



PUBLIC HEALTH

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Each Student Successful: Exploring Policies to Address Health Disparities and the Academic Achievement Gap

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Summary

- Health disparities exist in Washington. They are hurting us. As a result, there are implications for health and academic achievement.
- We need an agreed upon framework for how we think about health disparities. How we think, determines what we do.
- There are challenges for both health and education professionals but they can be overcome with well thought out strategies that include community based partnerships.
- The climate in Washington is ripe, even ready for change in policies that impact health disparities.

TERMINOLOGY

- “Eliminate health disparity” – HP 2010.
- “Eliminate racial/ethnic disparities in health” – DHHS Initiative.
- “Racial/Ethnic differences in health” .
- “Health inequality”.
- “Health inequity”.

* **HOW** “Health Disparity” is defined
has policy implications*

Health Disparities Defined

A chain of events signified by a difference in:

- Health status or a particular health outcome.
- Environment.
- Access to, utilization of, and quality of care.
- And includes concepts of health in-equality and in-equity.

-- Public Health Reports Sept/Oct 2002 Vol 117 Pgs 426-434

Health Disparities vs. Inequities

- Differences, i.e., inequalities, in health
 - What's wrong with differences?
- But we really mean:
 - Health disparities (inequalities) that are unfair (inequities)...
 - “Disparities,” “differences,” “variations,” and “inequalities” are descriptive terms.
 - But our concern regarding disparities reflects values.

Health Equity is a Value

- Not concerned with all health disparities.
- Specific concern with disparities that are particularly unfair – social disparities reflecting unequal opportunities to be healthy.

ACCEPTANCE OF TRUTHS

Not everyone has equal
opportunity for health.

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and the most inhumane.”

Martin Luther King Jr. – March 25, 1966

2nd National Convention of the Medical Committee for Human Rights

“Nowhere are the divisions of race and ethnicity more sharply drawn than in the health of our people...no matter what the reason, racial and ethnic disparities in health are unacceptable in a country that values equality and equal opportunity for all.”

Bill Clinton – February 21, 1998

Equalizing opportunities to be healthy requires addressing the most important social and economic determinants of health including not only health care, but also living conditions in households and communities, working conditions, racism, and policies that affect any of these factors

Source: Defining equity in health. J Epidemiol Community Health 2003, 57: 254-258

Social Environments and Health

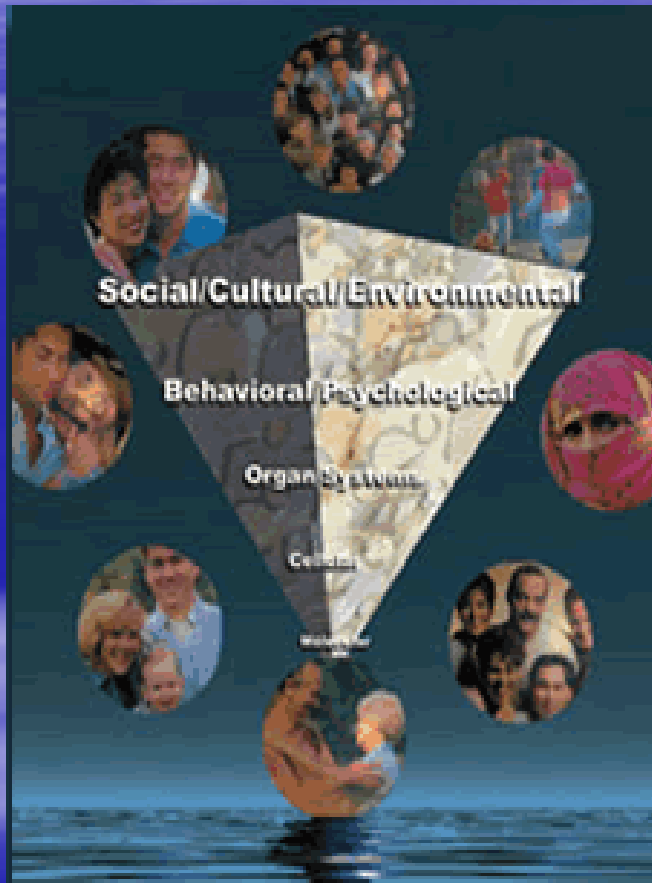
Individuals and families are embedded within social, political, and economic systems that shape behaviors and constrain access to resources necessary to maintain health.

Greater emphasis is needed on public health interventions that involve communities, with the goal of collectively identifying resources, needs and solutions...

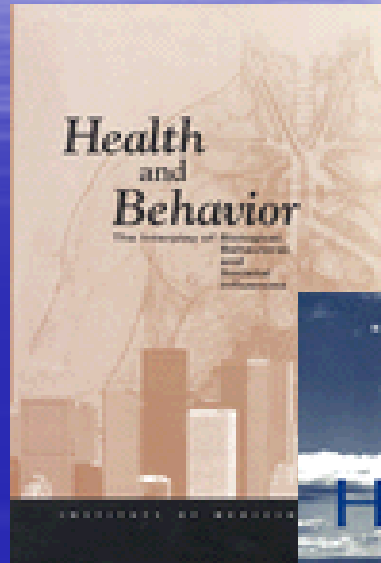
-- Institute of Medicine, Health and Behavior 2001

Exploring Policies

We Know What Determines Health



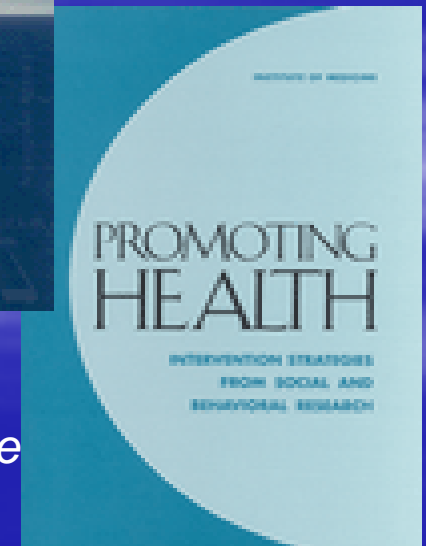
*National Institutes for Health
2000*



Institute of Medicine 2001



*National Research
Council 2001*



*Institute of Medicine
2000*

Disparities Start Early

- “Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Birth Outcomes: A life-Course Perspective” maternal child health journal vol. 7, no. 1, March 2003.
- “Building on a life-course perspective in maternal child health” editorial, maternal child health journal vol.7, no. 1, March 2003.

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

HEALTH

Multiple levels of influence

- Genetic and biological processes
- Individual behaviors and lifestyle
- Environments in which people live

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SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Institutionalized
Biases (racism,
sexism, etc.)

Health
Behaviors and
Personal
Risk Factors

Access to
Health Services

Trust in Health
System and
Research

Mental Health
and Social
Support

Stress due
To Social
Factors

Economic
Opportunity
and Equity

Environmental
Risk

Language and
Other Cultural
Factors

Education
Background
and
Opportunity

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH: INFORMING POLICY DECISIONS

*Social conditions
that affect health
are amenable to
population-based
interventions that
improve community
health outcomes.*



MMWR™

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report

Recommendations and Reports

February 1, 2002 / Vol. 51 / No. RR-1

Community Interventions to Promote Healthy Social Environments: Early Childhood Development and Family Housing

**A Report on Recommendations of the Task Force
on Community Preventive Services**



CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™

Social Environment Logic Model



The *Community Guide's* social environment and health model

Freedom from
Discrimination

Promotion of
Healthy
Behaviors

Access to
Health Services

Trust in Health
System and
Research

The Pathway to Action

Mental Health
and Social
Support

Reduced
Stress Due to Social
Factors

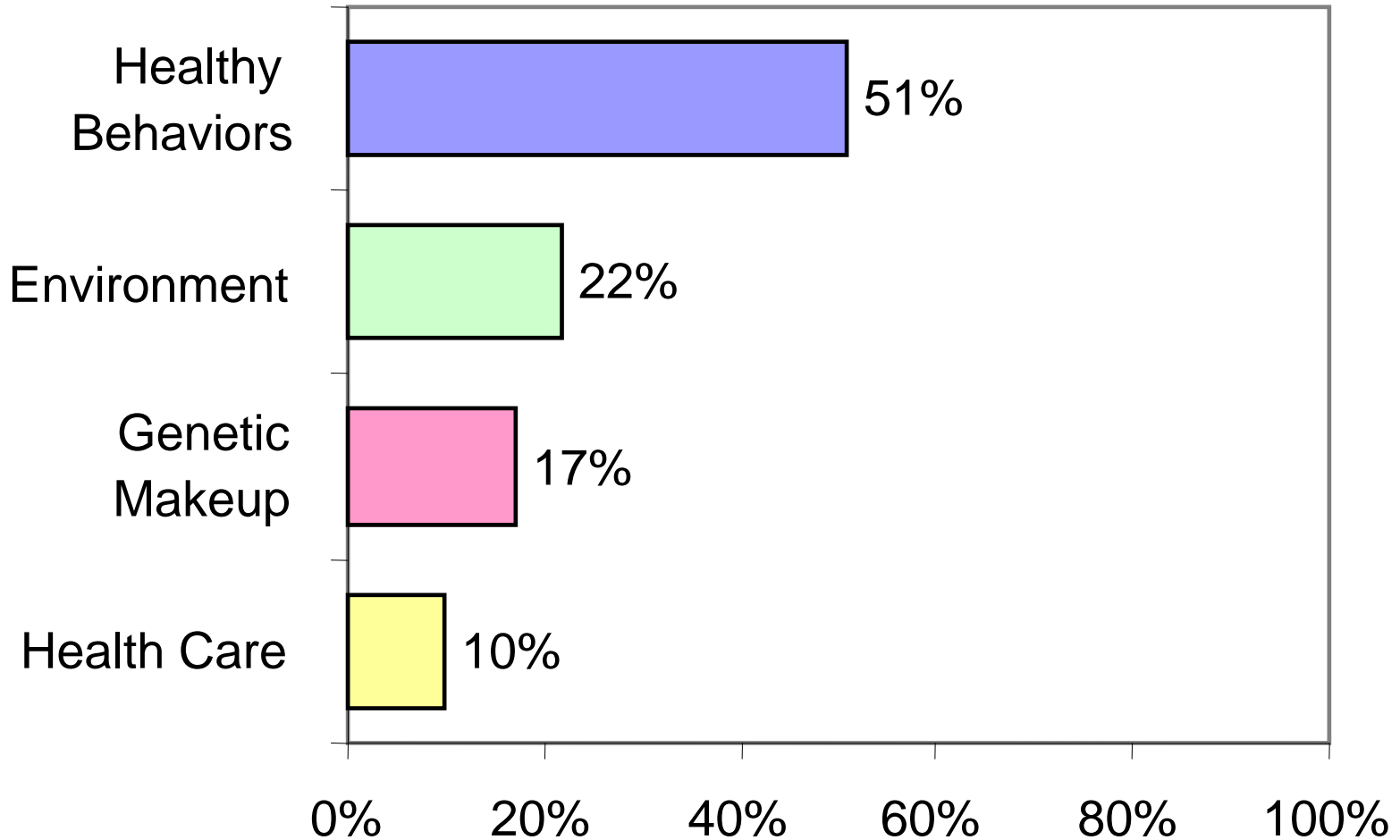
Economic
Opportunity
and Equity

Lower
Environmental
Risk

Respect for
Language and
Other Cultural
Factors

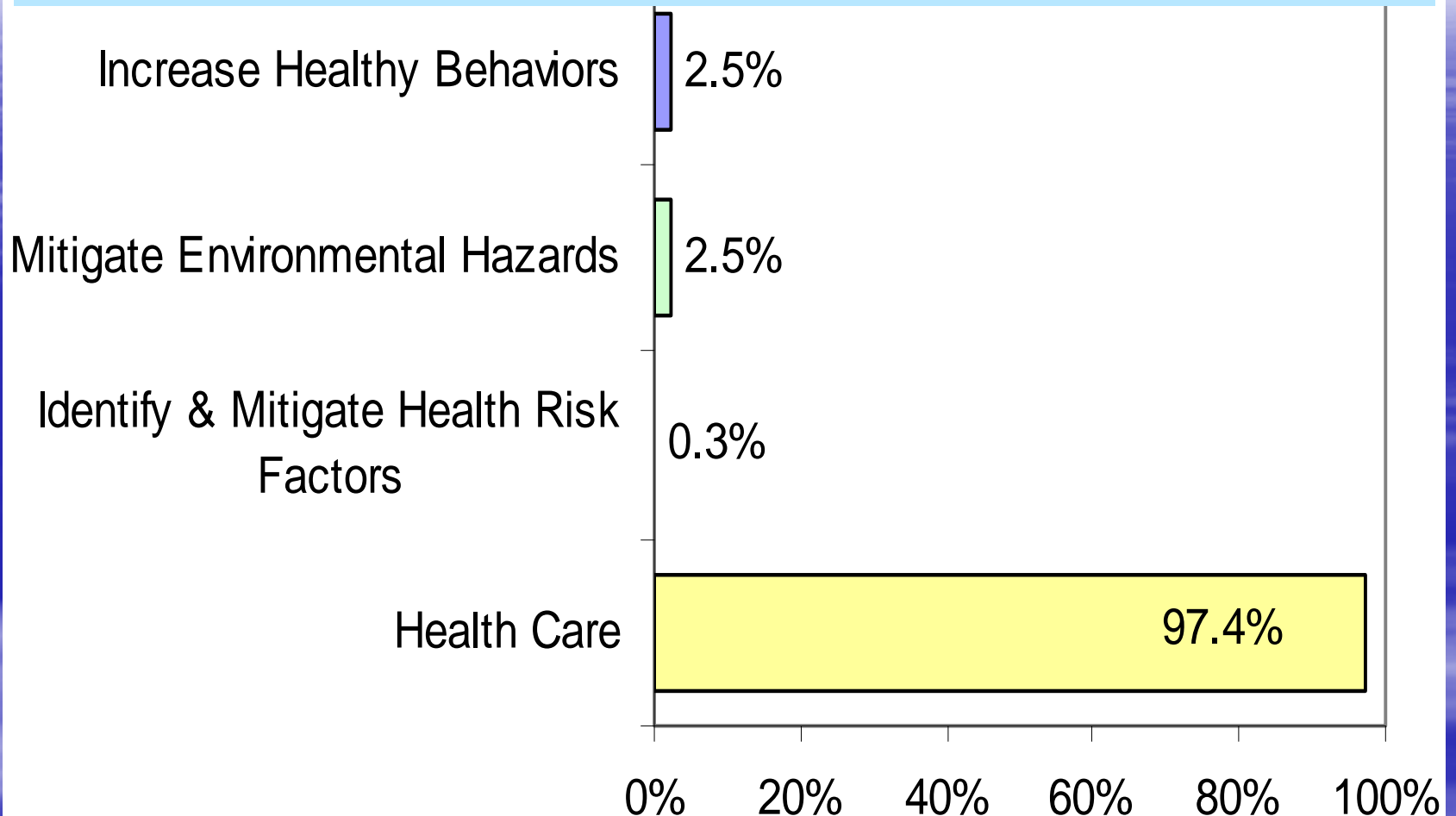
Educational
Opportunity

What Influences Our Health



Source: McGinnis, et. al, 2002

How We Spend Our Money



Source: Priorities of Government II, Summer 2004

Ranked by Potential to Improve Community Health

- Child development programs (Head Start, Healthy Start, etc.).
- Adequate public investment in education.
- “Living wages” to move working families above poverty.
- Access to quality health care for all ages.
- Mixed income neighborhoods to decrease segregation by SES.
- Programs to reintegrate stigmatized populations.
- Parenting classes in schools, churches, health agencies, etc.
- Neighborhood schools as site of numerous community support programs.
- Family-focused, one-stop health and human services centers .
- Adequate health benefits with employment.

Washington State Legislative Agenda 04-06

The Good News – These Bills Passed:

- SCR 8419 – Creates a joint select committee on health disparities.
- SB 6194 – An act relating to multicultural education for health professionals.
- SB 6196 – An act relating to including a health official from a federally recognized tribe on the state board of health.
- SB 6197 – An act relating to the creation of the governor's interagency coordinating council on health disparities.

Strategies to Eliminate Health Disparities

- Framing the issue correctly. Include concept of equity.
- Educate policy makers and affected communities on the consequences of inequities.
- Help policy makers as well as health/education professionals understand the impact of social determinants on health and academic achievement.
- Partner with others to take action.

Challenge to Health & Education

- Balance our traditional roles with innovative community based approaches.
- Agree on a frame work for policy change.
- Have one voice.



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