



Good Health is Good Business

Chambers Lead the Way on Community Health and Wellness



Good health is good for business. Healthy communities achieve improved education outcomes, attract more talented workers and are more productive and competitive. As a result, a growing number of chambers of commerce are championing health and wellness initiatives in their communities. ACCE has identified three approaches that chambers are using to incorporate health and wellness strategies into their economic and workforce development efforts.



Ready to Learn

Children who are healthy and ready to learn by the time they reach kindergarten achieve better education outcomes. Here are two examples of chamber programs that promote early-childhood health in order to ensure a more talented, productive future workforce.



Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce (Mo.)

Established the Big 5 initiative to collaborate with education stakeholders throughout Kansas City to connect every child, every family and every community to the resources necessary to launch successful education careers on the first day of kindergarten. The initiative focused on collecting the data needed to understand the system and measure success, identifying the resources and partners to enable success and developing strategies and tactics to improve early childhood education throughout the region.



Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce/Venture North Funding (Mich.)

Helped create the Great Start Collaborative and its 5toOne program to create a five-county system of resources to support young children and their families in rural communities. The program connects families and local partners to ensure that all children reach their highest potential by using fun activities to bring families together, connecting families to health and wellness screenings and presentations, focusing on children's social emotional development, creating better options for affordable child care and more.



Workplace Wellness

Workplace wellness programs help attract talent, build staff morale, reduce health care costs and boost productivity. Chambers are helping employers adopt effective programs and workplace policies that encourage employees to adopt healthier lifestyles.



Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce (Wash.)

The Chamber's Good Health is Good Business challenge encourages area businesses to promote health and wellness in the workplace. The initiative has expanded to include two eight-week challenge periods, where employees can compete individually or on teams with coworkers. Companies are encouraged to use their business name in their team name to create friendly competition throughout the community. Participants track exercise, nutrition and wellness activities through an online portal and mobile application. A live leaderboard lets teams see where they stand throughout the challenge.

Frederick County Chamber of Commerce (Md.)

Partnered with the Frederick Regional Health System (FRHS) to create a new business health manager position at the chamber. Funded by FRHS and housed at the chamber, the business health manager is a registered nurse who works in the chamber office helping local businesses establish health and wellness programs for their employees. The business health manager also works with community partners to identify community health needs and improve availability, accessibility and affordability of health care services throughout Frederick County.



Healthy Community Culture

By promoting a healthy community culture, chambers of commerce can ensure economic vitality and equitable prosperity. Chamber programs help to make their communities a better place to live, work and play.



Mason City Chamber of Commerce (Iowa)

Mason City employers, government, schools and citizens worked together to improve the wellbeing of their community by optimizing physical surroundings, policy and social connections for healthy living. Named a certified Blue Zone Community after a rigorous certification process, Mason City has changed the culture of their community to make healthy living a priority by creating healthier work environments, developing a comprehensive bike and pedestrian master plan, establishing new community gardens and educational events, implementing safe routes for children to walk to school and more.



Billings Chamber of Commerce (Mont.)

Led a group of community partners to develop the area's trail system for the economic, cultural and healthy community benefits. The Chamber worked with many partners and trail enthusiasts in the community to establish trail connections and complete the 26-mile Marathon Loop trail around the city, maintain existing trails, create trail amenities and directional and cultural signage, and integrate trails into chamber and community functions. When the chamber began working on the project, there were 15 miles of trails – today there are more than 40 miles. As a result of the initiative, trail usage has increased for active travel to work and school and for leisure and tourism activities.

Learn more about the three frameworks and additional examples of chamber programs online at www.ACCE.org/EAD_health.