

## Health Education: Spotlight on Equity Resources

Vermont rules and statutes require all schools to provide K-12 students with a comprehensive health education. The goal of health education is for all students to develop health literacy. Being health literate means having the knowledge, motivation, and competencies to access, understand, appraise, and apply health information to make judgments and decisions to maintain and live a healthy life. This definition is operationalized in the [National Health Education Standards](#) (NHES), adopted by Vermont in 2014.

This Spotlight on Equity includes a list of considerations for the purpose of providing an equity literate and socially conscious lens to the teaching and learning of health education, as well as recognizing the historic economic exclusion and marginalization of minority groups and communities. When grade-level appropriate, educators may use spotlight resources to critically engage students in socially relevant Health Education opportunities. Neither the enumerated considerations, nor the resources below, are a complete list, but rather a starting point on which to begin historically and socially relevant conversations on health literacy.

### Core Health Concepts Graduation Proficiency

**Comprehend concepts** related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health (in accordance to [Title 16 V.S.A. § 131](#): Definition of Comprehensive Health Education).

#### Spotlight on Equity:

- Health Equity
- Cultural Competency
- Cognitive Bias
- Personal Factors
- Socioeconomic Status

Resource	Resource Description
<a href="#">The Health Equity Framework: A Science and Justice-Based Model for Public Health Researchers and Practitioners</a>	Health equity is defined as having the personal agency and fair access to resources and opportunities needed to achieve the best possible physical, emotional, and social well-being. The Health Equity Framework is a practical tool for leaders that can be used to reflect on and support a shift toward addressing health inequities resulting from the interplay of structural, relational, individual, and physiological factors.

#### Contact Information:

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Resource	Resource Description
<a href="#">Cultural Competency Resources</a>	This document identifies tools and resources for individual teachers, and for school and district leaders responsible for providing professional development in culturally competent and responsive practices. It also includes examples from other state education agencies and some of the tools and resources they have created to address cultural competency/responsiveness and equity.
<a href="#">Cognitive Biases can Hold Learning Back – Here’s how to Beat Them</a>	Our thought processes are not always clear or rational, and one reason for this is cognitive biases. These are thought processes that can alter how you perceive things and get in the way of making good logical decisions.
<a href="#">Personal, Social and Cultural Factors Influencing Learners</a>	This article talks about personal, social, and cultural factors that impact the learner’s ability to learn.
<a href="#">Ethnic and Racial Minorities &amp; Socioeconomic Status</a>	The American Psychological Association discusses the relationship between Socioeconomic status (SES), race and ethnicity and considers how “SES encompasses not just income but also educational attainment, financial security, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class.”

**Analyze Influences Graduation Proficiency**

Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

**Spotlight on Equity:**

- Social Determinants of Health
- Ethnicity
- Trauma
- Access to Health Care
- Gender Identity

Resource	Resource Description
<a href="#">Vermont State Health Assessment 2018</a>	The Vermont State Health Assessment 2018 is our five-year update to what we know about the health status of Vermonters. It provides vital data for examining health inequities by race and ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, and geography.
<a href="#">Five Ways in Which Ethnicity Affects Health</a>	This article includes information on the different impacts that ethnic factors have on health. When talking about well-being and healthiness, your origins matter. To understand the health risks a person might face, it’s fundamental to identify the ethnic group they belong to.

Resource	Resource Description
<a href="#">Childhood Adversity Increases Risk for Long-term Health and Behavioral Issues</a>	Research shows that adversity experienced by children can affect them into adulthood. Challenges children face in school, life – and ultimately with their health – are often related to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress. The earlier children who are experiencing ACEs and toxic stress are identified, the sooner children and families can be connected to the services they need to prevent or heal long term effects. This website includes information about ACEs, answers to FAQs, perspectives from professionals that work with children, and additional resources.
<a href="#">The Effects of Gender- and Sexuality-Based Harassment on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Substance Use Disparities</a>	A study that showed gender- and sexuality-based harassment at school independently or interactively produced LGBT disparities in substance use.
<a href="#">Social Determinants of Health</a>	This is a link to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion’s social determinants of health webpage with resources. Our health is determined in part by access to social and economic opportunities; the resources and supports available in our homes, neighborhoods, and communities; the quality of our schooling; the safety of our workplaces; the cleanliness of our water, food, and air; and the nature of our social interactions and relationships.

## Access Information Graduation Proficiency

Access valid information, products, and services to enhance health.

### Spotlight on Equity:

- Internet Access
- Media Literacy
- Access to Health Care

Resource	Resource Description
<a href="#">Internet Access in Vermont</a>	This website includes regional data about Internet access, broadband speeds, and the digital divide in Vermont. Educators need to evaluate how this impacts their students and their ability to access health information.
<a href="#">Identifying Barriers to Access and Utilization of Preventive Health-Care Services by Young Adults in Vermont</a>	This study examined barriers to accessing and utilizing routine preventive health-care checkups for Vermont young adults.

Resource	Resource Description
<a href="#">Drawing the Connection of Media Literacy and Health</a>	This paper identifies the impacts of media literacy on several health behaviors.

## Interpersonal Communication & Advocacy Graduation Proficiency

Use **interpersonal communication skills to advocate** for enhanced personal, family and community health and avoid or reduce health risks.

### Spotlight on Equity:

- Social Emotional Competence
- Cultural Boundaries
- Multi-lingual
- Cognitive Disability

Resource	Resource Description
<a href="#">The Effect of Social-Emotional Competence on Children’s Academic Achievement and Behavioral Development</a>	This paper explores the importance of social-emotional competence on children’s growth. In order to develop children’s social-emotional competence, interactions between adults and children are critically important. Teachers have the responsibility to enhance children’s development in many aspects, including social, emotional, cognitive, academic, and behavioral skills.
<a href="#">Communicating across Cultural Barriers</a>	This article identifies difficulties in cross-cultural communication and provide tips for overcoming miscommunications.
<a href="#">Improving Health Education for ELL Students in the Mainstream Classroom</a>	This article gleans ten strategies from research that school health education teachers can utilize in their language- and learning-diverse classrooms that should increase the learning, achievement and success of English Language Learners (ELL) and students with limited literacy skills.
<a href="#">Sexual Health Education for Young People with Disabilities – Research and Resources for Educators</a>	This resource discusses how sexual health educators are in a unique position to be cognizant of their students’ various backgrounds and learning styles so that decisions being made about when and how much sexuality information a young person should receive are well informed. For young people with disabilities, it is necessary for educators to engage parents/guardians in developing a plan of instruction that is positive, gradual, and considers the individual’s developmental and maturity levels. Additionally, the parents/guardians’ beliefs and values need to be considered.

## Decision Making Skills and Goal Setting Graduation Proficiency

Use decision-making skills and goal setting to enhance health.

### Spotlight on Equity:

- Social Emotional Competence
- Religious Influences
- Cultural Influences
- Food Deserts

Resource	Resource Description
<a href="#">Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Student Benefits: Implications for the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Core Elements</a>	This brief shares the latest research on the effects of social and emotional learning (SEL) on students and includes strategies for implementing SEL. It explains how SEL works, elaborates on how SEL can be an integrative prevention framework that addresses core elements of Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS), including decision-making and goal setting.
<a href="#">The Influence of Religion on Health</a>	Religion is now prominent in scientific studies that investigate its influence on health. This article discusses the influence a religion has on health and personal decision making.
<a href="#">Food deserts not to blame for growing gap between rich and poor, study finds</a>	For decades, the conventional wisdom has been that people living in food deserts have little choice but to buy unhealthy food. In studies conducted by the University of Chicago, authors found that nutrition education and knowledge are strongly associated with differences in preferences across income group. Nutrition education may be more effective at closing the nutrition gap than building more supermarkets and farmers markets in food deserts.
<a href="#">Five Ways in Which Ethnicity Affects Health</a>	This article includes information on the different impacts that ethnic factors have on health. When talking about well-being and healthiness your origins matter. To understand the health risks a person might face, it's fundamental to identify the ethnic group they belong to.

## Self-Management Graduation Proficiency

Practice health enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

### Spotlight on Equity:

- Gender Disparities
- Social Emotional Competence
- Health Disparities
- Anti-bias Learning Environment

**Resources:**

Resource	Resource Description
<a href="https://www.ascd.org/2018/05/15/how-gender-disparities-affect-classroom-learning/">How Gender Disparities Affect Classroom Learning (ascd.org)</a>	Schools are influential agents of socialization. They play vital roles in how we make meaning of the world around us, significantly affecting how we perceive ourselves and others, as well as differences across race, languages, disabilities, and gender. Because of this, schools have the responsibility to model, teach, and create conditions in which each child's gender diversity is accepted and nourished.
<a href="https://casel.org/2018/05/15/SEL-What-Are-the-Core-Competence-Areas-and-Where-are-they-Promoted/">SEL: What Are the Core Competence Areas and Where are they Promoted? (casel.org)</a>	Use the interactive CASEL Wheel to learn about Social Emotional Learning (SEL). CASEL's framework takes a systemic approach that emphasizes the importance of establishing equitable learning environments and coordinating practices across key settings of classrooms, schools, families, and communities to enhance all students' social, emotional, and academic learning.
<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/adolescentand-school-health/health-disparities/">CDC Adolescent and School Health: Health Disparities</a>	This webpage addresses health disparities that result from multiple factors, including poverty, environmental threats, inadequate access to health care, individual and behavioral factors, and educational inequalities and their influences on being successful.
<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/adolescentand-school-health/health-disparities/">Action Steps to Address Health and Educational Disparities   Disparities   Adolescent and School Health   CDC</a>	The Division of Adolescent and School Health advances health equity and adolescent health issues across the nation through CDC's science and programs. Action steps proposed by CDC are provided for consideration by education and health agencies to address health and educational disparities among students.
<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/adolescentand-school-health/health-disparities/">The Role of Self-Efficacy in Achieving Health Behavior Change</a>	The concept of self-efficacy is receiving increasing recognition as a predictor of health behavior change and maintenance. The purpose of this article is to facilitate a clearer understanding of both the concept and its relevance for health education research and practice.

**Additional Vermont Agency of Education Resources**[Cultural Diversity and Equity Resources \(June 2020\)](#)[Educational Equity Webpage](#)[Equity Literacy Resources – Fall 2019](#)[Equity Literacy Resources – Spring 2019](#)