

Health Equity and Social Justice (HESJ) at NACCHO

Monday, May 22, 2023

Health Equity & Social Justice Team

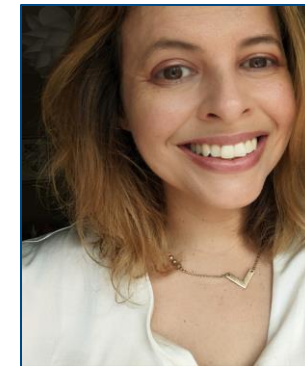
Welcome & Introductions



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About NACCHO

NACCHO serves **3,000 local health departments** across the United States and is the leader in providing cutting-edge, skill building, professional resources and programs. Our mission is to **improve the health of communities** by **strengthening** and **advocating** for local health departments.

Our Work:



Support health
departments



Advocate on behalf of
local public health



Encourage NACCHO
member engagement

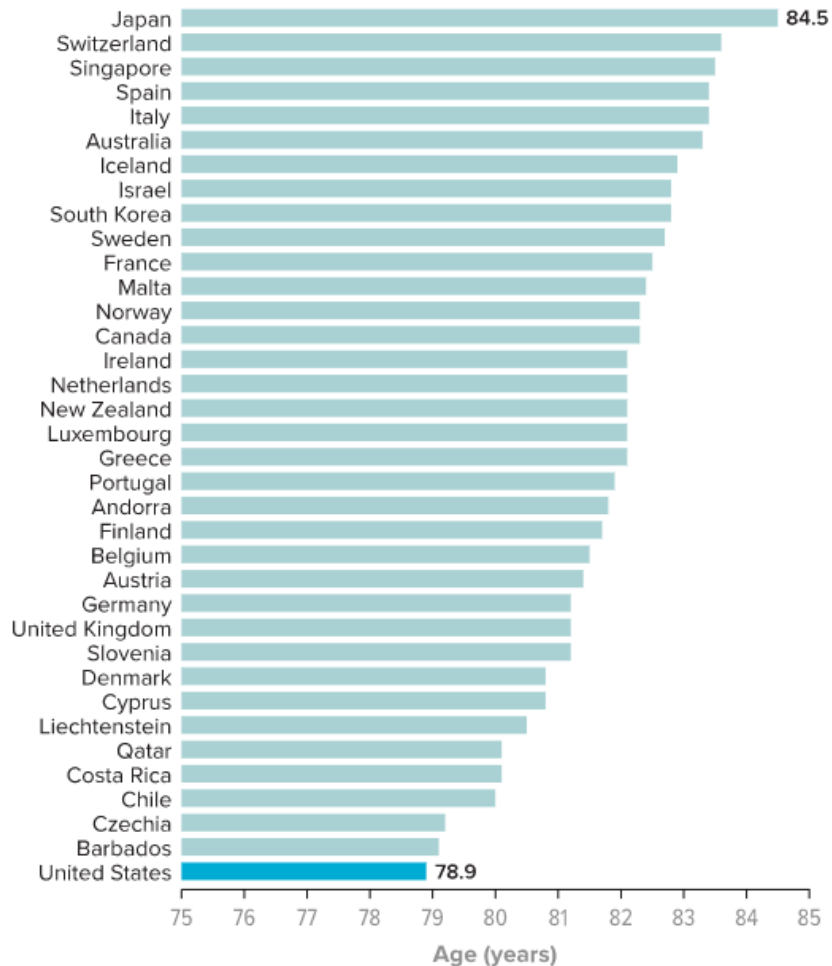


Optimize strategic
alliances and
partnerships

The Urgency

The Health Olympics

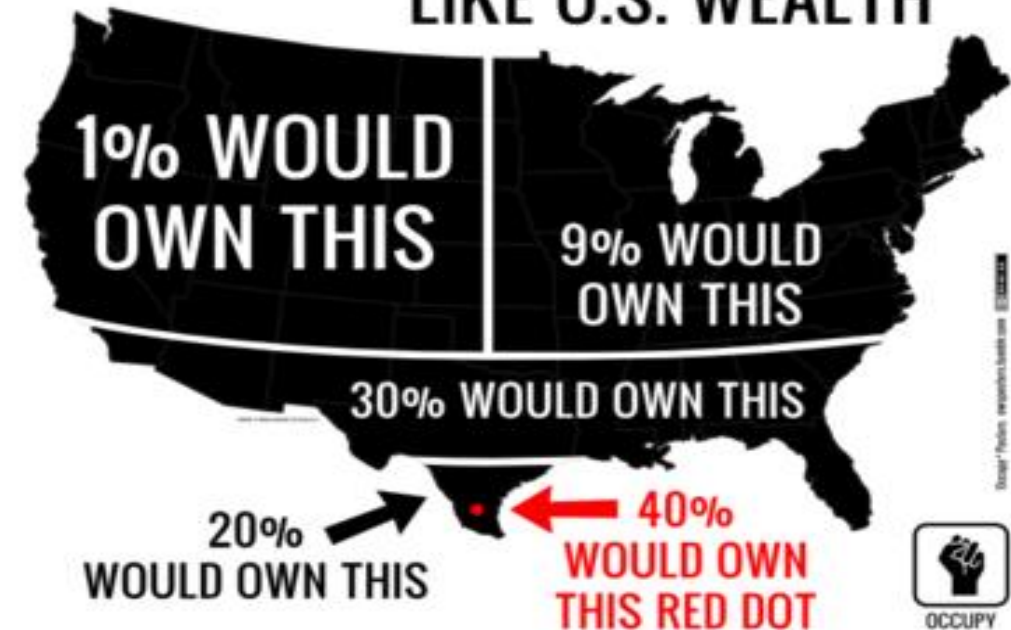
Top 36 nations ranked by life expectancy, 2018



SOURCE: POPULATION HEALTH FORUM

KNOWABLE MAGAZINE

IF U.S. LAND MASS WERE DIVIDED
LIKE U.S. WEALTH





Health Disparities vs Health Inequities

Health Disparities are...

“...a particular type of **health difference that is closely linked with** social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage”. ([Healthy People 2020](#))

“...preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are **experienced by socially disadvantaged populations.**” ([CDC](#))

Health Disparities vs Health Inequities

Health Inequity refers to...

“...differences in the distribution of disease, illness, and death that are ***systematic, unjust, actionable, and associated with imbalances in political power.***”

Source: Margaret Whitehead, “The Concepts and Principles of Equity and Health,” *Intl Jrnal of Health Services* 3 (1992): 429. [paraphrased]



Defining Health Equity

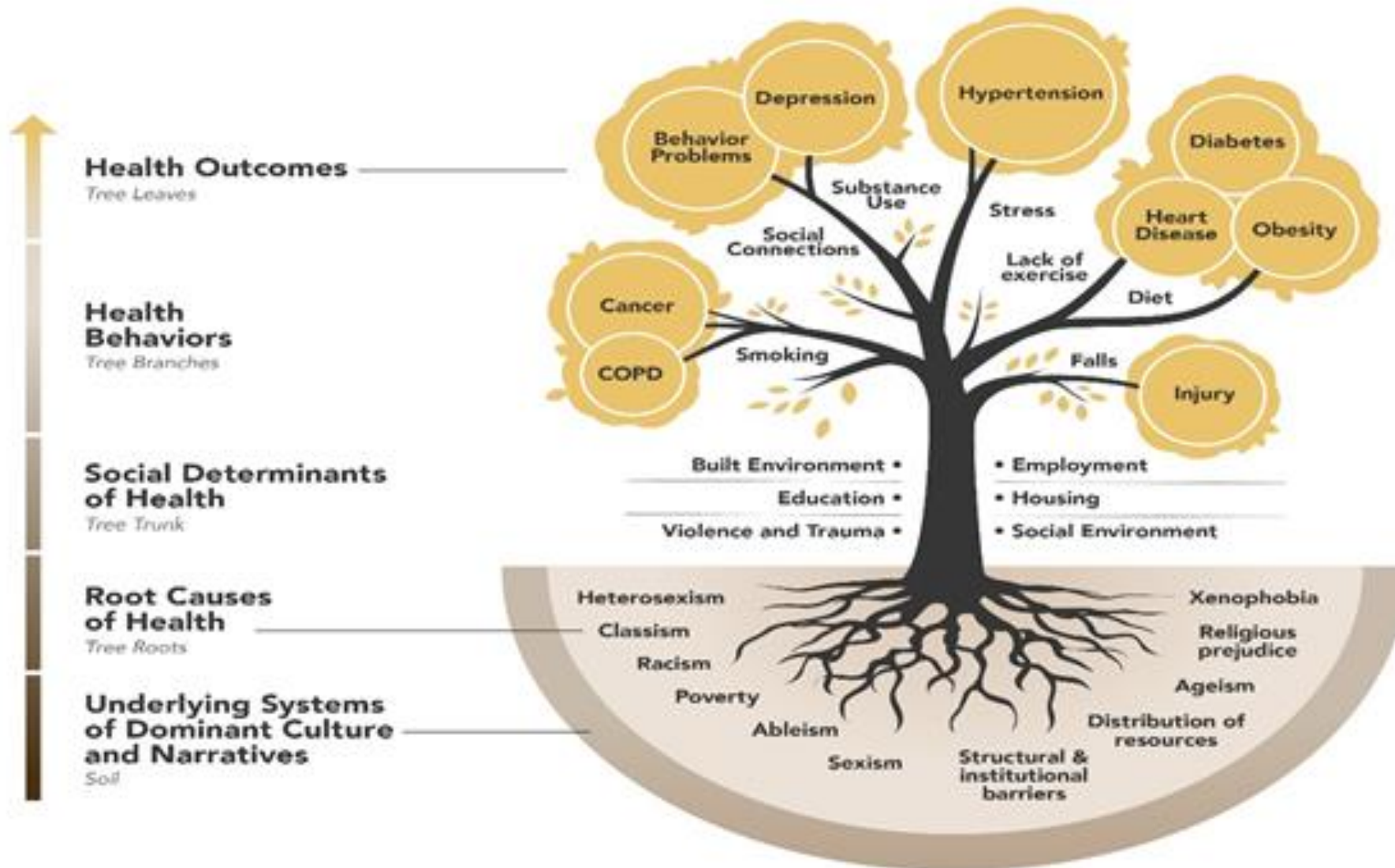
“Health equity is **the assurance of the conditions** for optimal health for all people. Achieving health equity requires **valuing all individuals and populations equally**, recognizing and **rectifying historical injustices**, and **providing resources according to need.**”

Source: Dr. Camara Jones, Morehouse College



Understanding the Foundations of Inequity

ROOT CAUSES / THE “-ISMS”



Racism

A system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call "race"), that:

- Unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities
- Unfairly advantages other individuals and communities
- Saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources



Determinants of Health

Social Determinants of Health:

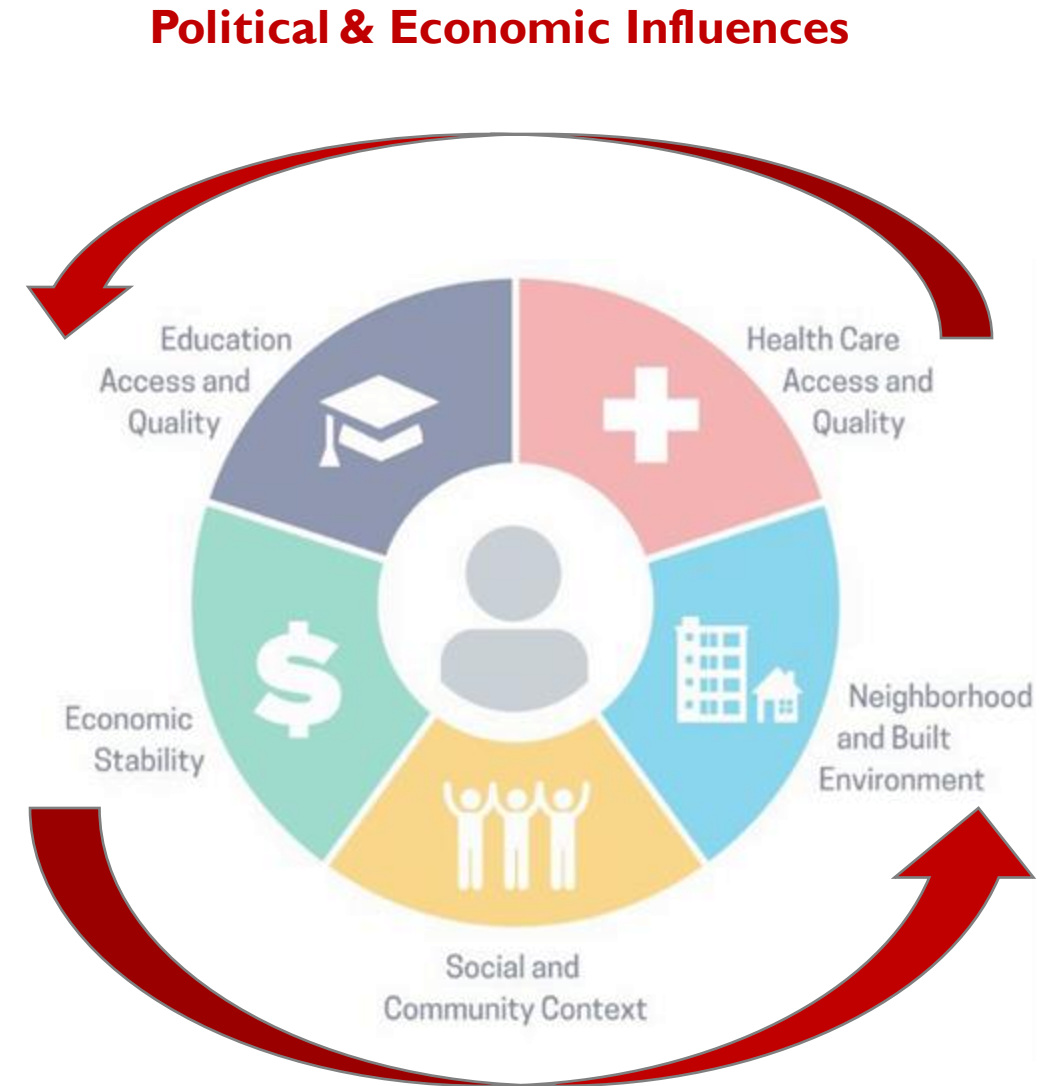
- The results of injustice that produce the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age

→ **Results of Inequities**

Structural Determinants of Health:

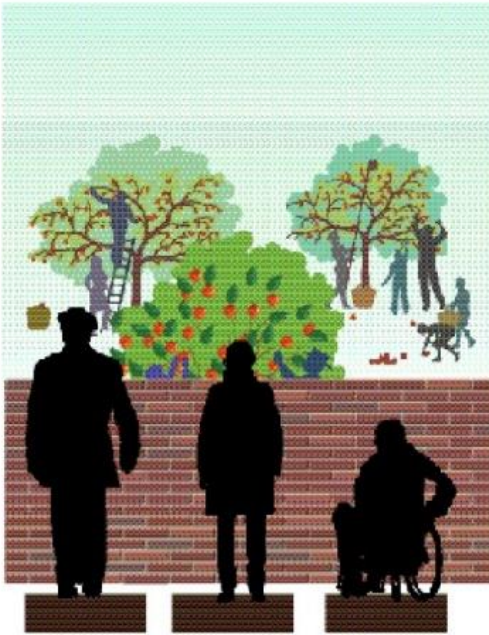
- Underlying social injustices that have accumulated over a long history that cause or drive health inequities
- Derive from fundamental social disadvantage, based on imbalances in political power or privilege¹

→ **Root Causes**



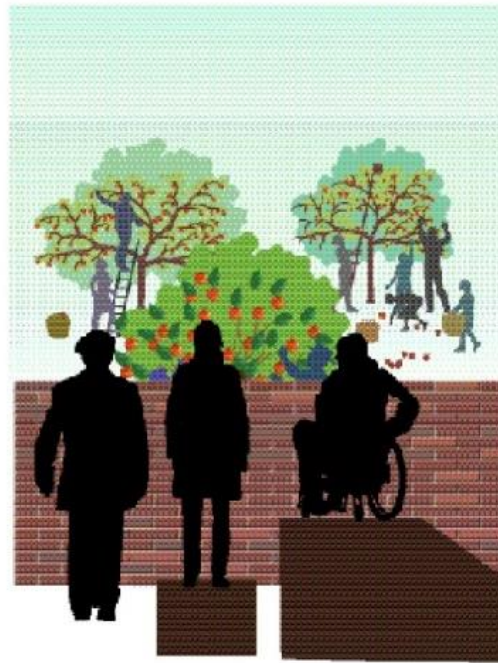
Source: CDC, Healthy People 2030

¹ Richard Hofrichter, "Health Inequity: A Charge for Public Health," white paper, NACCHO Annual, July 2016.



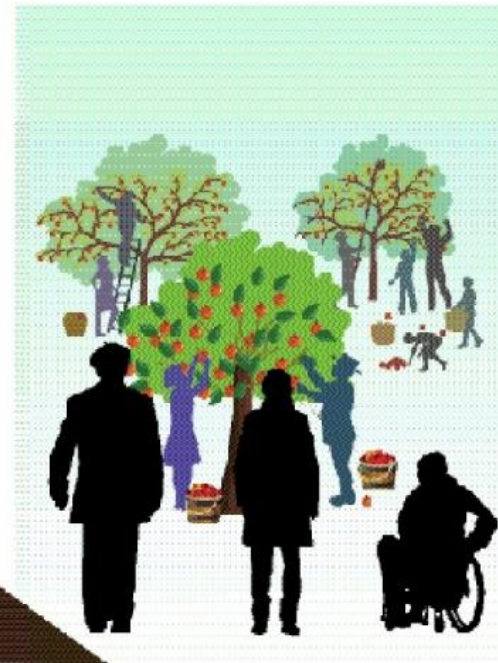
EQUALITY

Treating everyone the same.



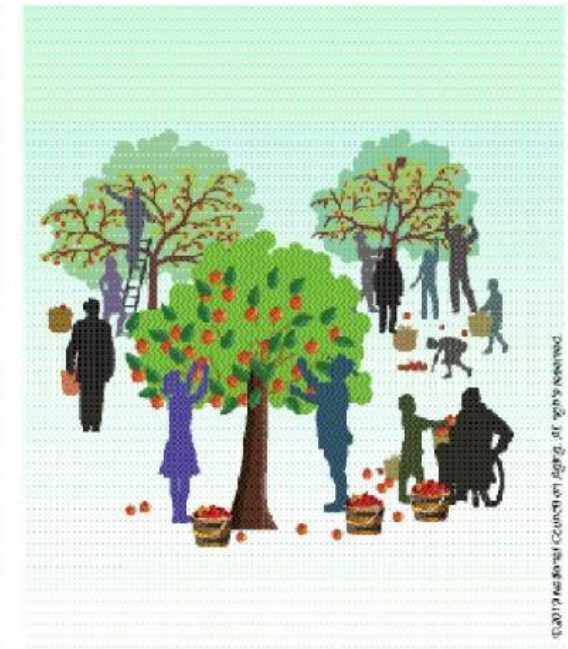
EQUITY

Giving each person what they need to be successful.



JUSTICE

Eliminating barriers so that everyone can succeed.



INCLUSION

Creating environments in which everyone can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.

Illustration credit: J.P. Gentry (www.jpgentry.com)

Intersectionality

“A theoretical framework for understanding how multiple social identities such as race, gender, sexual orientation, SES and disability intersect at the microlevel of individual experience to reflect interlocking systems of privilege and oppression (i.e. racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism) at the macro social-structural level (Bowleg, 2012).



**There is no such thing
as single-issue struggle
because we do not live
single-issue lives.**

—Audre Lorde

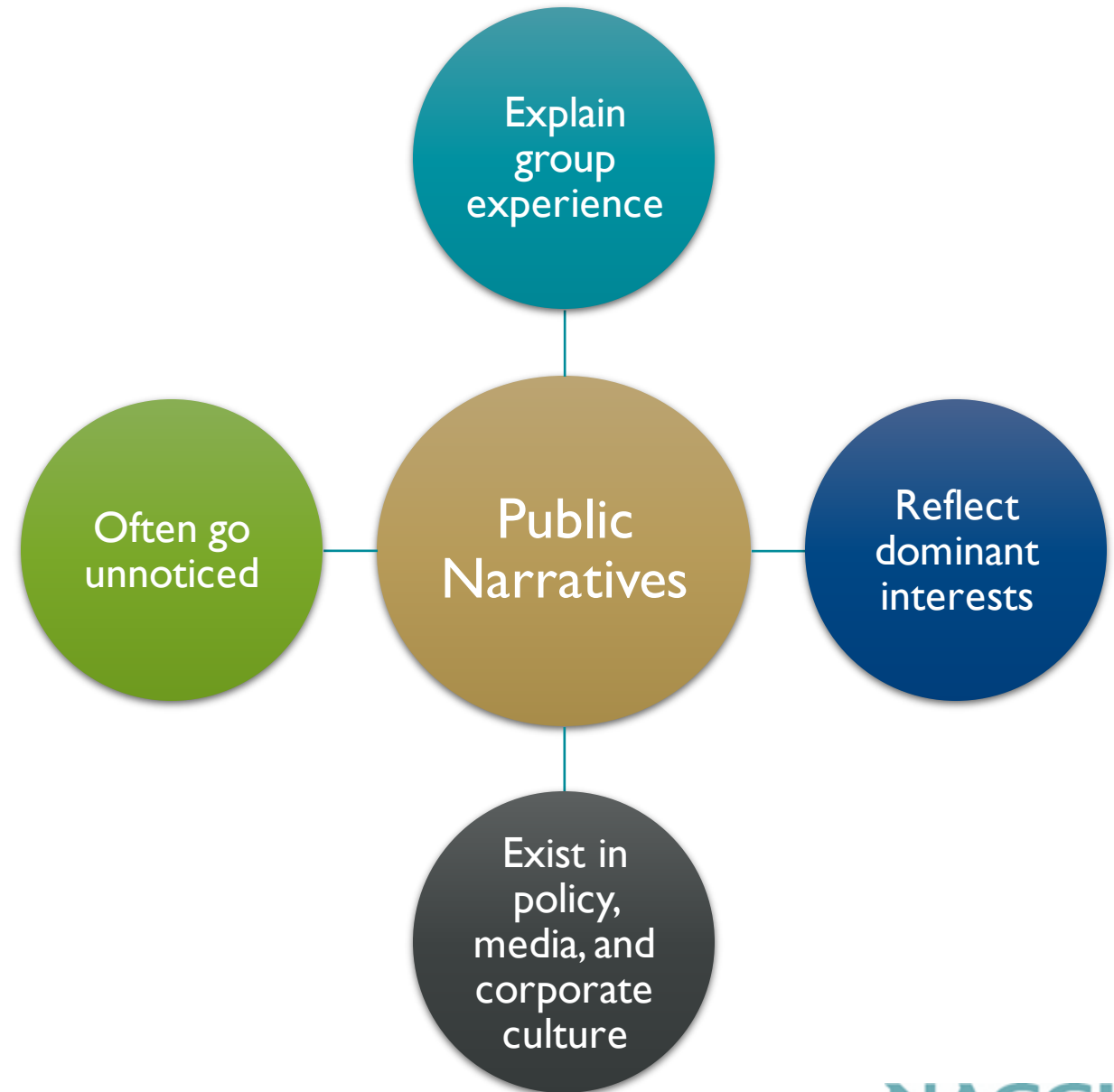


Activity

- Breakout groups
 - One note taker
 - One presenter
- Introductions
 - Name, pronouns, organization and role
- Answer the following questions:
 - Why does this matter?
 - What does it look like to center health equity in the work of a local health department?
 - As a pilot site in this project, what opportunities exist for me to set the stage for how health equity will be embedded in this work?

Public Narratives

- **Narrative** – collection or system of related stories that represent a central idea or belief
- **Public Narrative** – shared systems of meaning about the world and our place in it





Inequity or Unfortunate Outcomes?

Factors such as our race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status should not play a role in our health.

For too many, prospects for good health are limited by where we live, how much money we make, or discrimination we face.

Native Americans have the highest mortality rates in the United States.

Low-income people have the highest level of coronary artery disease in the United States.

Inequity or Unfortunate Outcomes?

Factors such as our race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status should not play a role in our health.

Social injustices such as racism or class exploitation, e.g., social exclusion and marginalization, should be confronted so that they do not influence health outcomes.

For too many, prospects for good health are limited by where we live, how much money we make, or discrimination we face.

Decisions by landowners and large corporations, increasingly centralizing political power and the nation's wealth, limit prospects for good health and well-being for many groups.

Native Americans have the highest mortality rates in the United States.

Native Americans, dispossessed of their land and culture, have the highest mortality rates in the United States

Low-income people have the highest level of coronary artery disease in the United States.

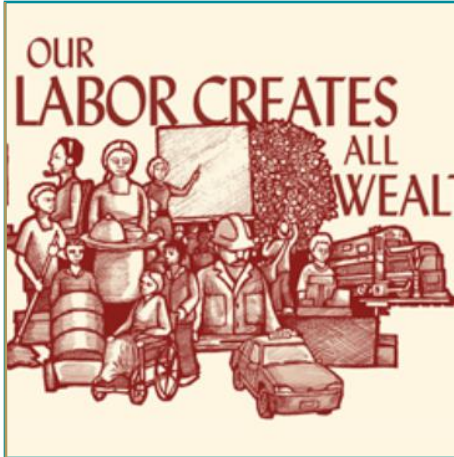
People under-paid and forced into poverty have the highest level of coronary artery disease in the United States.

PUBLIC HEALTH IS
SOCIAL
JUSTICE

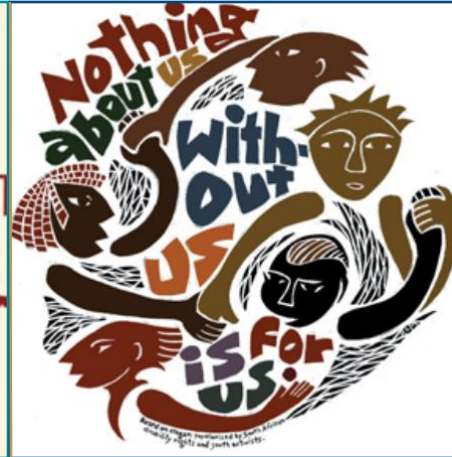


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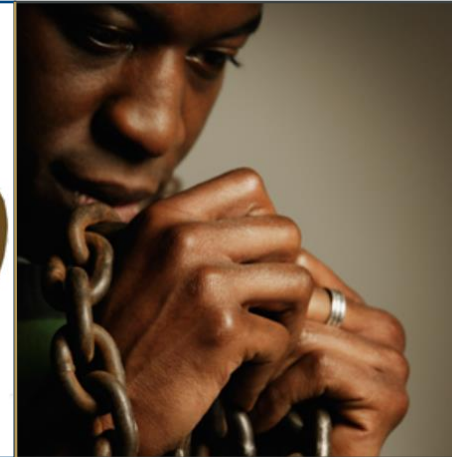
Principles of Social Justice



Social and
Economic
Equality



Political
Equality/
Democracy



Liberation and
Emancipation



Autonomy

What does it mean to take on an Equity Lens?



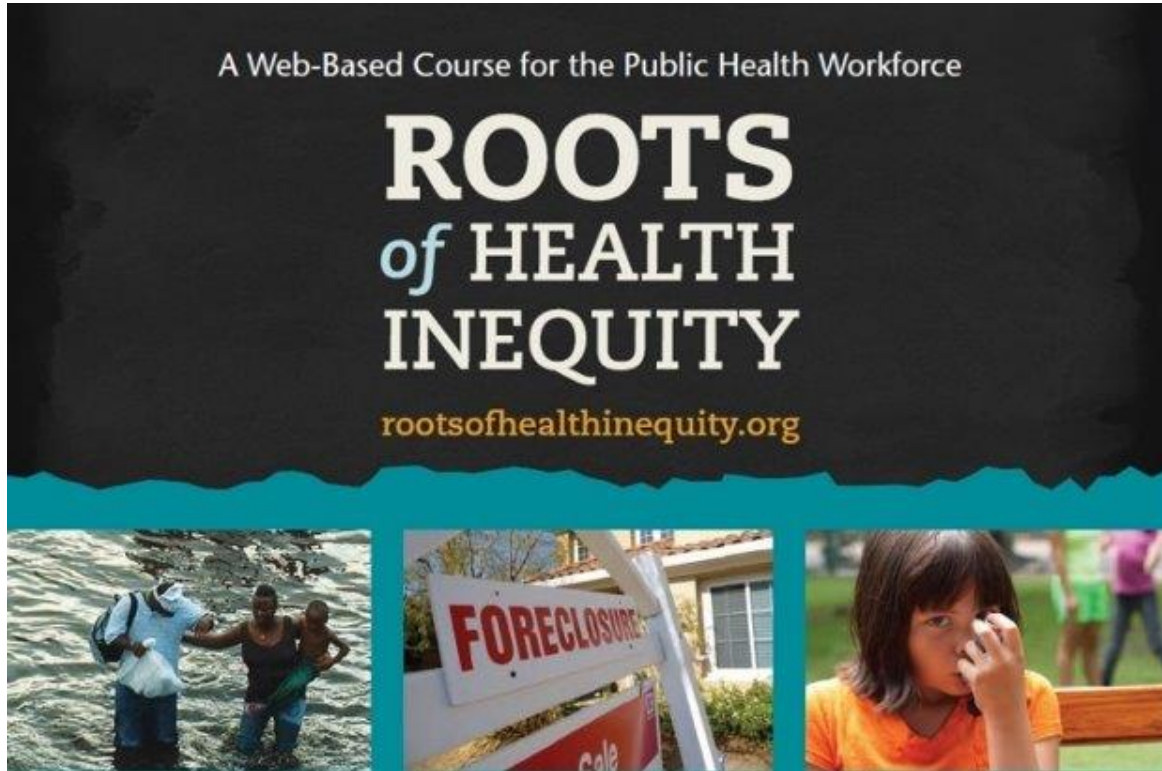
"Taking on an equity lens means we systematically consider equity needs and implications at every step, at each stage of a process, within each decision, when examining each outcome, and when developing each new policy or practice. Taking on an equity lens should become second nature."

Source: Health Equity & Action Research Tools (HEART) (2021). *Health Equity in the Response to Drug Overdose*.

Changing the Questions

Standard/ Conventional	Health Equity Framework
What interventions can address health disparities?	What generates health inequity in the first place?
What social programs and services are necessary to address health inequity?	What types of social change is necessary to confront health inequity?
How can individuals protect themselves against health problems?	What kind of collective action is necessary to confront health inequity?
How can we promote healthy behavior ?	How can we democratize land use policies to ensure healthy spaces and places?
How do we treat the consequences of health inequity?	How do we act on root causes of inequality to meet human need?
How can we create more resilient communities?	How can public health protect communities from disinvestment, redlining, predatory lending, serving as targets for hazardous waste?
What are the ways public health can adapt innovative practices to changing times?	What are the ways public health with their allies can organize for social change to meeting human need for health and well-being?

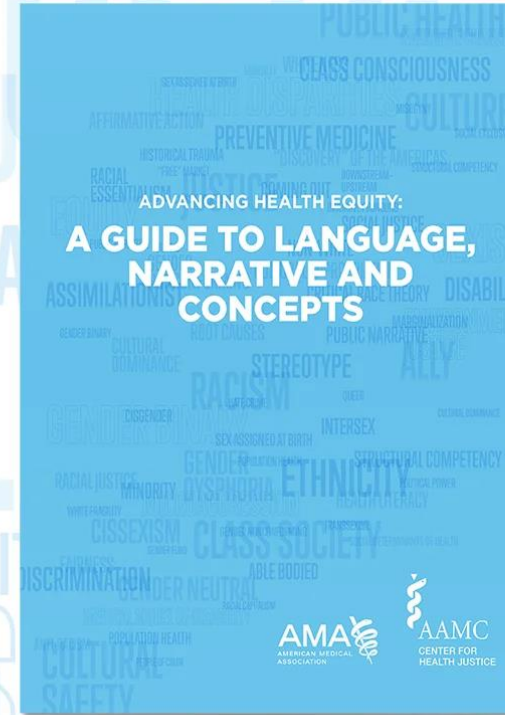
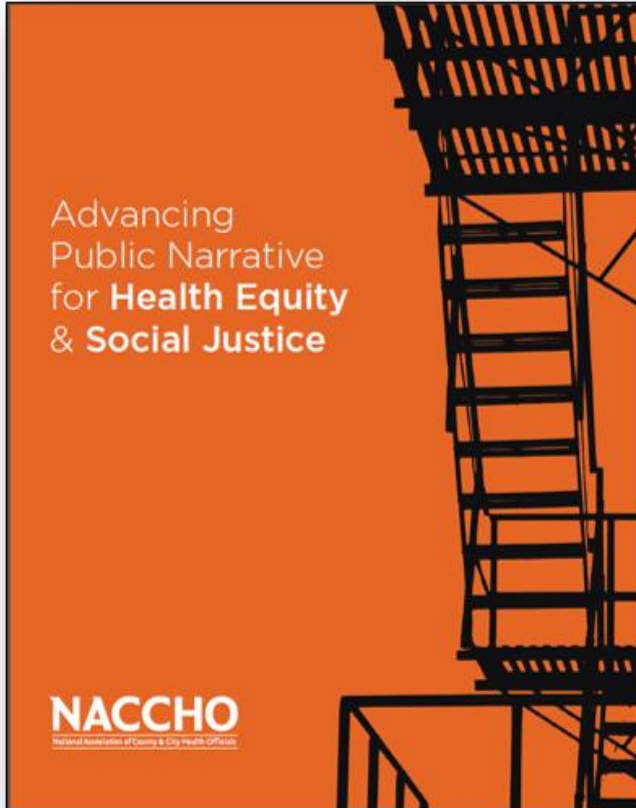
NACCHO Resources



Roots of Health Inequity provides...

- A conceptual frame that links social justice to public health practice
- Resources and insights learners can share with others
- Reflections and actions for confronting health inequities
- Opportunities to collaborate and strategize with colleagues across the country

Other Resources







Thank You!



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