



HEALTH INEQUITIES *studies*

Disparities in income and education are two of the most consistent predictors of poor health in the United States. Even worse, these disparities are growing. The bottom line? The greater the gaps in indicators of poverty—the greater the disparities in health.

Compared to other countries, the United States continues to fare low on important health outcomes, including life expectancy and infant mortality—despite the enormous resources invested in our healthcare system.

Successfully Modifying Risk Factors

Drs. Winkleby, Stafford, and Prochaska have been identifying and addressing the social causes of health inequities for the past 25 years. Their research shows that elevated blood pressure, smoking, high cholesterol, excess body weight, a sedentary lifestyle, and diabetes are all significantly higher in low-income, lower educated populations. These risk factors have behavioral, social, cultural, and economic explanations and, while many investigators view these factors as unmodifiable, SPRC investigators believe that they can be successfully modified.

Partnering with Local and International Communities

As “barefoot epidemiologists” and interventionists, we care about research that matters. We partner with local communities that have first-hand knowledge of the health of local populations and, together, we work to promote health and prevent disease in poor neighborhoods. During our 17-year partnership with the Monterey County Health Department, we’ve implemented policy and organizational changes to address obesity, diabetes, and asthma. In a new community-academic partnership with employment service agencies, we are examining the impact of risk behaviors in future employees. Our work extends to international communities in need, including a 10-year collaboration with researchers at Lund University in Sweden on the health of immigrants, a new collaboration with Newcastle University in Australia on tobacco cessation in adults with serious mental illness, and a planned collaboration assessing chronic disease disparities in urban China.

46
million

AMERICANS LIVE IN POVERTY

TOP
5%

OF U.S. POPULATION HAS 72% OF
THE WEALTH, BOTTOM 80% HAS 5%

25%

OF U.S. STUDENTS FAIL TO
GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL;
40% OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND
LATINO STUDENTS.

\$10 billion

SPENT ANNUALLY ON TOBACCO
MARKETING: LOW-INCOME YOUTH
PRIME TARGETS

>3 billion

PEOPLE (ALMOST HALF OF THE
WORLD) LIVE ON LESS THAN
\$2.50 A DAY