

Hidden In Plain Sight:

**A Stealth Approach To Incorporating
Health & Wellness Into Your EH&S Program**

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Today's Presentation

- Discuss the principles of NIOSH's *Total Worker Health* program
- Identify cost-effective methods to integrate *Total Worker Health* initiatives into an established safety program
- Discover opportunities within your organization to further educate employees on wellness initiatives and improve employee participation.

What Is Total Worker Health?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) officially launched the Total Worker Health® (TWH) program in 2011.

- Focuses on how the workplace environment can eliminate or reduce risks and enhance overall worker health
- Goes beyond traditional safety and health concerns in recognition of the relationship between work and non-work conditions
- Offers a holistic model for improving workforce safety, health, and well-being
- Provides a path to improving worker creativity, innovation, and productivity by creating work environments that are safe, health-enhancing, and fulfilling.

Why Does Total Worker Health Matter?

Benefits workers, employers, and communities. Corporate advantages include:

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Employee satisfaction
- Community engagement and reputation
- Sustainable workforce culture

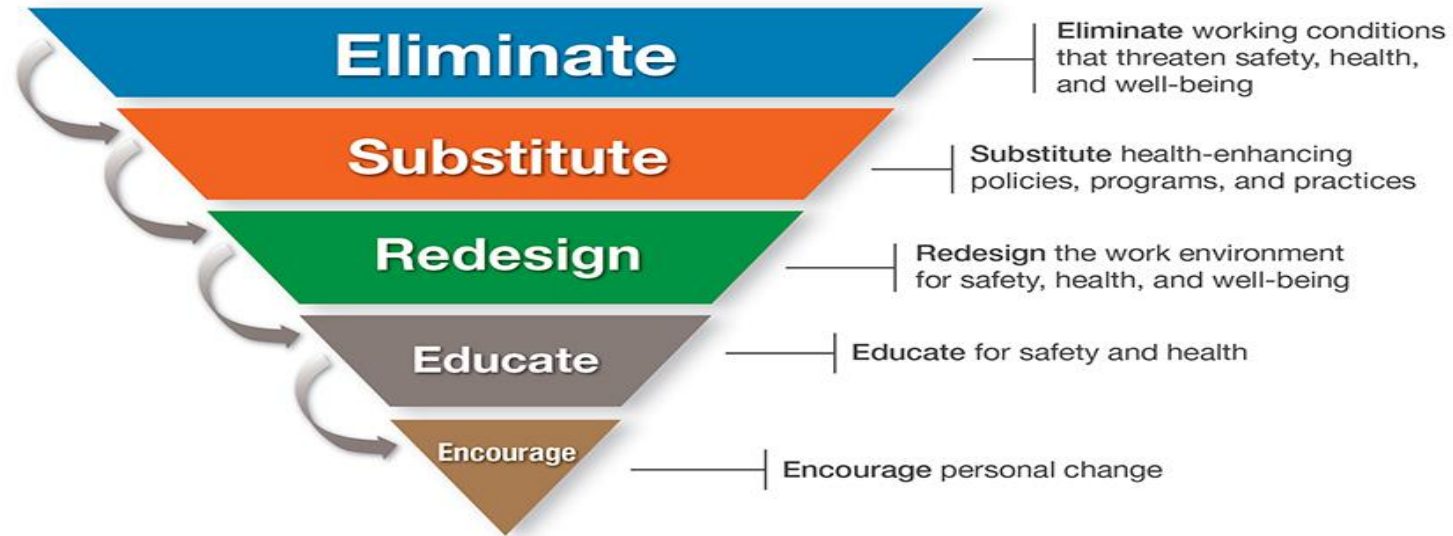
Why Does Total Worker Health Matter?

Risk factors in the workplace may contribute to health problems previously considered unrelated to work:

- Obesity
- Sleep disorders
- Cardiovascular disease
- Depression

Hierarchy Of Controls

Hierarchy of Controls Applied to NIOSH *Total Worker Health*[®]



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Hierarchy Of Controls

1) Eliminate - Eliminate workplace conditions that cause or contribute to worker illness and injury, or otherwise negatively impact well-being.

- Implement policies that remove root causes of stress and provide workers with increased flexibility and control over their schedules.

2) Substitute - Replace unsafe, unhealthy working conditions or practices with safer, health-enhancing policies, programs, and management practices.

- Encourage reports of unsafe work practices without fear of reprisal and replace workplace food options with healthier options.



Hierarchy Of Controls

3) Redesign - Redesign the work environment, as needed, for improved safety, health, and well-being.

➤ Enhance access to employer-sponsored benefits and improve shift work scheduling.

4) Educate - Provide safety and health education and resources to enhance individual knowledge for all workers.

5) Encourage - Encourage personal behavior change to improve safety, health, and well-being.



Gaining Traction, Facing Resistance

TWH is gaining recognition, particularly in safety-focused sectors and among large organizations:

- **Novelis Inc.** - An industrial aluminum company that piloted the TWH approach at its plants in Bresso and Pieve, Italy. The initiative led to improvements in ergonomics, chemical safety, and healthier food options, and has been incorporated into its 5-year Environmental, Health, and Safety Roadmap.
- **University of California, Davis** — The university became a TWH Affiliate in 2022, aiming to build a healthy work environment and improve worker well-being through collaboration with other institutions and development of programs like an office ergonomics course.
- **NASA** - In 2014, NASA became one of the inaugural members of TWH Affiliate Program and launched Mission: HEALTH. Includes information on diet, nutrition, exercise, medical screening recommendations, the importance of mental health, stress management, work-life balance, and working safely.

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Gaining Traction, Facing Resistance

However, many companies still treat employee safety and health and wellness as separate realms.

- Leadership – including those in safety - may view health and wellness as part of their company's human resources department and feel as if they should stay in their respective lanes.
- May fear a lack of resources, time, or credibility to simultaneously support employee safety and well-being:
 - We don't have the budget for this
 - This is an HR or wellness initiative, not a safety issue
 - We're already doing enough to support safety.

Why Go It Alone – The Power Of Collaboration

- Partner with other departments and leverage existing resources.
- If your human resources or benefits department has primary ownership of health and wellness programs, work with them to highlight employee assistance programs (EAPs), along with stress management, nutrition, and physical fitness initiatives.
- Often this information is relegated to scrolling banners or hidden in not so obvious spaces on the company website.
- By joining forces, you can bring this information to the forefront and increase employee awareness and participation.

Start Small, Then Conquer The World

- Find champions within your company that will allow you to pilot wellness initiatives and training topics.
- Work with area managers and include a stretching break or 5-minute discussion on mindfulness at the end of a technical shop talk.
- As this training gains traction and popularity, word will get out and you can expand to other groups.



Ergonomics With A Wellness Twist

- Ergonomic assessments lend themselves to providing information and encouragement regarding health and wellness.
- This is yet another opportunity to highlight existing resources regarding stretching and promoting physical fitness such as taking walk breaks throughout the day.

Provide A Moment Of Zen Within Your Safety Committee

- Include health and wellness as a routine topic in safety committee meetings.
- Ask members for their input and to share their own best practices regarding mental and physical well-being.
- This works for both in-person and Zoom/Teams meeting formats.



Online Training Brain Breaks

- For online training courses, work with your training developers to include "brain breaks" or slides that encourage employees to take brief breaks to stretch and/or breathe during their training courses.

Take A Grass Roots Approach

- Are there employee networking groups within your organization that offer programming, such as lunch and learn discussions?
- Volunteer to speak on Total Worker Health and even develop a series of health and wellness talks.
- These voluntary discussions have great potential to develop into routine training modules.



Moving Forward

- Educate your team - no need to be an army of one.
- Resources on NIOSH website include outreach, training, and education materials
- Huge focus mental health and the workplace.
- Society for Total Worker Health – founded in 2022.