

Using Health Literacy to Improve My Family's Health

You are an expert on your family's health. Health includes physical health, mental health, and safety.

Health literacy means you can find, understand, and use health information to make decisions. Many people can help you learn about health literacy, including early childhood program staff. You can talk with staff at your program about your health concerns and goals for your family's health.



Health literacy is when:

- My family can find and understand health information.
- My family uses health information to support our health.
- My family reflects on and evaluates our health experiences.
- My family shares accurate information and new learning with family, friends, and neighbors.
- My family gives feedback on health experiences and welcomes suggestions.

What It Means to Be Health Literate

Use these ideas to help your family be as healthy as possible.

My family can find and understand health information.

Health literacy starts with reading and understanding information about health and safety. You want to have sources you can rely on for health information. People and resources that you trust can help you when you run into challenges.

My family uses health information to support our health.

Health literacy helps you identify your child's health needs and create a plan to support your child's health.

Begin by talking with your health care provider to get more information. You can tell them when you do not understand something and ask for more information when you need it. You may want to bring someone you trust to help you when you talk to health care providers.

Think about your health practices, traditions, and the experiences of your family and community. Use the information from your health care providers and early childhood program to help you meet your family's health goals.

My family reflects on and evaluates our health experiences

It is helpful to think about your health experiences and what you learn before, during, and after each visit. For example:

Before a Visit

- Think about what your goals are.
- Think about what you want to ask.



During a Visit

- Write down what you learn.



After a Visit

- Review information.
- Think about what you need to do next.
- Decide how you will use what you have learned.



Use what you learn to best meet your family's needs.

My family shares accurate information and new learning with family, friends, and neighbors.

As you learn about your health, you may want to help other people learn more too. Health literacy skills can help you share the information with other people.

My family gives feedback on health experiences and welcomes suggestions.

Talking about your health experiences, practices, and cultural traditions helps your health care providers improve their services. It is also important to be comfortable hearing feedback from them. Giving and getting feedback will help you manage your family's health.



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For more information:

<https://headstart.gov/publication/using-health-literacy-improve-my-familys-health>

