



## Sample Data: 2019- 2020 Policy, Systems, Environmental (PSE) Impacts in Monmouth County

**Goals and Objectives:** The Monmouth County Family and Community Health Sciences (FCHS) department helps people improve their overall well-being, stresses the importance of healthier living, encourages more active lifestyles, and helps reduce health care costs. Many of today's health problems (obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and cancer) are often exhibited during the long workdays of many professionals. However, several of these ailments can be reduced through good nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.

Research shows that heart disease and obesity are often preventable if efforts are made early on. The FCHS department in Monmouth County is one that is trying to serve employees to focus on healthier ways of life. *This innovative initiative focuses on making health and wellness in the workplace a top priority in the County.*

**About the Program:** The goal of the *Work Well-Live Well-Stay Healthy (WWLWSH)* program is for employees to live healthier and more productive lives while reducing their risk of chronic disease and obesity. Stepping up to meet the needs of families impacted by COVID-19, our initiative evolved to incorporate Lunch and Learn Wellness Webinars and resource links that were sent weekly to all participants. While in 2019, the weekly wellness messages (distributed via *Constant Contact*) provided concise evidence-based information related in the *Healthy on the Job Newsletter*. Both programs followed health related objectives:

- Eating nutritious foods can contribute to a healthy lifestyle
- Stress reduction and mindfulness strategies
- Increase well-being, self-image and self-esteem
- Strategies for better eating and exercise habits, along with boosting brain health
- Tips for adapting lifestyle and managing personal finances
- Management strategies on time and balancing work with family

**Meeting the need for working adults:** Educating adults is a challenge for Extension educators! Families are very busy with activity schedules, leaving no time for adults to attend educational programs. Providing wellness education while adults are in the workplace has become a valuable approach. In response to the pandemic during these unprecedented times, our focus became self-care for employees and families, while working from home as well as in the workplace. The audience consisted of diverse socio-economic employees and their families within the Monmouth County community.

This web-based program was marketed through email and promotional flyers to all Monmouth County employees and their dependents, through the FCHS department. Involvement in different modalities offer many learning opportunities (brief articles, evidence-based web links, bi-weekly wellness text

**Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Department of Family and Community Health Sciences**

*Joanne Kinsey & Rachel Tansey, March 2021*

*Promoting Healthy Families, Schools, and Communities*

messages, healthy recipes with step-by-step videos and online Lunch & Learn sessions) leading to an improved relationship of food and health, a more active lifestyle, encouraging stress management including mindfulness strategies, and improved personal financial health. Participants expressed a desire to continue with more programmatic efforts, especially those that included a module like this and making healthier choices. The weekly online sessions offer an education on nutritious foods in addition to ways that help change eating and exercise habits, along with practical suggestions for adapting lifestyles.

**Progress the past 3 years:** This proposal is focused on the 2019 & 2020 PSE and employee follow-up data only. This figure from shows registered participants who completed the program is an impressive 90%. The county does offer an incentive to possible win a personal day off from work for those that are tracked (via email submission) from beginning to end of the program. Each year Monmouth County offers this program in conjunction with our *Walk at Lunch* event to promote more physical activity. In 2018 and 2019, the initiative extended to include a push in physical activity, to walk more steps visiting local parks and historical sites. With map routes outlined at our county parks, this encouraged participants to visit many of them and possibly some they had never been to in the past. In 2020 the push in activity was to decrease sugar consumption by completing the *Sugar Savvy Challenge*. We can see through the anecdotal comments that these extra pushes prove to be favorable.

As we continue this program the statistics improve each year. In 2020, with 283 registered, 233 participants completed the *Work Well-Live Well- Stay Healthy Lunch and Learn Video* program. Our survey results showed 82% of participants finished the full 12 weeks of the program. We are pleased to see that those who did respond 98% of the participants are felt the webinars were useful with answers of "sometimes", "yes" and "absolutely". Of which an astounding 99% felt they were "very", "extremely" and "somewhat" useful. With 94% responding that they both intend to and actually have used some of tips and provided within the 12 weeks. Lastly, 99% had intentions to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### **Employee Behavioral Outcomes 2019:**

367 Employees enrolled in the program

283 Employees took the pre-survey

Post survey respondents (n=326):

Our survey results show 89% of participants completed the full 12 weeks of the program.

The data shows that 88% of our participants have increased their steps daily. 34% found time to do so during the workday, while 63% found time outside of work hours. We are happy to see that 85% of participants are monitoring their daily steps making great efforts to add more steps each day. 60% now take time to exercise 3 or more times per week and improving their physical wellness.

Concluding the 12- week program, over 50% rate their physical condition as "good", while over 28% give themselves a rating of "very good-excellent".

It is great to see 55% of participants have increased their consumption of fruits and 58% increased vegetables. 54% of participants have decreased their sugar, 25% have reduced their fat consumption & 28% have decreased sodium intake. 39% of participants have improved their physical condition and 38% have reported to fit better in clothing. Approximately, 48% have lost some weight in the process, while 49% are eating a healthier diet overall. Over 31% of participants have also been finding healthier recipes and foods to eat. Remarkably, 31% have improved their level of energy and

**Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Department of Family and Community Health Sciences**

*Joanne Kinsey & Rachel Tansey, March 2021*

*Promoting Healthy Families, Schools, and Communities*

34% are getting better sleep at night. Another impressive result is that 14% participants have reported that they now manage money more effectively. 30% participants have increased their savings. Additionally, 44% participants have reported decreasing their debt.

### **Employee Success Stories from 2019 - 2020:**

*"I have a different outlook and perspective in how I do things. I actually meal prep the night before and sometimes on the weekends to get ahead on my work week. I also have changed the way my family does mealtime we have more healthier options."*

*"I became much more aware of how much I was moving throughout the day. Although I work-out often during the week after work, working behind a computer for many hours is not good for the body. The step tracking competition got me moving when I wasn't!"*

*"I have stopped smoking, stopped my cholesterol medicine, and stopped my anti-anxiety medication."*

*"These quick lunch programs are perfect---not too much information to get overwhelmed at one time...it is great and informative"*

*"I have lost 20 lbs. this year from being more aware of the food I'm eating and trying to eat food that is not processed. The sugar challenge also helped tremendously. It really made me more aware."*

*"The healthy recipes were delicious and easy to prepare!!!"*

*"Wellness Lunch & Learn videos motivate me to live a healthier lifestyle such as better food choices, more exercise, and fun, positive activities with my family to maintain our mental health as well."*

*"With the help of the program I am able to control my diabetes in much better way. I am trying to control my blood sugar, even after stop taking one medicine, so far it is working. Hope for the best."*

*"I have diabetes so this was very good for me very helpful!"*

*"I am losing weight, feeling better, bloodwork has been good"*

### **Policy, Systems, Environmental (PSE) Outcomes:**

Linkages between County administration & Cooperative Extension have been strengthened. The County has:

- identified wellness as a priority, hired full-time Wellness Coordinator
- established Wellness Committee
- devised wellness portal of events for employees
- offers incentives (completers entered in drawing for a free 'day-off' from work)
- changed vending machine choices to include healthy options (25 machines/20 worksites)
- identified 80 Wellness Champions at various worksites
- established wellness newsletter
- celebrates employee Success Stories in the newsletter
- initiated a Diabetes Prevention program

## Sample Data: Rutgers Employee Self-Care 2020 Impacts

Focusing on Self-Care Education for Employees as they Work-From-Home During the Pandemic in 2020

### Program Description

The wellness program empowers employees to live healthier lives & reduce chronic disease risk. Our goal was to disseminate weekly wellness topics & *Healthy on the Job: Self-Care Newsletter* plus additional resources to equip employees to best deal with working from home during the pandemic:

- Eating healthy foods
- Stress reduction
- Increase physical activity, well-being & self-esteem
- Managing time, work/family, finances

### Target Audience

Adults (1,900+) in the Rutgers University workforce received weekly wellness articles & resources from April 2020 to the present.

#### Participant behavior snapshot:

25% exercise 5+ times per week

22% get the recommended 8+ hours of sleep/night

20% engage in 4,000 or less steps/day

10% eat the recommended servings of vegetables/day

3% eat the recommended servings of fruit/day

### Employee Behavior Change Impacts

Participants (n=114) indicated making progress in these areas in mid-point survey (Qualtrics):

43% increased number of steps per day

10% increased vegetable consumption

9% improved physical condition

7% increased fruit consumption

7% decreased sugar consumption

7% lost some body weight

7% identify healthier foods/recipes

6% improved energy level

6% improved sleep

6% managed money more effectively

5% improved physical appearance

4% used strategies to prevent disease

4% reduced consumption of sodium

4% lost some inches around the body

4% decreased fats consumption

1 person (out of 5 smokers) quit smoking

### Demographics

70% female, 31% male

Age Range: 4% age 20-30, 16% age 31-40, 21% age 41-50, 36% age 51-60, 22%, 60+

**Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Department of Family and Community Health Sciences**

*Joanne Kinsey & Rachel Tansey, March 2021*

*Promoting Healthy Families, Schools, and Communities*

## **Employee Success Stories**

'I don't eat as much per serving, or between meals, I'm not totally sedentary, but could improve my exercise and activities.'

'I have reduced my consumption of red meat.'

'Love the newsletters for ideas and inspiration, especially helpful with the mental challenges of the COVID 19 lock down.'

'Each week I plan meals before I shop. It has to be friendly for my whole family. Then I make a list and stick to it. I try to substitute ground beef for ground turkey and try to stop eating as soon as I am satisfied.'

'Increased fiber intake, reduced sugar intake, exercise more often, lost body weight.'