Healthier Students are Better Learners:

Reducing Educationally Relevant Health Disparities is a Missing Link in School Reforms to Close the Achievement Gap among Urban Minority Youth

Charles E. Basch
High Prevalence

- Visual problems: ~20% of youth
- Asthma: ~14% of youth <18
- Teen pregnancy: 1 in 3 teens
- Violence: 28% of adolescents bullied at school
- Physical activity: ~2 in 3 don’t get enough
- Breakfast: ~20% of youth skip it
- Hyperactivity: ~8% of youth 6–17 diagnosed
Rates of Visual Impairment in US Among Persons Age 12 and Above, by Race/Ethnicity and Income

- White: 5.0%
- Black: 8.4%
- Hispanic: 10.7%
- Low-Income*: 12.0%
- Others**: 4.4%

*Income below poverty level; **Income ≥2X poverty level
Source: NHANES 1999-2002
Asthma Prevalence for Youth in US, Ages 5-14, by Race/Ethnicity

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, 2001-2003 data
Birth Rates Per 1,000 Among 15-17 Year Olds in US, by Race/Ethnicity

Source: Annual Summary of Vital Statistics, 2006
Percentage of High School Students in US Who Were in a Physical Fight*, by Race/Ethnicity**

*One or more times during the 12 months before the survey.
** B > H > W
Source: CDC, National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2007
Percentage of High School Students in US Who Did Not Go to School Because They Felt Unsafe at School or On Their Way To or From School*, by Race/Ethnicity**

* On at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey.
** H > B > W
Source: CDC, National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2007
Percentage of Female High School Students in US Who Did Not Participate in Physical Activity*, by Race/Ethnicity**

* Did not participate in 60 or more minutes of any kind of physical activity that increased their heart rate and made them breathe hard some of the time on at least 1 day during the 7 days before the survey.
** B > H > W
Source: CDC, National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2007
Percentage of White and Black Girls Who Consumed Breakfast on All 3 Days Assessed

At Age 9

- White: 77.0%
- Black: 57.0%

At Age 19

- White: 32.0%
- Black: 22.0%

Source: NHLBI, Longitudinal Growth and Health Survey; n = 1166 white and 1213 black girls
Prevalence of ADHD Among 3-17 Year Olds in US, by Family Status and Income

Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2008