



## American Red Cross WIC Program San Diego/Imperial Counties Chapter

**LOCATION:** KEARNY MESA

**INDUSTRY:** NON-PROFIT

**EMPLOYEES:** 105

At the San Diego American Red/Cross/WIC Program (SDARC/WIC), wellness is a part of everyone's job. Whether communicating to the clients, employees or co-workers, the message is consistent: The SDARC/WIC aims to support their staff, clients and community to make informed choices, adopt healthy lifestyles and foster personal growth.

The two year old grassroots employee wellness program taps into the expertise of their own staff to provide a diverse array of healthy activities that focus on emotional, social, spiritual, physical, and intellectual health.

Because the program has no full-time staff associated with it, a strong wellness committee that links each satellite site has been key. The Wellness Committee supports and facilitates the Employee Wellness Program and is composed of a representative from each of the SDARC/WIC offices and admin departments. Each Wellness Lead representative is responsible for attending Wellness Committee meetings, sharing ideas, developing wellness activities, organizing and facilitating office opportunities, managing HBs, completing a monthly employee wellness action plan for the office, and contributing to the office wellness plan for the year.

Even without a substantial budget, the SDARC/WIC has found an effective way to incentivize employee participation using PTO through a system they call "Healthy Bucks." Healthy Bucks are points staff can earn by participating in employee wellness activities. Each employee has the opportunity to earn 8 Healthy Bucks (HB) each month by:

### PROGRAM ELEMENTS:

- Employee Interest Survey
- Team Wellness Challenges
- Onsite Educational Activities
- Onsite Walking Clubs
- Wellness Integrated into Regional Staff Meetings
- Annual Fitness Testing using the President's Fitness Challenge
- Fitness Challenges/Classes
- Wellness Bulletins
- Monthly Wellness Calendar
- "Health Buck" PTO Incentive Program
- Dynamic Wellness Committees

**TOTAL BUDGET: \$2,000**

"For every wellness activity we take on, we ask ourselves four questions: (1) What does our staff want to do; (2) What *will* they do; (3) Is it educational; and (4) Will it help us "walk the talk" at our organization?"

-Maryann Miernicki, RD  
Nutrition Education Coordinator

- Participating in four weekly challenge opportunities
- Maintaining a healthy weight or losing weight
- Participating in two office opportunities
- Posting on the wellness bulletin board

When each office has earned their group HB goal - which is based on the number of full time employees - they receive a variety of perks and incentives.

Overall 100 percent of their employees are participating in the program and they are feeling a real shift in their organizational culture. "We've expanded our concept of wellness beyond just fitness and nutrition to touch the whole person," says Stephanie Brookshier, a registered dietician and the organization's Wellness Lead. "It's made us much closer as a team."