



Health Literacy

What it is: The Center for Disease Control defines Health Literacy as the degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process, and understand basic health information to make appropriate health decisions.¹

Why it's important: The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has identified Health Literacy as one of the critical 21st Century Interdisciplinary Themes.² A wide body of research has correlated poor health with poor academic performance,³ and studies have shown that participation in extra-curricular physical activity is associated with decreased high school drop-out rates.⁴

Strategies to support Health Literacy in *ACCESS AfterSchool*:

- Incorporate physical activity whenever possible within lesson plans
- Identify and discuss health benefits of class activities
- Talk about making healthy choices in the context of content area

Applications/Examples:

- Lesson on healthy eating choices, recipes and cooking methods as part of cooking class
- Learn about BMI, heart rate and obesity in fitness class
- Tech classes such as web design and digital publishing learn online safety
- Jr. Fire Academy lesson includes fire safety and CPR
- Outdoor Ed incorporates hiking or trail running as part of the curriculum
- Babysitting class learns about child safety, first aid and CPR
- Outdoor Survival covers preventing hypothermia and other health risks in the wilderness
- Yoga learns about wellness attributes of breathing; mind-body connection
- Rock climbing students learn about underlying health and fitness subjects that will support their climbing skills, such as the importance of stretching, strength training and healthy diet

How the skill will be assessed: Teachers will be surveyed after the course is complete, including how Responsibility was included in their curriculum, how students displayed these skills to them and how they might improve upon their methods or suggest to other teachers how to implement in the future. Students will self-report on pre- and post-program surveys about their interest and aptitude of 21st Century skills.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2014), Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/learn/>

² Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2011). *Framework for 21st century learning*. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/1_p21_framework_2-pager.pdf

³ St. Leger, L. (2001), *Schools, health literacy and public health: possibilities and challenge*. Retrieved from <http://heapro.oxfordjournals.org/content/16/2/197.full>

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010), Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/pa-pe_paper.pdf, p. 24