

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Personal health is impacted by individual health choices and also determined to some extent by “access to social and economic opportunities; resources and supports available in our homes, neighborhoods, and communities; quality of schooling; safety of the workplace...and the nature of our social interactions and relationships.” The environments in which people live explain in part why some are healthier than others and why, in general, some are not as healthy as they could be. No discussion of the health status of a community is complete with acknowledging these social determinants of health, which are “the conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work and age that affect a range of health outcomes. By establishing policies that positively influence social and economic conditions, and support changes in individual behavior, health outcomes can improve in ways that can be sustained.”ⁱ



ⁱ Healthy People 2020, www.healthypeople.gov/2020, (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2016).