Health Equity and Anti-Racism Lesson Plan

Duration: Approximately 30 minutes. See the recommendations at end of the lesson for ways to expand.

Learning Objectives
Participants will be able to:
- Define the terms “equity” and “antiracism” (knowledge)
- Identify conditions that contribute to inequity in their place of work (awareness)
- List two ways in which they plan to practice antiracism in their work (action)

Content | 5 minutes
Present definitions of “equity” and “antiracism.”

Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.
- Equity is a solution for addressing imbalanced social systems. Justice can take equity one step further by fixing the systems in a way that leads to long-term, sustainable, equitable access for generations to come.
- In contrast, equality means that each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities.
- Proportional distribution or parity of desirable outcomes across groups.
- Sometimes confused with equality, equity refers to outcomes, while equality connotes equal treatment.

Anti-racism is the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

Describe examples of health equity and anti-racism.

Anti-racism
- Report any acts of discrimination to the institution dean of students or Title IX Officer.
- Review your institution’s budget to advocate for funding of fellowships, internships, scholarships, etc., for Black, Indigenous, and people of color, and continued antiracist efforts.

Equity
- Provide students with certain disabilities accommodations so they can thrive in their classes and earn the same outcomes as students without similar disabilities.
- Provide needed services and resources for Black, Indigenous, and people of color students to achieve outcome rates for graduation, homeownership, and wealth-accumulation that are similar to outcome rates of white students.
• Opportunities in your workplace for Black, Indigenous, and people of color to achieve promotions, professional development, and leadership opportunities.

Activity | approximately 10 minutes
Discuss as a group or with a partner:
• What would health equity and antiracism look like in your place of work?

Content | 5 minutes
Causes of inequity
• Root causes of inequity, like institutional practices and policies, are underlying reasons for poor health.
• These structures influence differences in living conditions or opportunities that groups of people experience within the same community.
• At the root of inequities are unfair, discriminatory, and racist practices and policies in:
  • Education
  • Employment
  • Housing
  • Transportation
  • Urban and regional planning

Action steps: how to be an antiracist
• Confront racism
• Analyze policies and systems
• Remove racist policies
• Replace racist with policies that strive for equity
• Seek diverse representation in groups and leadership
• Do not rely on standard measures of success if there is a more equitable option
• Create programs and systems where members from diverse backgrounds feel that they belong and have opportunity

Assessment | Approximately 10 minutes
Reflect in a journal either private or to be shared with peers:
• What are two steps you can take to practice antiracism at your place of work?
• Option to creative/accessible mode of assessment: video journal or arts-based method (drawing, poetry, dance, etc.)

Closure
Call to action with suggested quotations:

“Antiracism is not an identity or a checklist; it’s a practice.” – Andrea Ranae

“You can’t say you care about people and not care about the systems and structures that negatively impact them.” – Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil

“Like fighting an addiction, being an antiracist requires persistent self-awareness, constant self-criticism, and regular self-examination.” – Ibram X. Kendi
Recommended options to expand the lesson:

- Assign a reading(s) or video from the Health Equity & Anti-Racist Toolkit resource list prior to the lesson. Then, open with a discussion of what participants learned and answer questions participants have.

- Assign participants to interview or talk with someone they know life about what anti-racism and health equity would look like in their place of work. Participants can share the discussion during the next session.

- Add a Q&A period.

References:
