

Wellbeing Breaks in the Workplace

A PROACTIVE WAY TO ENHANCE FACULTY & STAFF WELLBEING.

The Wellbeing Break Initiative encourages the integration of brief movement or wellbeing breaks throughout the workday to reduce sedentary behaviour and improve physical and mental wellbeing in the UBC community.

"It is really easy to set up and is a nice way to start a meeting by having everyone focus on their movement just for 5 min."

— UBC Staff Member

What is the Wellbeing Break Initiative?

We are partnering with groups across campus to pilot the Wellbeing Break Initiative. The Wellbeing Break Initiative is a commitment to provide a wellbeing break every 60-minutes in seated meetings, workshops, or gatherings. Breaks could include anything from a guided movement break, an opportunity for social connection, or a mindful moment. We aim to pilot this initiative for the 2023-2024 school year with interested departments. The long term goal is to integrate this commitment across the university.

What Could a Wellbeing Break look like?

- Request a movement break from the Move U Crew ([Vancouver](#) or [Okanagan](#)).
- Play one of the UBC Rec [Movement Break videos](#).
- Guide your group through a [mindful moment](#).
- Do some [deskercises](#).
- Attend an [Ergo Your Posture](#) workshop.
- Lead an icebreaker promoting social connection.
- Get creative and create your own wellbeing break!



Several studies have found that short breaks in the workplace are associated with cognitive, emotional, and physical benefits.

¹Albulesca, et al. PLoS One. 2022;17(8):e0272460. ²Arrabito, et al. Hum Factors. 2015;57(8):1403-16. ³Barredo, et al. J Phys Ther Sci. 2007;19:151-163.

⁴Blasche, et al. Healthcare (Basel). 2021;9(10):1330. ⁵Danedhmandi, et al. J Lifestyle Med. 2017;7(2):69-75. ⁶Fischer, et al. Chronobiol Int. 2017;34(10):1423-1438. ⁷Taylor, et al. Health Educ Res. 2013;28(3):414-425.



“Move U Crew came to our staff meeting and ran a short but very enjoyable stretch break that helped start the meeting on a very positive note.”

— UBC Staff Member



Why Should We Provide Wellbeing Breaks?

- According to the 2021 Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey, only one in four UBC faculty and staff are currently meeting the sedentary behaviour recommendation of the Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines.
- Additionally, one in four UBC faculty and staff were considered to have low mental wellbeing according to a 14-item self-reported measurement tool.
- Taking brief mental breaks in the workplace can also reduce stress, improve mood, improve productivity, and ultimately enhance mental wellbeing.
- Signing onto the initiative demonstrates your department’s commitment to championing wellbeing in the workplace.

[Learn more](#) about wellbeing in the workplace.

Advancing UBC Strategic Plans

This initiative directly advances the following UBC strategic plans:

[Wellbeing Strategic Framework](#)

[20-Year Sustainability Strategy](#)

[Focus on People Framework](#)

And is informed by the following UBC strategic plans:

[Inclusion Action Plan](#)

[Indigenous Strategic Plan](#)

[Student Strategic Plan](#)

Who Else is Involved?

There are many groups across campus helping us to enhance the wellbeing of the UBC community through Wellbeing Breaks!

- UBC Office of Wellbeing Strategy
- UBC Athletics and Recreation
- UBC Human Resources
- UBC Wellness Centre
- UBC Sustainability

What We’ve Done

July 2022

Discussions with Dr Stewart (UBC-O) on adaptation of “Take A Stand”.

Sept 2022

Invite stakeholders to be part of the Wellbeing Break Initiative development.

Jan 2023

Consultation meeting with stakeholders to develop Wellbeing Break Initiative Plan.

May 2023

Conduct ‘tools assessment’ to determine existing resources.

July 2023

Spread the word. Discussion with interested departments, campus partners, etc.

Sept 2023

Pilot test Wellbeing Breaks within a UBC department.

Nov 2023

Call for Action!

Have departments sign a pledge committing to the Wellbeing Break Initiative.

Help Us Pilot the Wellbeing Breaks Initiative!

We need your help to ensure the most practical and beneficial implementation of the Wellbeing Break Initiative! Let us know if you’re interested in testing out the Wellbeing Break Initiative and providing us with your feedback. Contact the Office of Physical Activity below for information on next steps.

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