

Making America HEALTHY AGAIN

WHY do people in these countries live longer than we do in the United States?

WHAT do they do that makes them healthier? We spend almost half of the world's health care budget, so it cannot be that other countries have better health care systems. Japan is the healthiest by far, yet the Japanese smoke the most of all the listed countries. Even if we eradicated heart disease, our number one killer, we still would not be on top.

OUR GREATEST HEALTH HAZARD is the gap between the rich and the poor.

Research shows that more economic inequality makes for worse health. All of the higher-ranking countries in the Health Olympics have a smaller gap.

5 STEPS you can take to help close the gap:

Fight for JUSTICE to reduce the gap between rich and poor. It's better for our health! A widening gap is not only detrimental for everyone's health, but is associated with more violence, decreased educational opportunities and outcomes, and more behavioral problems. Get involved locally and nationally. Being active as a public citizen is good for your health.

Advocate for CHILD-SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS where children get love, care, and opportunities to develop. The critical phase of human development is conception to preschool. A loving supportive family environment that values children leads to adult health.

Promote SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS in your community. Know and share with your neighbors. Parts of the US where people trust and help one another are healthier than places with less cooperation. Sharing communities with high participation and civic involvement are the healthiest.

Work to increase WOMEN'S STATUS AND OPPORTUNITIES in society. Where women's status is higher, women's health is better and men's health is even better. When women have a larger role in society, it's good for all of us.

Strive to end stressful, low-paid WORK. Having a sense of control in the workplace and at home decreases stress and is good for your health. A sense of control and a decent workplace go along with the right to have a union and a commitment to end discrimination at work. We must improve working conditions for everyone.

HEALTH OLYMPICS 2004

TOP 30 FINISHERS

Health ranked by average number of years lived.

1 Japan	16 Germany
2 Hong Kong	17 Singapore
3 Iceland	18 Finland
4 Switzerland	19 Cyprus
5 Australia	20 Luxembourg
6 Sweden	21 Malta
7 Canada	22 Netherlands
8 Italy	23 United Kingdom
9 Israel	24 Greece
10 Spain	25 Costa Rica
11 Norway	26 United Arab Emirates
12 France	27 Chile
13 New Zealand	28 Ireland
14 Austria	29 Cuba
15 Belgium	30 United States

For more information and sources for the statements made, please visit the Population Health Forum Web site at the University of Washington: <http://depts.washington.edu/eqhlth/>.