

FRIDAY
Education


NPHW 2020

FOR SCIENCE
Educational achievement is linked to lifelong health and prosperity.

FOR ACTION
Demand equitable funding for all your local schools.

FOR HEALTH
High school graduation is linked with a 9-year increase in lifespan.

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 NATIONAL
PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

Education

A lack of education is one of the social determinants of poor health. Factors like poverty and unsafe neighborhoods can stack the deck against children even before they enter the classroom because educational achievement is directly linked to socioeconomic status and community environment.

Eight and a half percent of Vermont residents have an associate's degree, 35.8 percent have a bachelor's degree, 13.8 percent have a graduate or professional degree, and 91.4 percent have graduated high school.¹

Students who receive free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch at school have lower rates of absenteeism and obesity, and higher rates of food insecurity.²

In 2019, 9.8 percent of Vermont households were food insecure, or unable to provide adequate food for one or more household members due to lack of resources.³

Demand equitable funding for all schools within your school district. Advance cross-sector partnerships that target the social determinants.⁴ Help establish school health coordinating councils, which can link databases to better track improvements and areas that need attention.⁵

High school graduates have better health and lower medical costs than those who drop out. College graduates fare even better, health-wise.⁶ Elevate the message that health and education are intertwined. Reach out to your local school boards and communicate your support for school-based health care services. Advocate for eliminating school lunch debt completely.

Current distribution of economic resources to schools is based on property taxes. In neighborhoods and communities where property values are lower, schools see fewer resources. To introduce equity, resources should be distributed based on student needs.

Due to COVID-19 and the closing of the school buildings, our teachers have transferred their educational services to mostly online communications. These empty buildings remind us that in our rural state, the schools are a major part of our communities and support our children and families with not only education, but also meals and nourishment, health and sports and also cultural activities. These dramatic actions of "closing" our schools reinforces the need to fully support our schools financially so they can best service our future generations.

¹ [Open Data Network](#)

² [Journal of School Health](#)

³ [United Health Foundation Americas Health Rankings](#)

⁴ [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#)

^{5,6} [APHA](#)