



Cambridge Pediatrics

A Healthiest Maryland Businesses Success Story

Cambridge Fit Chicks Get Fit!

How Things Got Started

The move toward workplace wellness at Cambridge Pediatrics began when the practice enrolled in *Work at Health*, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) pilot program to help employers build a workplace health program. A wellness team, 'Cambridge Fit Chicks,' was created, and planning began in earnest.

"We wanted to motivate and inspire our employees to increase their daily activity as a way to improve and maintain good health," explained Valerie Allen, Wellness Coordinator. "But our office is very small considering the size of our staff, so there's no room for exercise equipment or workout sessions."

Valerie checked with local gyms to see if



Fit Chicks CindyLou Frye, Cheri Burgess, Dominique Lomax.

group discounts were available. Fortunately, one local gym was running a half-price enrollment special, but it was the last day of the offer. "Our business owners are very supportive of our wellness program and quickly gave me the consent to enroll everyone that very afternoon!" recalls Valerie.

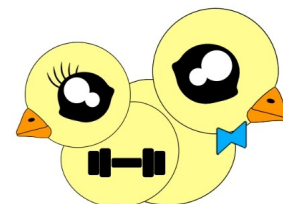
Once the gym memberships were secured, the next step in planning

was to find ideas to motivate the staff. "We read about a company in North Carolina that had implemented a 10-minute daily challenge, and thought it would be a great idea to issue a daily activity challenge of our own—centering it around our gym memberships and their available exercise equipment.

We wanted to encourage employees to try each of the suggested

Cambridge Pediatrics at a Glance:

- **Type of Business:**
Pediatric physician practice
- **Location:**
Waldorf
- **How Long in Business:**
9 years
- **Number of Employees:**
39
- **What worked:**
Free gym memberships; 10-minute daily fitness challenges; healthy meeting meal policy



**Cambridge
Fit Chicks**



Fit Chicks Ivelisse Gonzalez and Eneida Ribott

machines at the gym in order to strengthen targeted areas of the body,” said Valerie. Challenge activities were planned for the first four weeks. In addition to gym activities, yoga, outdoor walks, and cranking up music and dancing at home were suggested.

A spreadsheet was created for employees to record their daily activities. The wellness team agreed that each 10 minutes of daily activity would earn one point. In addition, in order to meet the challenges, employees were required to attend the gym for workout sessions at least twice each week, or a total of eight times per month. Those who did not meet this requirement would lose the free gym membership.

Building Enthusiasm With Incentives

The team decided to incentivize by offering a small gift card to

each employee who completed the four week challenge successfully. To further motivate employees, the wellness team offered a bonus gift card to the employees with the top three points totals for the challenge time period.

Next, the group decided on rules and created the necessary forms. A sign-up sheet was posted about two weeks before the official kickoff date. Then the wellness program was off and running!

Surveys Provide Insight

The wellness team conducted several surveys of employees to get a better idea of health and wellness needs. With guidance from the *Work at Health* program, the team offered a baseline health risk assessment (HRA) that employees were asked to complete. About 50 percent of employees participated in the HRA, and nearly all

employees completed Job Satisfaction and Needs & Interest Surveys.

“Conducting surveys is part of the *Work At Health* program and the CDC provides guidance on this as part of the pilot program,” explained Valerie. Biometric data collection days are scheduled in September and March, which will provide an even more detailed snapshot of employee health.

Healthy Food at Work Is a Hit

Since diet also plays an important role in health, the team implemented a healthy meeting meal policy. “We now have a sampling of healthy recipes at our monthly staff meeting, as well as posted recipes and a variety of health magazines to enrich our company culture in our break area. We also purchased a blender/Nutri-Bullet so that employees can make healthy smoothies or nutritious blasts. This has been really popular—everyone enjoys trying new creations. We’re handing out Dixie cups full of a different smoothie every day.”

Success Is Personal

So far, 50 percent of Cambridge Pediatrics employees have reported an increase in physical activity—half of those are going to the gym, and half are exercising more at home.

“It’s definitely been a health success for me,” said Valerie. “I’ve lost 11 pounds and lowered my blood pressure just in the past two months!”