, which ultimately benefits both the employer and families.

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Coordinated School Health.

Coordinated School Health (CSH) is recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention as a strategy for improving students' health and learning. The goal of CSH is to improve the well-being and health of our young people through education and performing activities, thereby having a positive contribution into the adults they will become. The key components of CSH include health education, physical education, nutrition services, social services, healthy and safe school environment, health promotion for staff and family/community involvement.

Lindy Payne and Bryce Kovacich are working to assess the use of coordinated school health curriculums in the region, and communicating with school officials on the importance of school health.

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