

Working *on* Wellness

Supporting healthier people, workplaces and communities.

A HealthyMass Initiative

Case Study

Organization: Family Service Association

Location: Fall River, MA Headquarters, plus 15 satellite locations

Employees: 340

Business Type: Non-profit, social service agency

For over 120 years, the Family Service Association (FSA) has provided quality social services in the Greater Fall River area. The work of FSA employees is all about taking care of others, which leaves little time to properly take care of themselves. With the support of President/CEO Carol Nagle, the FSA joined the Department of Public Health's Working on Wellness program.

To get started, FSA added "wellness" activities to their already-established Safety Committee and conducted a survey to understand employees' health behaviors, interests and needs. Results showed employees were most interested in preventing heart disease, reducing stress and managing weight. Results were used to develop a wellness program plan for the year, which included activities such as:

- » An indoor walking program
- » Snack packs full of healthy snacks



FSA Employees host an apple tasting.

- » Blood drives and health screenings
- » A stress reduction program
- » A team-based walking competition
- » A proper food wear and care fashion show
- » A tasting and vote for the best type of apple
- » A program to increase fruits and veggies

The FSA is also establishing workplace policies that require healthy

options to be offered at catered events, low-fat and low-calorie vending machine choices, and a tobacco-free work place policy.

The FSA Wellness program was evaluated and showed remarkable results:

- » There was an overall reduction in cholesterol, stress and weight loss.
- » 93% of employees have a greater understanding of how to make healthy choices.
- » 94% of employees believe their employer is committed to their health and safety.

The most significant impact of the program, however, was a **decrease in employee turnover**, down to 10.6% in 2009 from 17% in 2008.

FSA remains committed to the health of its employees as a way to ensure the organization is providing quality services to the clients who depend on the agency and its staff every day.

