

Attitudes and Experiences Towards Health Education in NJ Schools



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A discussion about health education in our schools

RUTGERS

Institute for Women's Leadership

The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to *practice leadership through* action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women's Leadership's website at <http://iwl.rutgers.edu>.

The Problem

- Few to no surveys are given to high school students that assess their knowledge on vital health and wellness topics.
- Reductions were found in U.S. adolescents' retention of formal sex education from schools between 2006–2010 and 2011–2013 (Hall et. Al, 2016).
- Research demonstrates that education, health and wellbeing are intrinsically linked. Education is associated with life expectancy, morbidity, and beneficial health behaviors (The Lancet, 2020).

NJ health education is inconsistent in its delivery and student information retainment.

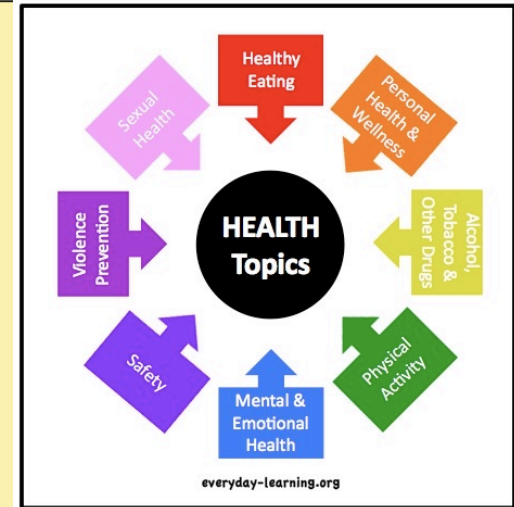
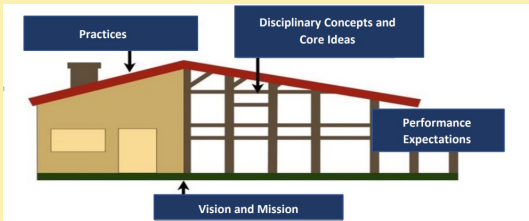


Diagram of Health Topics

Intellectual & Conceptual Foundation

Comprehensive Health and Physical Education (CHPE)



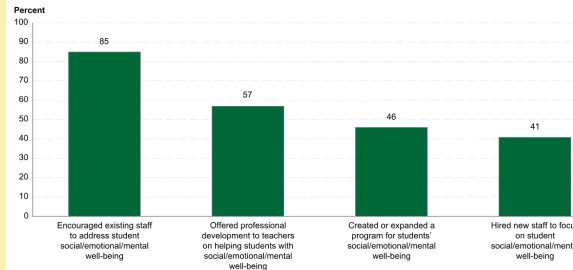
Foundation (CHPE, 2020).

Grade division, disciplinary concepts, and standards on disciplines. This document serves as an outline rather than a curriculum (Geppert, 2022).

Mental Health Services in Public Schools



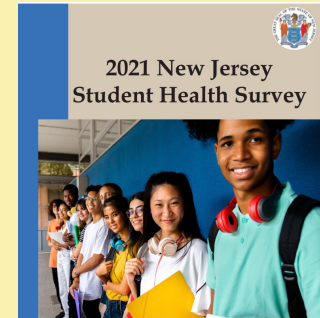
Percentage of public schools that took a given action to help students cope with the coronavirus pandemic, by selected type of action: April 2022



Mental health services in public schools (NCES, 2022).

While 85% of public schools were made aware of mental health concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic, only 46% acted

NJ Student Health Survey Reports



The last available health survey is from 2021.

Scope of Project

Mission Statement

To address and highlight the importance of health education in all public schools and the need for curriculum and/or delivery adjustments.

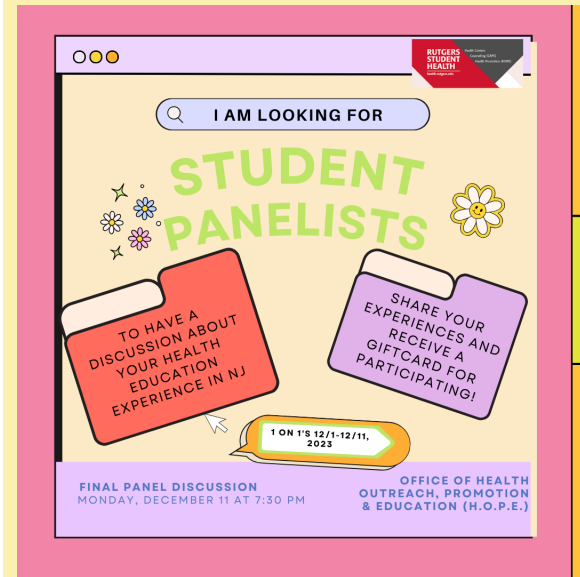
Discussion & Student Interviews – Notable Questions

Q1: What is your first lesson or memory of health education?

Q4: What is something that you would change about your schooling?

Q5: In general, how do you feel about the level of health education you received in high school?

Promotional Flyer



Demographics of Interviewees/Panelists

1. Female-Identifying Individuals
2. Attended a NJ public school before enrolling in Rutgers
3. 11th-12th grade
4. Different majors and career interests (not enforced)
5. Mostly from North Jersey

Timeline of Project

OCTOBER

Discussion with high school PE teachers, narrowing down targeted population, review of CHPE



FUTURE DIRECTION

Send out health education experience/knowledge student body, report findings in a cross-sectional study



SEPTEMBER

Bibliography and literature reviews, adjustments of overall project, meeting with Dr. Trigg

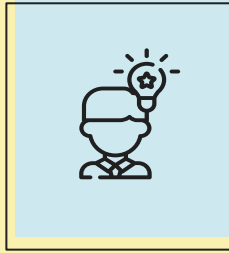


NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

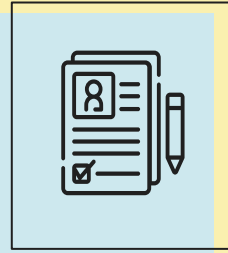
Meet with SAP advisor Josie, send out flyer and invite panelists/interviewees, reach out to H.O.P.E. for the space

FEMINIST LEADERSHIP

Education saves lives and is a social determinant of health (Healthy People 2030).



Higher level of education = Increase in child survival rates



Women represent 77% of all public school teachers, emphasizing the importance of education

Impact & Evaluation

Results, Insights, & Future Direction

- 5 Rutgers students interviewed
- Opened a conversation about health knowledge & retainment
- Actively working with NBPS health educators and gaining insight on their experiences
- Will continue working on this project, and create a health knowledge survey
- Interview more Rutgers students from different towns – turn this into a cross-sectional study

Notable Moments

“Other parents gave the sex talk, whereas that wasn’t a thing in my house, it was just ‘don’t get pregnant’ and ‘don’t have sex’ and I didn’t what that was.” – Student from Orange, NJ

“I don’t recall learning about health education from my teachers. Everything I learned was from talking with my peers.” – Student from West New York, NJ

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Thank You!

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