

# The Connection Between Work and Health:

What we know and how you can be a part of it.



## Employees who take advantage of prevention services have:

- Lower absenteeism (especially when families use prevention services, too)
- Higher productivity
- A stronger organizational commitment

~ *Why Invest in Disease Prevention* (available online)  
Partnership for Prevention, <http://www.prevent.org/publications.htm>

## Twelve Work and Health Themes from the Research Literature:

- 1 Work is central to social status, one of the most powerful predictors of health outcomes.
- 2 Unemployment is associated with a large number of health risks.
- 3 Inadequate employment is also associated with poor health outcomes.
- 4 The degree of control that employees exercise over their work influences their health.
- 5 At least one study indicates that every step up the occupational ladder has positive health consequences.
- 6 Access to health insurance comes primarily through the workplace and has important health consequences.
- 7 Worksite health promotion programs improve the health of those who have access to them.
- 8 Despite its overall health benefits, work can be hazardous to health.
- 9 Work influences the health of families and children.
- 10 Health conditions affect work status.
- 11 Income inequality affects health.
- 12 An emerging social science framework integrates labor market conditions, employment experiences and health.

~ *Reflections on the Connection Between Work and Health* (available online) The California Wellness Foundation, <http://www.tcwf.org/reflections/2000/jun/>

## Become a Partner to Improve Health in Your Community's RC/EZ/EC: It good for your bottom line.

The purpose of Renewal Communities (RC), Empowerment Zones (EZ) and Enterprise Communities (EC). The Initiative has helped communities create jobs, improve housing and healthcare in urban areas, improving the lives of thousands of Americans. RC/EZ/ECs bring communities (business, non-profit organization, government and residents) together to create partnerships that attract the investment necessary for sustainable economic and community development.

A healthy community and healthy economy go hand in hand. Why should you become a partner?

You may be eligible for:

- ◆ Tax Incentives
- ◆ Grants
- ◆ Loans to create jobs

You can:

- ◆ Expand your business opportunities
- ◆ Increase productivity
- ◆ Improve the health of your employees
- ◆ Improve the health of the community
- ◆ Raise the quality of life for your employees and their families

For ideas and strategies for improving health and

For more information about the HUD and RC/EZ/EC Initiative, visit: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/ezec/index.cfm>.

For more information on the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural EZ/EC program, visit: <http://www.ezec.gov>

## Making Changes at the Community Level:

### *More Bang for your Buck*

Increasing the social economic status and education of individuals within a community may have a more profound effect on their health than individually-based interventions, giving you *more bang for your buck!* By looking at the context and environment in which a person lives, more broad-based strategies to improve health can be implemented.

Socioeconomic status, social support, and education are what Link and Phelan\* call *fundamental causes of diseases*. These fundamental causes of disease are what put people at risk for unhealthy lifestyles.

By becoming a partner in your RC/EZ/EC, your company is helping to improve health by affecting those fundamental causes of disease.

~ \*Social Conditions as Fundamental Causes of Disease  
*Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. 1995

### Interesting Facts:

“Our nation spends 95% of our health dollars – one trillion dollars a year – on diagnosing and treating diseases...yet fully half of all deaths in the United States are preventable”  
(Partnership for Prevention)

Better employee health pays off:

- DuPont reduced disability days by 14% in sites using health promotion, compared to 6% in sites with no interventions
- Prudential Insurance Company reports that the company’s major medical costs dropped from \$574 to \$312 for participants in its wellness program
- Employee illness days dropped 12.2% after a national manufacturing company targeted health promotion efforts to high risk employees

### Strategies for Improving Health and Economic Development in RC/EZ/ECs

- ◆ Use Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Welfare to Work Wage Credits, or Indian Employment Tax Credit to hire RC/EZ/EC residents, especially for health outreach, health services and health promotion.
- ◆ Offer employees (and their spouses) smoking-cessation classes to help them quit. This will help reduce health care costs and absenteeism.
- ◆ Use Environmental Cleanup Cost Deduction (Brownfields) to clean-up sites contaminated with hazardous substances. Eligible businesses can choose to deduct qualified environmental cleanup costs in the tax year they pay or incur the cost.
- ◆ Ensure that all employees receive training on appropriate safety precautions.
- ◆ Use Qualified Zone Academy Bonds to prepare high school students in the RC/EZ/EC for health careers and other jobs
- ◆ Use purchasing cooperatives to bargain for and obtain affordable health insurance premiums

These are just a few examples of how your business or organization can be a partner in improving health and economic development. For more information on RC/EZ/EC tax incentives, contact your local RC/EZ/EC listed below.

**Additional information on RC/EZ/EC models, tools, tips and success stories can be found at:**  
< <http://aspe.hhs.gov/ezec> >

**For more information about your RC/EZ/EC contact:**