

How a Skills-Based Approach is Changing Health Education Instruction

Holly Alperin EdM., University of New Hampshire, USA

Sarah Benes EdD., Merrimack College, USA

holly.alperin@unh.edu

Health education is evolving. Behavior change theory supports that, if we want students to adopt health behaviors, we must teach them how to address these behaviors in ways that are relevant and meaningful to their life. To do this, we must move away from an emphasis on knowledge acquisition to placing an emphasis on skill development for application of health skills and concepts in a real-world setting. As an approach, skills-based health education is founded in developing self-efficacy and promoting opportunities for individuals to develop the agency to apply their learning.

This session will discuss key underpinnings of a skills-based methodology, including focusing on strength-based approaches, integrating culturally sustaining teaching practices, and operating through a trauma-informed lens while integrating trauma-sensitive approaches. While an emphasis will be on PK-12 students, a skills-based approach is application across all populations.