

PEOPLE

OPPORTUNITY

NATURE

BELONGING

Statewide Health Assessment

Environmental Health | Lecture 4: Belonging

In this Lecture

- Introduction
- Social Environments
- Community Health
- Prenatal & Early Childhood
- School
- Chronic Conditions
- Isolation

By the end of this lecture you will:

Understand how inclusion and connections to people and communities intersect with environmental health

- Inclusion and connections with others impact our health

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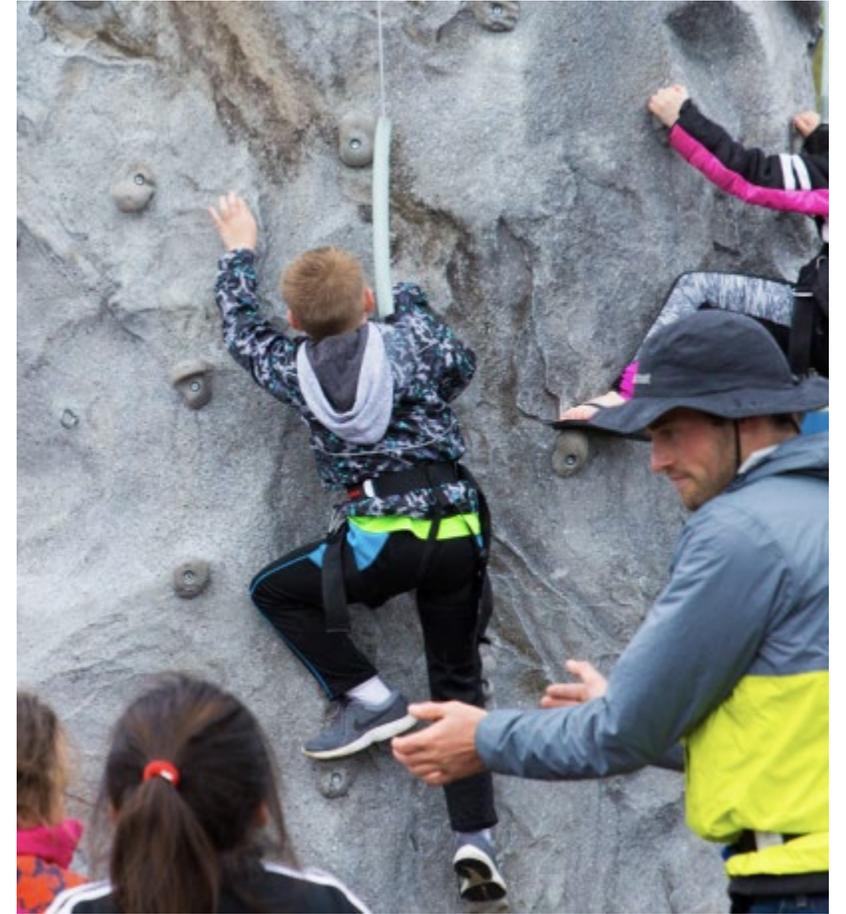
We are social creatures, and belonging creates meaning, purpose, and hope for the future.

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Social Environments

- Age affects social environments (friends, family)
- As you age social environments change yet, connection remains necessary to health



- Physical environment is important for people's feeling of connection to each other
- Group conversations - 3 of 8 groups shared that living in greater MN (rural) is a highlight and strength of living in MN

“ *I feel supported. I feel I belong. I feel valued. I can contribute my talents, skills, ideas. It makes me feel worthwhile.* ”

– Group conversation participant



Our sense of belonging is what creates healthy communities.

- Populations and communities experience a sense of belonging when they are not marginalized or excluded (Powell, 2012)
- Marginalization leads to poor health conditions



Prenatal & Early Childhood



- “Relationships, experiences and the environment impact our lives before we are born and as we grow”
- In early childhood it’s essential to have accessible activities and spaces for kids to play

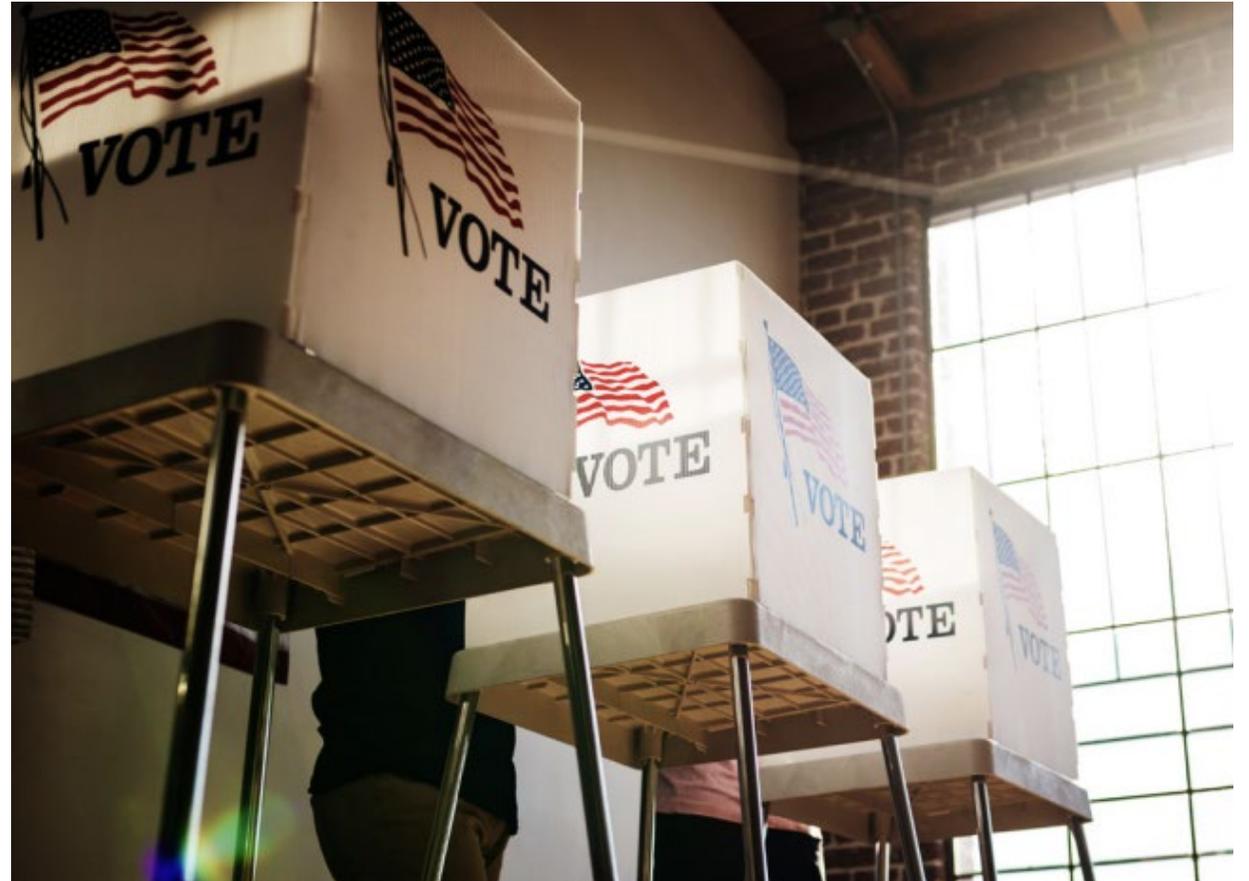


- School environments set the stage for adolescents becoming adults
- Feeling a sense of belonging in school settings is essential
- Bullying in school or outside of school can have long term effects and cause avoidance for those being bullied



Civic Participation

- In 2022 Healthy Minnesota Partnership determined civic participation a state strength
- Also in 2022 American Medical Association declared voting to be a social determinant of health
- In 2021, 36.7% of Minnesotans aged 16 and older had volunteered in the past year U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021)



Chronic Conditions & Isolation

- Biases, and barriers determine a person's life and well-being
- Chronic conditions impact groups disproportionately
- Older adults living in rural areas risk more isolation due to lack of opportunity



- The sense of belonging in our environments can impact our health throughout our lives
- Try applying these concepts to yourself.

Q: How has your sense of belonging in the environments you are in impacted your health positively for negatively? Think of a specific example.



ST. CATHERINE
UNIVERSITY



Healthy Minnesota
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m DEPARTMENT
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For any addition questions ask:

Dr. Susi Keefe (MPH Director) email: skeefe162@stkate.edu

Audrey Hanson, MPH (SHA Project Manager) email:

Audrey.Hanson@state.mn.us

Kaitlin Corey (MPH student) email: kncorey484@stkate.edu