



How to Boost Attendance at Your Classes

By Michelle Hernandez, Family Wellness Partner & Trainer

Congratulations! You've successfully completed your training and you are now a Certified Family Wellness Instructor. You have a great strength-based curriculum that can really make a difference for the better in the every day lives of individuals, couples, and families. How do you get the word out so your classes will be well attended?

As you begin planning, take time to review the Production Section in your Family Wellness Instructor Manual. It contains ideas, suggestions and tools to help you plan and execute a successful Family Wellness series.

Once you and your Family Wellness partner have decided whom you want to reach and when and where you will offer your Family Wellness series, the next step is to gather your iMake It Happenî team. This team is made up of people who will help make your series successful. You will want to include a few influential and enthusiastic people from the community you are trying to reach. Also invite someone who enjoys designing simple flyers, posters and other printed materials. Include a few people who can help with greeting, registration, and refreshments once the series begins. Additionally, you may want to include a childcare coordinator. What other people would you like to include on your team? Remember, each of your team members will have a sphere of influence and pool of people they can recruit to attend your series.

Once you have your team, sit down with them and brainstorm strategies for getting the word out to your target audience, those people who will benefit from participating in your series. You will want to make use of as many marketing avenues as possible, including word-of-mouth, posters, flyers, invitations, attendance incentives, and media opportunities.

The most effective method of marketing a Family Wellness series is word-of-mouth. Personal invitations, by phone, email or in person, from enthusiastic and excited people that the participants know will be most effective. If you are holding the series at a school, recruiting teachers to help invite can be extremely helpful. Consider offering a pizza or ice-cream reward for the class with the most parents in attendance. Teachers could give a pass on homework or other incentives for those who attend. It is also helpful for your team members to send email or make phone call reminders a day or two before the series to those people they have invited.

While word-of-mouth is the most effective way of getting people to attend your Family Wellness series, you will also want to use as many other marketing strategies as possible. Use printed materials, such as flyers, posters and invitations. Make sure they contain the day of the week, specific dates, start and stop times, the cost, and the location as well as a phone number and email for people who may have questions. If there is no charge to attend, be sure to add the word iFREE!î somewhere on your printed materials. If you are offering prizes or other incentives, include that information as well. The materials should also specify who is invited, such as families, single parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, etc. Also note that children's activities are provided for younger children and specify the childcare ages.



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Have your team help you decide who should get these invitations, flyers and posters and how you will get them distributed. Can they go out to the schools and be sent home to parents? Would local merchants be willing to display posters and have a stack of flyers available? What about doctor and dentist offices? Sometimes churches are willing to place your flyer in the Sunday bulletins or even make an announcement about your Family Wellness series. What community agencies are in your area? Could your team members hand out flyers at little league games or other natural gathering places for parents?

Many newspapers offer free listings of community events. The trick here is to find out and meet the paper's deadline for information. You may even be able to interest your local paper in doing a story about your Family Wellness series. Who doesn't want free publicity? Likewise, some radio stations also announce local events. You will find a sample media announcement and press release in the Production Section of your Family Wellness Instructor Manual.

You give yourself the best chance for success when you and your team take full advantage of each and every opportunity available for encouraging people to attend your Family Wellness series. We would love to hear how your series goes. Just send a quick email to families at families@familywellness.com. We wish you great success in your creative efforts as you move forward with bringing Family Wellness to your community.

For more information go to www.familywellness.com