

Linking Health & Learning

The newsletter for Vermont's Health and Physical Educators and supporters

November 2021

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Pause, Reflect, Rejuvenate!

As you prepare for the winter months, pause and take a minute to reflect on the successes you have experienced teaching this fall, the hopes you have for your students in the upcoming months, and appreciate the opportunities you have had to impact the wellness of your students! Please take time to maintain your readiness to teach and engage your students in their learning. Stay strong and find peace in knowing you are doing the best you can!

This week's [Hechinger Report](#) focuses in on how physical education teachers across the nation are tackling 'physical learning loss.' Knowing this fall has been anything but typical, in the January 2022 issue of *Linking Health and Learning*, I would love to share some inspiring Vermont stories from the field! Consider how you or someone you work with has reengaged students in physical education; if you have a story you'd like share with readers, please feel free to send it to [me](#) by the end of December, 2021.

Vermont News

Updated Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) Webpages

The following links take you to newly revised webpages that support Comprehensive Health:

- [Physical Education](#)
- [Health Education](#)
- [Sexual Health](#)
- Related Comprehensive Health Education webpages
 - [Safe and Healthy Schools](#)
 - [Health Services](#)
 - [Physical Activity](#)

Also see the new [SEL Platform](#). SEL VT contains a series of professionally developed modules to help educators easily incorporate materials into their lesson planning. In addition, classroom teachers can provide a link to their students so they can directly access materials for lessons. Finally, this platform also provides parents and caregivers with free access to these materials so they can facilitate continued learning at home.

School Wellness Programs

[16 V.S.A. § 136](#) was revised per Act 66. “Wellness program” means a program that includes physical fitness and comprehensive health education as defined in [section 131](#) of this title. The Advisory Council on Wellness and Comprehensive Health is in the process of revising the [Vermont School Wellness Policy Guidelines and Implementation](#) with a new focus on Comprehensive Health Education along with Nutrition and Physical Fitness.

Changes in the Vermont Physical Education Assessment

The Agency of Education will not be requiring schools to administer the Vermont Physical Education Assessment (VTPEA) in the spring of 2022. The AOE is exploring, with national education partners, the possibility of piloting an inclusive, student-centered Physical Education performance assessment in the future.

Condom Availability Program Guidance

According to [16 V.S.A. § 132](#), in order to prevent or reduce unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, each school district shall make condoms available to all students in its secondary schools, free of charge, starting July 1, 2021. In response to this law, the [Condom Availability Programs: Recommendations for Supervisory Unions/Districts and Schools](#) was collaboratively developed to support the implementation of Condom Availability Programs. The Vermont State School Nurses Association (VSSNA) has posted the recorded webinar, [Intro to 16 V.S.A. § 132: Vermont’s Condom Availability Law](#), to support school nurses in their role in this work.

Spotlights on Equity: Health and Physical Education

The AOE defines [educational equity](#) to mean that every student has access to the resources, opportunities, and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education, whatever their race, gender/identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, language, disability, family background, or family income may be.

Content specialists on the Proficiency-Based Learning Team have developed Spotlights on Equity and resources for the field to support equitable instructional practices. Currently, the AOE is looking for feedback on content specific Equity Spotlights, including Health and Physical Education. We have developed a set of prompting questions via this [form](#) and would like to hear from you as practitioners and co-designers to ensure these resources are as meaningful and useful as possible.

Sexual Health Education Updates

- **Vermont Leadership Exchange for Adolescent Health Promotion (LEAHP) Team**
Vermont has been chosen to participate in the [LEAHP](#) project where state agencies work together to support adolescent sexual health policies, practice, and implementation. LEAHP is a learning collaborative of multi-sector, state-

level leadership teams with the goal to develop state-specific action plans in support of policy assessment, development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation to address adolescent health in three priority areas: sexual health education (SHE), sexual health services (SHS), and safe and supportive environments (SSE). The Vermont LEAHP Team includes Kim Swartz and Sara Chesbrough (Vermont Department of Health), Dr. Erica Gibson (UVM), Chani Waterhouse (Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence), Andrea Nicoletta (Planned Parenthood of Northern New England), Dr. Katy Culp (CU), and Susan Yesalonia (AOE). This group is supported by the Vermont LEAHP Advisory Group that includes additional stakeholders from across Vermont. The Advisory Group is currently looking for a health educator to participate in quarterly meetings. If you are interested in serving on the Vermont LEAHP Advisory Group, please email [Susan Yesalonia](mailto:Susan.Yesalonia@vermont.gov).

- The [Essential Topics in Sexual Health Education](#) was introduced to the field on October 14, 2021, during a [Vermont Higher Education Collaborative \(VT HEC\) webinar](#). This resource helps health educators prioritize sexual health education topics and describes how to be inclusive of LGBTQ+ students and youth with disabilities, as well as incorporate racial justice principles as part of essential sexual health education. The VT HEC is continuing this professional learning series focusing on different essential topics. For more information visit [Teaching Essential Topics in Sexual Health Education](#).

New or Updated SHAPE America Resources **[Health Education Assessment Tool \(HEAT\)](#)**

This tool is for SHAPE America members. HEAT is an assessment bank of over 800 reviewed test items to use in your classroom immediately! Assessments cover health topics and health skills for elementary, middle, and high school levels as well as content and skill acquisition rubrics, scoring criteria, Lexile and grade range, and teacher information.

[101 Tips for Teaching Nutrition in PE](#)

SHAPE America and Fuel Up to Play 60 have teamed up to provide updated tips to help physical education teachers integrate nutrition concepts into their teaching routines.

[Backward Design SEL/HPE Units](#)

Six SEL/HPE unit plans use backward design to show how SHAPE America Grade-Level Outcomes and/or National Health Education performance indicators align with appropriate social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies/sub-competencies, assessment, and instruction.

[Students with Chronic Health Conditions Posters](#)

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SHAPE America and the National Association of Schools Nurses developed this poster series of four of the most common chronic conditions in school-age children — anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and seizures — to show physical education teachers how to recognize and respond to a health emergency.

Open Access Articles

- [Engaging Students in Health Literacy Through Fiction Novels](#)
- [Enhancing Health Education: There's an Instructional Strategy for That](#)
- [Everyday Happiness: A Mental Health Lesson to Help Students Focus on the Positive During the Pandemic](#)
- [Helping Students Improve Their Health Literacy](#)
- [Mental Health Education](#)
- [Whole School Approach Connecting Schools to Community Resources to Enhance School Health](#)

State and National Professional Learning Opportunities

- [ASCD Webinars – Free Professional Learning](#)
- OPEN's Free - [Teacher Learning School](#)
- PE BLOG – [10 Professional Development Websites](#) (Free)
- [Prevent Child Abuse Vermont](#) – Free professional learning events
- 2021 SHAPE Vermont - [Conference and Events](#)
- [2022 SHAPE America Convention \(New Orleans – April 26-30\)](#)
- [Vermont Higher Education Collaborative \(VT-HEC\)](#)

Resources for Health and Physical Education

- [FitnessGram Learning at Home Modules](#)
- New! [Digital 2021 Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool \(HECAT\)](#)
- [PBS Learning Media](#), ([filtered by Health and P.E.](#))
- [RMC Health Education Resources and Tools](#)
- [SHAPE America](#)
- [SHAPE Vermont](#)
- [Thriving Schools](#)

We're on the Web!

[Health Education](#)

[Physical Education](#)