

# HIA Findings Influence State Strategy to Address Childhood Obesity Through a State Worksite Wellness Bill

*Kentucky HIA Project  
ASTHO Funding  
Human Impact Partners Support*

*Teresa Lovely M.S. CHES  
Cecilia Watkins Ph. D. CHES*



# Kentucky Department for Public Health's Introduction to HIA

- In the fall of 2010 the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) received a grant from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) to build capacity to conduct Health Impact Assessments (HIA) and to complete a first HIA for the KDPH.
- The first HIA project is the Kentucky Worksite Wellness Tax Credit (HB74) which would provide tax credits to employers who implement worksite wellness programs according to specific guidelines.



# Interest in Health Impact Assessment

- Public Health Commissioner support for childhood obesity and worksite wellness was strong
- Established relationships with key business associations such as the Kentucky Chamber
- Connected with committed partners in business and health across the state
- High level of expertise in childhood obesity prevention and worksite wellness, and history of strong partner relationships
- Recognized potential of conducting assessments of key policies or projects
- Potential opportunity to make the connection between worksite wellness and childhood obesity
- Worksite Wellness tax credit bill introduced every session since 2008 (not passed)

# HIA Project Description

- ❖ Research the impact of the tax credit on:
  - Childhood obesity
  - Jobs
  - Social Cohesion and Well-being
- ❖ Assessment tools included:
  - 24 research and impact questions
  - Developed a “consider this” format for impacts
- ❖ Partnered with Western Kentucky University



# Political Positioning

- The Kentucky Worksite Wellness Tax Credit bill has been proposed since 2008 but not passed
- Strong support by Kentucky Chamber of Commerce for the bill
- Need for a broader level of support of the bill
- Timing would allow conducting an HIA and sharing results by 2012 session

# The Kentucky Worksite Wellness Tax Credit HB74

- House Bill 74 would allow for employers to certify their worksite wellness program through the Kentucky cabinet for Health and Family Services and then apply for a tax credit for program costs.
    - Employers could receive 50 percent of the costs of their wellness program subject to:
      - 1) not to exceed \$30 a month per employee for physical activity related costs
      - 2) Not to exceed \$100 per employee per year
      - 3) No food or health insurance costs can be applied
- (House Bill 74, 2010)



# Key Recommendations

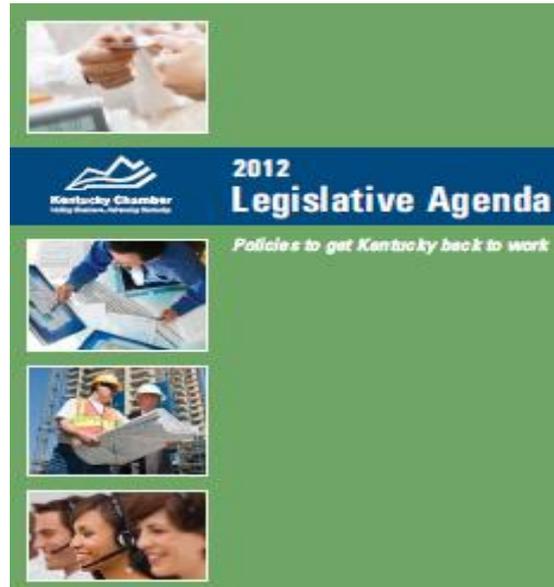
- Implement the tax credit
- Conduct an assessment of worksite wellness programs
- Create a state-wide worksite wellness council
- Create a Kentucky center of excellence
- Trained worksite wellness coordinator at all regions
- Provide education for parents in the worksite
- Raise awareness of the benefits of family programming

# HIA Project Outcomes

- Kentucky DPH staff and 34% of counties in state trained in HIA
- Completed first comprehensive HIA project
- HIA findings to be used by WKU for funding to conduct worksite wellness assessment
- Findings impact to date:
  - Kentucky Chamber 2012 legislative agenda
  - Lead to introduction of the worksite wellness bill in 2012 legislative session
  - State-wide Wellness Council creation input

# Kentucky Chamber 2012 Agenda Comment

“A balanced approach that educates children in schools and **parents** in workplaces about practicing healthy lifestyles to avoid the long-term consequences of childhood obesity is necessary.”



**(HIA) of a Kentucky Worksite Wellness Tax Credit for employers leads to the introduction of a bill in the 2012 Kentucky legislative session on March 1, 2012 by Rep. John Tilley.**



## AN ACT relating to encouraging healthy lifestyles.

Create new sections in KRS Chapter 141 establishing a wellness project credit; create a new section in KRS Chapter 131 requiring the reporting of wellness project credit data by the Department of Revenue to the Legislative Research Commission; amend KRS 141.0205 placing the new credit within the credit-ordering statute; create a new section in KRS Chapter 194A requiring the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to develop an employer wellness project model and require a certification process for all employer-provided programs.

# HIA Finding Leads to Input in State Wellness Council Creation

**“A recent Health Impact Assessment, a state-of-the-art approach used for assessing the broader outcomes of health-related policies, revealed that worksites provide a unique opportunity for Kentucky to improve health of not only employees, but also spouses, families, children, and the community. One key recommendation of the HIA Team is to create a worksite wellness council.”**

**Teresa Lovely MS CHES**

**Business Coordinator for Worksite Wellness**

# Potential Impact of Worksite Wellness Tax Credit

Worksite	Employees	Families	Community	Kentucky
-Increase number & quality of wellness programs	-Healthier lifestyles	-Healthier lifestyles	-Healthier members	-Healthier citizens & workforce
-Role model for community	-Role model for families	-Improved family dynamics	-Improved social cohesion	-Attract new businesses



*Barbara Miller, an industrial nurse at Legum Aluminum, checks employee Michael Blake's blood pressure in an examining room at the company's health and wellness center.*



Cabinet for Health and Family Services



# Conclusion

- HIA data and findings provided an opportunity to begin a conversation with key stakeholders (legislator, state chamber).
- Providing “new information and research” of the potential policy impacts led to interest and support of the policy.
- HIA influences were seen early and quickly.

# QUESTIONS

