



Adventist Philosophy of Health



Adventist health education emphasizes concepts necessary for the development of dynamic Christ-centered personalities, creative minds, and physically fit bodies. The

values and lifestyle which students develop as adolescents will significantly influence their future health. Adventist philosophy challenges all to nurture sound mental and physical health, stability in the family, and care of the environment.

Every person should have a knowledge of nature's remedial agencies and how to apply them. . . . Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet and the use of water, trust in divine power---these are the true remedies.¹

Adolescence is a time of rapid psychological and physical change. School-age students often make decisions regarding high-risk behaviours. It is proven in recent research that those who were successful in not engaging in some of the most serious behaviours relied on spiritual strength and encouragement from teachers.² It is, therefore, incumbent upon teachers to be appropriate role models and to provide a climate in which students can explore behavior options and acquire healthful habits consistent with an Adventist Christian lifestyle.

In Adventist schools, the development of healthy individuals is seen from the perspective of the

Christian worldview. Its focus is on the balanced development of the whole person, taking into account the laws of physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health, understanding that a healthy mind and body are the avenues through which the Holy Spirit works to restore people to God's original plan. This inclusive view of health involves the preparation of the student for responsible citizenship in this life, and takes into account a future eternal life. It seeks to help students understand their personal worth as individuals created in the image of God.

1. White, E. (1905). *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 127. Pacific Press Publishing Association.

2. Hopkins, G.L., Hopp, J.W., Hopp, H.P., Rhoads, G., & Neish C. (1996). "An AIDS Risk Appraisal of Seventh-day Adventist High School Students." Doctoral Dissertation, Loma Linda University, School of Public Health.



Adventist Rationale for Health

Health is a state of wellness. Wellness includes the physical, mental-emotional, social and spiritual well-being of the individual. It is dependent upon and influenced by the interaction of these factors within the context of an individual's cultural and ethnic background, values, lifestyle, and physical and mental makeup.

Recognizing that:

- *the body is the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit.
- *the mind is the only medium through which God communicates with people.
- *a healthy body is the most effective agency for serving God and people.
- *health is a fundamental concept of the gospel.
- *a poor lifestyle is a major determinant in the majority of disabling diseases and premature deaths.
- *sound mental and physical health is basic for all peoples in all aspects of life.

IT IS IMPERATIVE that each student maximize his/her potential physical, mental, social and spiritual development and that health education be an essential element in the general education of all students in the Seventh-day Adventist schools.

The objective of health education is to provide each student with a knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of health, to motivate the student to apply that knowledge to daily living that he/she may achieve optimum physical fitness and health, and to encourage that student to share this knowledge and experience in healthful living with others, thus maximizing his/her service to God and humanity.

