

Promoting health in your workplace and community:

Take the Focus off Weight



Research shows that programs and activities that focus on weight can cause harm. These programs and activities are based on the assumption that overweight or obese people have poor health and make unhealthy choices that need to be changed.

Focusing on weight can result in:

- Poor body image and body dissatisfaction
- Depression and anxiety
- Sense of worthlessness
- Low self-confidence
- Loneliness

Some examples of programs and activities that focus on weight include:

- weight loss programs
- contests to lose weight
- cooking and exercise programs with an emphasis on weight

Programs and activities that focus on healthy eating, active living and helping people feel good about themselves, can help participants stay healthy or become healthier. Talk to people in existing groups and programs about activities they would like to do. Offer a variety of programs that everyone can participate in. Help participants think about what they can do to stay healthy or become healthier and to set some goals.



Here are some examples to consider:

- Offer a cooking program, virtually or in person, where participants can help each other learn cooking skills, plan a meal, try a new food, share a meal together and make new friends. Keep the focus on the food, the cooking skills and the socializing rather than on what foods to eat to lose weight.
- Offer a time to sample various indoor or outdoor activities such as walking, snowshoeing, swimming, square dancing, yoga, hiking, biking and gardening.
- Start or build on cultural activities such as music, crafts, and storytelling which promote socializing and friendships. These activities often include food so think about how to include options for healthy eating.
- Establish an online community wellness group using social media where community members can share wellness ideas, tips and activities.
- Develop municipal and workplace policies that promote healthy eating and active living. For example, a policy about foods sold in canteens or offered at community events.

To help support programs and activities consider applying for grants such as:

- [Community Healthy Living Fund](#), Government of NL
- [Eastern Health Healthy Communities Partnership Fund](#), Eastern Health
- [Funding Opportunities](#), Recreation NL
- Wellness Coalition Funding
 - [Wellness Coalition Avalon East](#)
 - [Eastern Regional Wellness Coalition](#)