Are your employees socially well?

When it comes to wellness, we often think of keeping people safe, healthy and happy. An important element that may be overlooked is social wellness, the ability to develop friendships, healthy behaviors and comfortable interactions with others while working for harmony in personal, professional, community and work environments.

By strengthening relationships, we strengthen ourselves to interact positively regardless of the situation or outcome. We begin to feel better about who we are and what we can contribute. With this new resolve, we attract additional experiences and relationships while communicating what we truly desire.

A recent Framingham study published in The New England Journal of Medicine showed that our health is intricately connected to the health of the people who are important in our lives. If a person gains weight, for example, his family and friends are more likely to gain weight. The effect is surprisingly stronger on friends than on family and shockingly works over a distance of up to 300 miles.

The study concluded that the reverse effect also holds true. When people lose weight and improve their health, their friends and family benefit as well. This study proves what we already know to be true: that the attitudes and behaviors of the people in our lives have a tremendous influence on our own thoughts and actions.

Characteristics of Social Wellness:
- Maintaining positive interactions
- Deriving comfort and ease from work and leisure situations
- Communicating feelings and needs
- Developing and building close friendships and intimacy
- Practicing empathy and effective listening
- Caring for others and allowing others to care for you
- Recognizing the need for leisure and recreation while budgeting time for those activities

For assistance in creating a social wellness plan for your employees, contact Sharon Rateike, corporate wellness program coordinator at (920) 568-5244 or Sharon.Rateike@forthc.com.