

WORKSHEET

Introduction to Equity

This worksheet is a companion to the Introduction to Equity Action Learning Guide. Consider the worksheet a place to track your progress through the guide. Use it for individual reflection or to guide group discussions about your community's experience with the topic.

The worksheet will take you through the three sections of the Action Learning Guide:

What is Health
Equity?



Why is Equity
Important?



How Does Equity
Connect to Health?

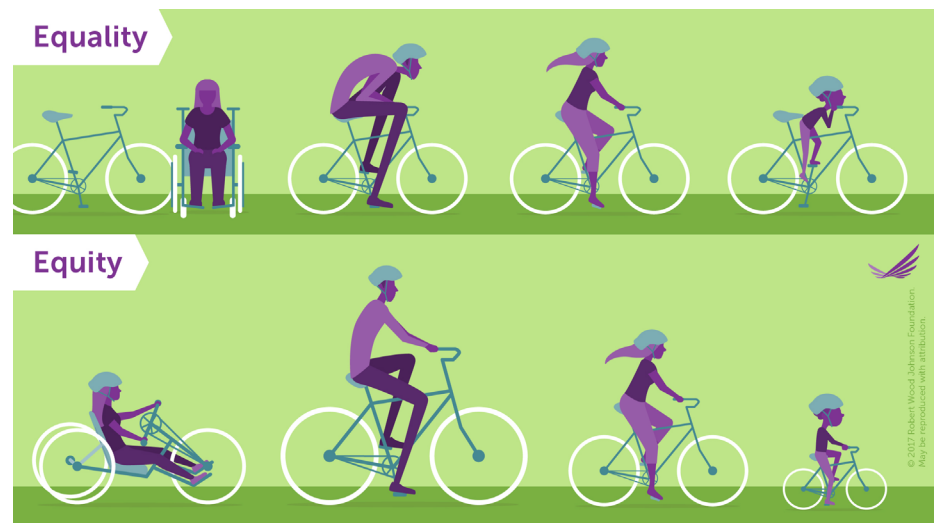
What is Health Equity?



Equity is Not the Same as Equality

The goal of **equality** is to make sure that everyone has access to the same things to be healthy. That sounds good, right? When people do not all start at the same place, they may not all need the same things to thrive.

That is where **equity** comes in. Equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to access what they need to thrive, no matter where they start.



Take a moment to reflect on these definitions and the graphic from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on Page 1 that illustrates the difference between equality and equity.

<p>What parts remind you of your experience as an individual?</p>	<p>What parts remind you of your community?</p>
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Equity Applies to Individuals and Communities

<p>As you think about your own community, how do opportunities differ between neighborhoods or groups of people?</p>	<p>What do you think has contributed to those differences?</p>
<p>What could be done to change them?</p>	



Reflection and Discussion

On your own or with others, take a few minutes to discuss or journal individually responses to these questions.

What were your “light bulb” moments in learning more about the difference between equality and equity?

What new perspectives have emerged?

Why is Equity Important?



Explaining Why Equity is Important for Everyone

In the video, Glenn Harris of Race Forward describes equity as “bringing a little bit of justice, a little bit of common sense to a system that’s out of balance.”

What about this description or the video resonates with your experience? How do Glenn Harris’s ideas on equity resonate with your experience?

Glenn Harris describes “systems that are out of balance.” Reflecting on the video and your community, what systems are out of balance? Consider your own community. What systems are out of balance?



Differences in Opportunity Affect Community Residents

The following examples are common ways in which barriers to opportunity affect communities and residents. **How do these examples relate to your community?**

Opportunities	How barriers to opportunity affect communities and residents	Where have you noticed these common barriers?	Who in your community is impacted? How?
Education funding	School funding based on property taxes can mean low-income neighborhoods don't have enough funds to support high-quality schools.		
Safe and healthy housing	Poor quality housing can expose residents to allergens, lead, infectious diseases, and other hazards.		
Healthy foods	Neighborhoods with limited access to healthy foods have higher rates of obesity and chronic diseases.		
Parks and recreation	Unsafe neighborhoods or those without sidewalks and parks mean residents have fewer opportunities to be active.		
Clean air and water	Proximity to highways and factories may expose residents to poor air quality or contaminated water. This can lead to asthma, birth defects, or premature birth.		
Primary care doctors or hospitals	Access to affordable, quality health care is important to physical, social, and mental health.		
Public transportation	Local transit options can support active, energy-efficient travel. Without these options, residents may not be able to access good jobs, health care, child care, and social services.		



Reflection and Discussion

On your own or with others, take a few minutes to discuss or journal individually responses to these questions.

What surprised you about the ways barriers to opportunity affect communities and residents?	What questions did this section prompt for you?
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How Does Equity Connect to Health?



Focus on Equity to Improve Health Outcomes

Acting to improve health and equity includes engaging with people who bring diverse experiences and voices can deepen your understanding of what impacts health in your community. Some ways to do this are to:

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1. Look at the data on who is doing well and who is not. There are many sources of information about the groups in your community and their health outcomes, including the County Health Rankings snapshot for your community.	What data sources can help you learn more about gaps in health and opportunity in your community?
2. Connect and partner with people experiencing poor health outcomes in your community to learn about what is important to them.	Who can you partner with to learn more about gaps in health and opportunity in your community?
3. Pay attention to the root causes of inequities in your community. Consider which factors have contributed to worsening or improving conditions for everyone to have a fair and just opportunity to live their healthiest lives.	What factors have contributed to gaps in health and opportunity in your community?



Reflection and Discussion

On your own or with others, take a few minutes to reflect on your community and its history, assets, and resources. Then discuss or journal individually responses to these questions:

<p>What are the social, economic and physical conditions in your own community that help you be healthy?</p>	<p>Who has access to those opportunities and who does not?</p>
<p>What kinds of health gaps have you seen in your community?</p>	<p>What might motivate you and others in your community to focus on equity to improve health?</p>
<p>What resources, including conversations with people experiencing poor health, can help you learn more about gaps in health and opportunity in your community?</p>	