



HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

You want your child to succeed in school and to become a healthy individual. There are many ways to encourage your child to achieve. Below, are some of the many ways you can help your student be successful in school and be a health literate child:

- **Show interest** in what your child is learning in school.
- **Dedicate at least 15 minutes** each day to talking with your child about school and ask questions about health.
- **Limit the amount of daily screen time** for your child (i.e. smart phones, television, computer, etc.).
- **Talk with your child's teacher** about the Integrated Health Literacy Program if you have questions or if you can act as a resource.



A Partnership of Worcester County Public Schools, Atlantic General Hospital, and University of Maryland Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy



Health Literacy for All

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO INTEGRATED HEALTH LITERACY



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"The Integrated Health Literacy program provides our students with meaningful opportunities to learn and understand a healthy lifestyle and to be able to advocate for their own health. We want to build healthier, stronger communities from the ground up and allow children to make connections between their health and their everyday life."

-WCPS Superintendent, Mr. Louis H. Taylor

WHAT DOES AN INTEGRATED HEALTH LITERACY LESSON LOOK LIKE?

The plan outlined below is simply a sample of how teachers have created integrated lesson plans (with resources and materials that they already use) to impact students' health knowledge and application.

Content Area(s): Reading, Math, Health Literacy

Lesson Topic: Nutrition and Reading Food Labels

Grade: Third/3

MCCRS Reading and Writing :

RI.1. Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of the text, referring to the text as a basis for the answers.

RI.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text.

RI.5. Use text features and search tools to locate relevant information on a topic.

RI.7. Use information from illustrations and the words to demonstrate understanding of a text.

W.2.1. Write an opinion piece in which you introduce the topic or book you are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words to connect opinion and reasons, and provide a concluding statement.

Health Literacy Standards:

HL.1. ANALYTICAL REASONING/SELF-EFFICACY - Use appropriate information and tools strategically to enhance health and wellness.

HL.2. MEDIA LITERACY/CRITICAL REASONING - Analyze the influence of culture, media and commercialism on health.

Math Standards

NBT.2. Fluently add and subtract within 1000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations and relationships.

OA.8. Solve two-step word problems using the four operations. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity.

What will they do?

Students will read *An Apple a Day* (a current text) and food nutrition labels. They will use these texts and a video to complete a KWL chart.

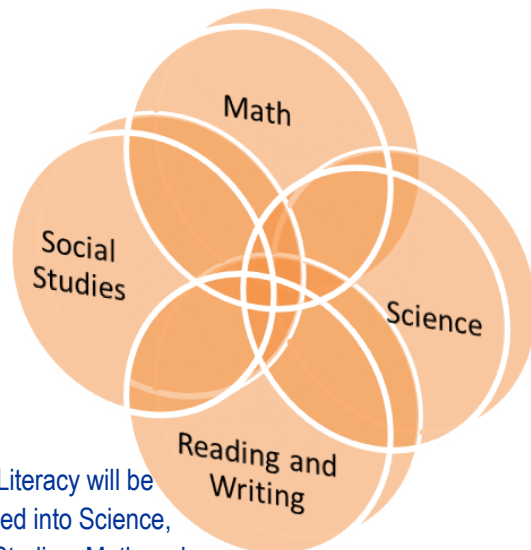
Students will work and read in small groups, large groups, and individually to learn how to identify the parts of a nutrition label and how to compare and analyze labels.

Students will complete a Serving Size Activity in math and compare predicted serving sizes with actual serving sizes. Students will collect and record data. Students will be assessed on their knowledge of nutrition components and math activity.

WHAT IS INTEGRATION?

When teachers integrate two or more disciplines within a subject area, they are using an interdisciplinary approach. Integrating reading, writing, and oral communication in language arts is a common example. Teachers often integrate history, geography, economics, and government in an interdisciplinary social studies program. Through this type of integration, teachers expect students to understand the connections between the different disciplines and their relationship to the **real world**. These programs report a positive impact on achievement for students who participate.

-Drake and Burns, ASCD



Health Literacy will be integrated into Science, Social Studies, Math and Reading and Writing lessons.

“Being college and career ready students to be healthy! We are excited about this new healthy opportunity for our kids!”

*Dr. MaryAnn Cooper,
SHES Principal*

WHY AN INTEGRATED APPROACH?

Health education is a separate curriculum in our schools and has the potential to create a health literate child. However, in Maryland, evidence indicates that separate health education has not resulted in a significant increase in health literacy among student populations. An integrated approach will continue to teach the targeted math, science, social studies and reading and writing standards, while at the same time, increasing the amount of time that students focus on health-related topics from 10% to approximately 40%. Based on evidence from other counties in MD, this integrated approach has proven to increase health literacy, health awareness, and self-efficacy among children.

Dear WCPS Parents,

In Worcester County, the average adolescent has an obesity rate of 10%. That number increases with age: 12-13 year olds, 12.6% and 14-15 year olds, 12.9%, and continues to rise. For this reason, we want our children to be health literate. A health literate person is defined as a person who can:

- demonstrate healthy decision-making skills;
- understand the connections between knowledge and personal health;
- access relevant and accurate health media messages and information;
- evaluate health information as bad or good;
- demonstrate how to ask informed questions of healthcare providers; and
- understand the consequences of actions on health.

Therefore, during the past five years, Worcester County Public Schools and Atlantic General Hospital have been working together to develop an Integrated Health Literacy Program. Currently, Health Literacy lessons are being integrated in grades 1-8 across the county.

The curriculum, written by our Worcester County teachers with the help of health professionals, will be integrated into English/ Language Arts, Science, Math and Social Studies classes. The Integrated Health Literacy Program will not replace content area instruction. Through an integrative approach, academic content and health literacy content will be taught together. We will maintain the rigor and integrity in which our students are taught. An integrated model has been chosen because evidence indicates that a separate health literacy program does not result in significantly higher health literacy among students.

“Health Literacy is...the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.”

- Institute of Medicine

THE NEED FOR HEALTH LITERACY

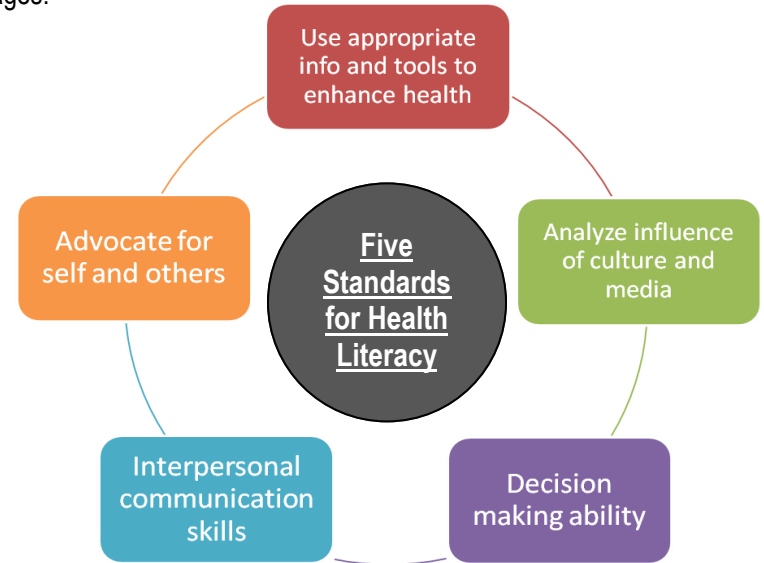
In the most recent National Health Report of 2018, which is funded and implemented by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, Worcester County ranked 12th out of 24 districts in overall health. The report ranks every county in every state in the U.S. on a variety of public health indicators. These public health indicators include poor health days, smoking, obesity, excessive drinking, motor vehicle crash fatalities, and more. In Worcester County, 31% of adults were reportedly obese, 2% above the state average. In the 2016 Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey, nearly one third of middle school students in Worcester County self-reported that they are overweight or obese (23.9%).



L. Hooton/Science Photo Library

HOW IS HEALTH LITERACY RELATED TO EDUCATION?

The role of Health Literacy is not confined to the patient-provider environment, but instead is broad enough to include the impact of government, public information, media, community-based campaigns, and school education on health understandings and the ability of someone to critically understand and use health messages.



ANALYTICAL REASONING / SELF-EFFICACY
MEDIA LITERACY / CRITICAL REASONING
DECISION-MAKING
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION
INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION / ADVOCACY

STATE ALIGNMENT

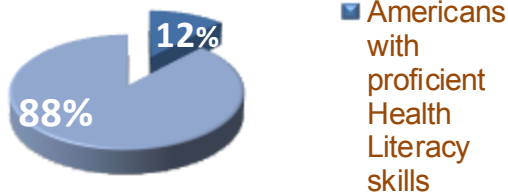
The Health Literacy standards were created with the MD State Health Education Standards in mind. There is alignment so that students are learning the skills they need to expand and enrich their existing health education. For example, students learn about the dangers of smoking from PE/health class, but will learn advocacy strategies to keep friends and family from smoking in an integrated health literacy lesson.

- Mental / Emotional Health
- Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs
- Safety and Injury Prevention
- Nutrition and Fitness
- Personal / Consumer Health
- Human Development

Impact of Low Health Literacy...

- Higher mortality
- Inability to understand medicinal labels
- Decreased screenings
- Increased hospitalization
- Later stage diagnoses

Health Literacy in the U.S.



University of MD Center for Health Literacy, 2012

Worcester County Obesity Rates

County Health Rankings, 2018