

Education and Health

Why is Education a Public Health issue?

- There is a strong correlation between an individual's education and their health.
- Inequalities in educational outcomes affect physical and mental health as well as income, employment and quality of life.
- The best possible health underpins a child or young person's ability to flourish, stay safe and achieve as they grow up.
- Children spend around a quarter to a third of their waking lives in school therefore the school environment and ethos of the school will have an impact on their health as well as academic outcomes
- Physical activity and play provision in schools plays a key role in keeping school age children fit and healthy
- Children who thrive at school are better placed to act upon information about good health however a child who does not master the basics of reading and numeracy may experience health problems in later life.
- The mother's education is a key factor in breaking from the intergenerational cycle of economic disadvantage and is related to many outcomes for children including health and well-being.
- Effective communication skills and attunement are crucial to babies development and a lack of attunement has been found to have intergenerational implications for health, education and social development.
- Certain groups and communities are identified as being at increased risk of experiencing poorer educational and health outcomes these include young offenders, teenage parents, Looked After Children and those living in some of the more deprived areas of the county
- Life expectancy is increasing for everyone, but differences in life expectancy have grown over time between those with and those without further and higher educational qualifications.
- Better educated people have lower morbidity rates from the most common acute and chronic diseases

- People with better education tend to engage in less health-harming behaviours, such as smoking.
- Studies suggest education might be a more precise determinant of a person's long term health rather than their current income and social status.
- Educational qualifications are a key determinant of an individual's likely future position within the labour market; this in turn influences income, housing and other material resources which are related to health and health inequalities.

What can the County Council do about it?

- Aim to enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control of their lives
- Support the roll out of the connected baby work which facilitates attunement and positive communication skills in the early years
- Support the development & provision of high quality pre-school education which helps to develop learning skills as well as laying foundations for motivation, socialisation, self-esteem, and confidence.
- Work with schools to narrow the gap in educational attainment between vulnerable groups and others at Key stage 2 and key stage 4
- Address the variation in educational attainment across the county, as the gap between the most deprived pupils (those who have free school meals) and the rest is wider than the national average.
- Support the on-going implementation of the standards set out in the Northumberland Healthy Schools Programme to facilitate a comprehensive 'whole school' approach to children's social, emotional and physical health and wellbeing.
- Create an environment that supports positive behaviours for learning and for successful relationships, providing an emotionally secure and safe environment that prevents any form of bullying or violence.
- Support all pupils and, where appropriate, their parents or carers (including adults with responsibility for looked after children).
- Encourage participation in curricular and extra-curricular PE, sport and play in schools, including pre and after school clubs, wake & shake and competitive sporting competition such as the School Games Programme.
- Ensure services and resources reach those identified as being at risk of poorer educational or health outcomes.

- Work with partners to further reduce the proportion of 16 to 18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Maintain a comprehensive range of adult further education and leisure programmes.
- Develop and implement strategies in a national and local context which promote social inclusion and health and well-being to improve the life chances of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children and young people with a focus on raising educational attainment

How will it make a difference?

- Improvements in education will have a direct and positive impact on health and narrow the gap in health inequalities
- There will be an increase in life years and an increase in years spent in good health
- Improvements in educational attainment will bring tangible improvements in both physical health and mental wellbeing which will in turn contribute to improved employment opportunities