



SAMHSA NREPP Model Programs for the Workplace

Workplaces seeking to broaden their substance abuse prevention efforts can consider implementing one of the many evidence-based programs that SAMHSA has recognized as effective. These programs have been carefully implemented and rigorously evaluated, and have shown consistently positive outcomes for preventing substance abuse. They have met stringent standards set by the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP). Technical assistance can be obtained from the program developers. Examples of NREPP model workplace programs are described below.

Coping With Work and Family Stress: A Workplace Preventive Intervention

This program is a 16-session weekly group intervention¹ that teaches employees to develop effective coping strategies for dealing with stressors at work and at home. Companies provide release time so that employees can participate in the program consistently. The first component presents methods to help eliminate or modify sources of stress. The second component gives techniques to modify cognitive processes that lead to or exacerbate stress. The third component emphasizes stress management and reducing the use of avoidance coping and other negative tension-reducing behaviors (e.g., use of alcohol and other drugs). In the final session, participants create personalized stress management plans to maintain the program's beneficial effects.

Intended Population

The program was tested in a wide range of work settings including manufacturing, water authority, telecommunications, and utility companies. The target population included both men and women working in various occupational groups and of diverse ages and ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic

backgrounds. The participants also varied in education, religious affiliation, marital status, and number of children.

How It Works

Specific techniques include didactic presentations, group discussion and problem solving, and looking at personal experiences. The strategies provide opportunities to learn a wide range of active coping skills, to consider ways to make better use of social networks, and to practice specific stress management approaches. Though the program is conducted in a group setting, it promotes behavior change in relation to employees' unique work and family situations. This intervention is adaptable to any work setting.

Implementation Essentials

The program uses a "train the trainer" model involving personnel in the workplace or other professionals in the community to implement the program. Training takes 3 full days with two trainers, with up to 20 participants in each training series. Onsite or telephone follow-up is essential to guarantee program fidelity and to troubleshoot issues that might arise once implementation in the work setting begins. It is vital to have strong management support for the program, with a commitment to provide release time for employee participation.



Individuals training to implement the program receive intervention materials (at cost), including a curriculum, a supply of handouts for each



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session, and a CD-ROM—the last of which demonstrates stress management techniques. When the program is implemented, these materials are provided to the employees so they can practice using new coping strategies and stress management techniques at home between sessions and after completing the program.

Sixteen 1½-hour sessions are conducted by a trainer with a group of 15 to 20 employees. The trainer needs 4 to 6 hours a week to prepare and deliver the course. The need for administrative support is minimal. Space for conducting the sessions is provided by the business or organization. Equipment and materials include a flip chart, the optional use of an overhead projector or PowerPoint for presentations, and, for each participant, handouts, a CD-ROM, and a three-ring binder.



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According to the evaluation studies of the program's effectiveness across a wide variety of companies and employees, the program resulted in

- Significant reduction in work and family stressors
- Significant increase in problem-solving and cognitive coping strategies
- Significant reduction in the use of avoidance coping strategies
- Significant increase in social support from supervisors and coworkers
- Significant reduction in use of alcohol and other drugs

- Significant reduction in depression, anxiety, and complaints about physical illness

To learn more about the program and obtain information on contacts and training, visit <http://www.theconsultationcenter.org/WFS%20SAMHSA.pdf/>.

Proven Results for Coping With Work and Family Stress

- A 16 percent increase in the use of active behavioral coping skills
- A 15 percent increase in the use of social support coping
- A 33 percent reduction in avoidance coping (e.g., "I avoided doing anything about the situation")
- A 17 percent reduction in social withdrawal coping (e.g., "I avoided being with people")

Team Awareness

*Team Awareness*² is a workplace training program that addresses behavioral risks associated with substance abuse by employees and, indirectly, employees' families. This program has been shown to increase employee help-seeking for, and supervisor responsiveness to, troubled workers; to enhance the work climate; and to reduce problem drinking. The program is appropriate for businesses or organizations of any size.

Intended Population

Team Awareness is designed for use in any type of organizational setting or occupational group where employees interact with or depend on one another to get work done. The training may be particularly effective for employees in safety-sensitive occupations (e.g., construction workers, emergency response and law enforcement personnel, machinery or equipment operators, transportation workers) or workplaces where tradition supports coworkers' use of alcohol to handle stress or to socialize. The program has been tested on a wide variety of white- and blue-collar occupations with same- or mixed-gender compositions within two municipal workforces. *Team Awareness* has also been adapted for use by

small businesses and community-based alcohol and other drug awareness centers.

The training consists of six modules delivered in two 4-hour sessions. (Larger companies generally require multiple training sessions.) *Team Awareness* is highly interactive and uses group discussion, communication exercises, a board game, role playing, and self-assessments. Modules cover policy ownership, enabling, stress management, listening skills, and peer referral.

Team Awareness Benefits

- Reduces alcohol and drug use risk factors in the work setting
- Improves work group climate that supports employee health and wellness
- Increases supervisor willingness to use the employee assistance program
- Decreases employee tendency to ignore or stigmatize coworkers with problems
- Improves confidentiality (respect for privacy) within the work group
- Reduces social norms that support drinking with coworkers

How It Works

Team Awareness can serve three different functions, depending on the needs of a business, and can be positioned as

- An enhanced drug-free workplace program
- A team communication workshop
- A work culture intervention

The original design of *Team Awareness* includes three core components:

- Preparatory focus groups and meetings to collect policy information, establish rapport, and facilitate employee involvement
- Supervisor training (two 4-hour sessions)
- Employee training (two 4-hour sessions)

The training consists of six modules:

- **Relevance** (2 hours), which increases employee ownership of the importance of their roles in substance abuse prevention at their worksites.

- **Team Ownership of Policy** (1½ hours). The Risks and Strengths Game creates positive attitudes toward organization substance abuse prevention policies as tools for risk prevention.
- **Reducing Stigma and Tolerance and Increasing Responsiveness** (1 hour), which reduces risky levels of supervisor and coworker tolerance of substance use (i.e., enabling and codependence).
- **Work Stress, Problem Solving, and Substance Use** (1 hour) identifies signs of poor coping and the role of substance use; the module promotes healthy alternatives for dealing with stress.
- **Workplace Communication Skills** (1 hour) reviews listening skills and identifies workplace communication norms.
- **Encouragement** (1 hour). The NUDGE Model develops peer referral skills and employee alliance with employee assistance programs (EAPs).

Implementation Essentials

Successful implementation of *Team Awareness* requires a facilitator who understands the overview manual and each of the manuals for the



six *Team Awareness* modules. Manuals and materials are available for free downloading from Organizational Wellness & Learning Systems (at <http://www.organizationalwellness.com>) or from the

Institute of Behavioral Research at Texas Christian University (at <http://www.ibr.tcu.edu>).

The facilitator must also be familiar with the organization's work climate, current substance use policies and related documents, and employee

assistance resources such as the organization's medical office and the EAP. Some modules require the facilitator to incorporate information on particular policies and resources. Sessions should be delivered to groups of 10 to 25 employees in a training room equipped with an overhead projector, a screen, and flip charts. Participants can be drawn from the same or different work groups or settings.

Training

Facilitator certification takes 3½ days and can be done onsite or offsite. It proceeds as follows:

- **Day 1.** Orientation, training, and practice sessions for modules 1 and 2; review of theory and background research
- **Day 2.** Orientation, training, and practice sessions for modules 3 through 5
- **Day 3.** Orientation, training, and practice sessions for module 6; review adaptations for supervisors, focus groups, customizations, and fidelity issues
- **Day 4 (½ day).** Receipt and review of evaluation protocols; and review of transfer management (strategies for applying what has been learned)

Proven Results for *Team Awareness*

Employees who participated in *Team Awareness* were^a

- Significantly less likely to come to work under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Twice as likely to decrease problem drinking behaviors
- About one third as likely to work with or miss work because of a hangover
- Likely to double their help-seeking behavior
- Significantly more likely to work in groups that encourage coworkers to stop a drinking or drug habit

^aSix-month follow-up analyses, compared with a control group

Technical Assistance

The developer will conduct focus groups, help customize aspects of the program to fit particular policies and resources, and assist with before and after evaluation and fidelity assessments.

To learn more about the program and obtain information on contacts and training, visit <http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/pdfs/model/TeamAwareness.pdf/>.

The Healthy Workplace

*The Healthy Workplace*³ program is a set of workplace substance abuse prevention interventions designed to reduce unsafe drinking, illegal drug use, and prescription drug abuse while improving the health practices of adult workers. Cast in a health promotion framework and rooted in social-cognitive principles of behavior change, the program integrates substance abuse prevention material with popular health promotion strategies, thereby defusing the stigma that often accompanies substance abuse and removing barriers to help-seeking behavior.

The Healthy Workplace achieves positive results because it

- Reaches the mainstream of workers through the vehicle of health promotion
- Raises awareness of the benefits of healthy practices and the hazards of using alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs and of misusing legal drugs
- Teaches employees specific techniques for improving health and reducing use of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs
- Incorporates carefully constructed videos to increase self-efficacy and provide models for embracing healthy practices and reducing substance abuse

Intended Population

The Healthy Workplace has been tested in medium-sized and large companies, including manufacturing and printing facilities, an insurance company, and within groups of construction workers. It has been implemented in a wide variety of industries (e.g., insurance, printing, telecommunications, pharmaceutical manufacturing), occupational groups (clerical, technical/professional, construction, managerial),



and ethnically diverse workforces, including African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, and white workers. The program has been implemented in all regions of the

country on male, female, young, and middle-aged workers.

How It Works

The program consists of five interventions that are delivered in small group sessions using videos and print materials. The interventions can be used in any order and are selected based on the organization's goals and employee composition. Three of the interventions are relatively brief, typically requiring three to four sessions lasting 1 hour or less each.

- *The Say Yes! Healthy Choices for Feeling Good* intervention is a general health promotion program with substantial segments on alcohol and drug abuse.
- *The Working People: Decisions About Drinking* intervention concentrates on alcohol abuse prevention and is especially appropriate for a young (18 to 35 years old) blue-collar workforce.
- *Make the Connection* is a three-part series of video and print materials designed for insertion into workplace health promotion programs on stress management, weight management/nutrition, and fitness.

- *The Power Tools* intervention is an eight-session program for young, male, blue-collar workers that combines instruction on general health issues with special sessions devoted to alcohol and drug abuse.
- *Prime Life 2000* is a multitiered intervention consisting of a series of small group sessions on stress management, healthy eating, and fitness. Videos and print materials are mailed to all employees, and supervisors receive training in EAP utilization. All components include information on preventing alcohol abuse, illegal drug use, and prescription drug abuse.

Implementation Essentials

Small group sessions of 10 to 20 employees are held typically in an organization's training or conference room. A trainer who is familiar with the training guide and has the supporting videotapes and print materials can implement any of the interventions. If the worksite already has an active health promotion program, modifications of *Make the Connection* or *Prime Life 2000* may be used since these interventions are designed to add alcohol- and other drug-use information to existing programs.

Training and Materials

Each intervention has a training guide and supporting materials that can be ordered at <http://www.centerforworkforcehealth.com/>.

A special Web-based program, The Prevention Connection, has been created to train health promotion specialists to implement these interventions. This training program can be accessed at <http://www.PrevConn.com/>.

To learn more about the program and to obtain information on contacts and training, visit <http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/pdfs/model/Healthy.pdf/>.

Proven Results for *The Healthy Workplace*

When compared with a control group, participants achieved

- A 47 percent reduction in the number of drinks consumed in the past 30 days
- A 67 percent reduction in the number of days of heavy drinking in the past 30 days
- Improved motivation to reduce drinking
- Reduced use of alcohol or illegal drugs to relieve stress
- Increased perception of the risks of alcohol and illegal drug use
- Improved health practices and beliefs (e.g., confidence in ability to improve health)

Wellness Outreach at Work

*Wellness Outreach at Work*⁴ (or *WOW*) provides comprehensive health risk–reduction services—health screening, intensive follow-up, and worksite health promotion—to all employees at a workplace. Alcohol education is integrated into the context of health-risk counseling. *WOW* is based on five principles:

1. Reach out to all employees.
2. Deliver comprehensive care that includes cardiovascular and cancer risk screening, and personalized follow-up health coaching that includes alcohol education.
3. Conduct waves of follow-up through mailings, telephone calls, and personal contacts.
4. Make participation voluntary and friendly.
5. Provide long-term, direct employee support and long-term support within the workplace (e.g., lowfat cafeteria food options, peer-led health promotion).

Intended Population

The program originally was tested in manufacturing plants and in university and

hospital settings. The model also has been tested in churches, school systems, gas stations, and an airplane servicing facility. *WOW* participants have included African American, Hispanic/Latino, white, blue-collar, white-collar, management, and professional employees. The program targets working adults ages 25 and older, and retirees.

How It Works

WOW begins with free, worksitewide, health-risk screening, including biometric measures of health status. Health screenings are followed by 15- to 20-minute personalized coaching sessions that



direct employees' attention to health matters in general, and to their individual health risks. Some employees receive follow-up outreach, based on the number and severity of their discovered health

risks. Employees are seen one to four times a year thereafter, based on risk factors, in sessions that take about 20 minutes each. *WOW* program interventions also provide baseline information about health risks for the total workforce, so at the same time, a worksite Wellness Committee looks at organizational policies and practices that could improve employee health, and creates activities and peer support for health improvement. The committee typically meets once a month to assess how well *WOW* is working, to sponsor health improvement activities, to give generalized feedback to the health coaches, and to discuss health-relevant policies with organization management. As employees lower their health risks, health counselors see them less frequently and a supportive social environment at work helps them maintain their health gains. Periodic reports to management and the wellness committee track measurable changes in health risks for the employee population and gains in the work environment.

Used in more than 100 worksites, the program has reached more than 75,000 employees in organizations ranging in size from 5 to 6,000 employees, including blue- and white-collar workforces. Significant results for participating employees include

- Improved nutrition
- Reduction in alcohol consumption
- Maintained weight loss (for obese participants)
- Improvement in blood pressure control
- Decreases in other cardiovascular disease risks
- Increased personal exercise
- Successful stress management
- Improved relations with coworkers
- Heightened sense of well-being

Companies using the program have reported decreased absenteeism, improved employee morale, heightened productivity, and decreased use of disease care services.

Implementation Essentials

A comprehensive implementation guide provides step-by-step instructions for implementing *Wellness Outreach at Work* and is available through the developer's Web site at <http://www.ilir.umich.edu/>.

Critical elements for successful program outcomes include

- Management support
- Union involvement (where applicable)
- Guaranteed confidentiality of employee records
- Space at the worksite where employees can receive confidential counseling
- Computerized data management

Successful program outcomes also require

- A wellness committee.

- An ample staff of trained wellness professionals with appropriate supervisory oversight and support (ratio of counselors to employees is 1 full-time or equivalent counselor to 500 employees).
- Use of program interaction protocol guidelines with clients, adapted to their personal lifestyles and preferences.
- Program resources and materials concerning each cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factor, including alcohol consumption guidelines. It is necessary to use CVD Health Risk Screening procedures that meet current National Institutes of Health guidelines for health-risk profiles and appropriate interventions.
- Necessary equipment includes blood pressure measuring equipment, immediate blood analyzers using finger-stick blood draws, weight scales, and body-fat measuring instruments.

Proven Results for *Wellness at Work*

- A 50 percent decrease in at-risk drinking
- A 50 percent or better improvement in blood pressure control
- A 50 percent decrease in other cardiovascular disease risks

Outcomes for *Wellness at Work*

- Screening plus exit counseling reduces alcohol consumption for about 75 percent of persons whose drinking puts them at-risk for later health problems.
- One third of the obese lose and maintain 10 or more pounds of weight loss 3 years later.
- Employees report—and biometric measurements corroborate—increased personal exercise, more successful stress management, improved relations with coworkers, and a heightened sense of well-being.
- Companies report decreased absenteeism, improved morale, and heightened productivity.

To learn more about the program and obtain information on contacts and training, visit <http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/pdfs/model/Wellness.pdf/>.

References

- ¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), SAMHSA, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). N.d. "Coping With Work and Family Stress." Rockville, Maryland. Available at <http://www.theconsultationcenter.org/WFS%20SAMHSA.pdf/>.
- ² U.S. DHHS, SAMHSA, CSAP. N.d. "Team Awareness." Rockville, Maryland. Available at <http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov/pdfs/model/TeamAwareness.pdf/>.
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