Changing the Way We Look At Women’s Health

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It's long past time we started focusing on the solutions that actually keep women healthy, instead of using basic aspects of women's health as a tool of cultural, moral, and political control.

Martha Plimpton
How Healthy Are We
## Leading Causes of Death for Women, By Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Age 1-4</th>
<th>Age 5-9</th>
<th>Age 10-14</th>
<th>Age 15-19</th>
<th>Age 20-24</th>
<th>Age 25-34</th>
<th>Age 35-44</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unintentional injuries 27.7%</td>
<td>Unintentional injuries 30.6%</td>
<td>Unintentional injuries 21.5%</td>
<td>Unintentional injuries 39.5%</td>
<td>Unintentional injuries 42.4%</td>
<td>Unintentional injuries 32.6%</td>
<td>Cancer 22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Birth defects 12.4%</td>
<td>Cancer 19.0%</td>
<td>Cancer 16.3%</td>
<td>Suicide 17.5%</td>
<td>Suicide 11.8%</td>
<td>Cancer 12.0%</td>
<td>Unintentional injuries 19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cancer 9.4%</td>
<td>Birth defects 7.4%</td>
<td>Suicide 12.8%</td>
<td>Cancer 7.9%</td>
<td>Homicide 7.5%</td>
<td>Suicide 9.2%</td>
<td>Heart disease 12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Homicide 8.3%</td>
<td>Homicide 5.4%</td>
<td>Birth defects 5.4%</td>
<td>Homicide 7.1%</td>
<td>Cancer 6.8%</td>
<td>Heart disease 7.8%</td>
<td>Suicide 6.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Heart disease 4.1%</td>
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<td>Heart disease 4.7%</td>
<td>Heart disease 3.6%</td>
<td>Heart disease 4.3%</td>
<td>Homicide 4.9%</td>
<td>Chronic liver disease 3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Age 45-54</td>
<td>Age 55-64</td>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>Age 65-74</td>
<td>Age 75-84</td>
<td>Age 85+</td>
<td>All Ages</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Cancer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>Alzheimer's</td>
<td>Cancer</td>
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<tr>
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<td>15.1%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>disease 10.1%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unintentional injuries</td>
<td>Chronic lower respiratory diseases</td>
<td>Alzheimer's disease</td>
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<td>6.0%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
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<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Top 5 Causes of Death in Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>All Races</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>American Indian/Alaska Native</th>
<th>Asian/Pacific Islander</th>
</tr>
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Where We Focus Our Energy
A society's infant mortality rate is considered an important indicator of its health, because infant mortality is associated with socioeconomic status, access to health care, and the health status of women of childbearing age.

(Congressional Budget Office, 1992)
March of dimes report card
2018 March of Dimes Report Card

Percentage of live births born preterm

- 11.8 in 2007
- 11.5
- 11.3
- 11.4
- 11.1
- 11.2
- 11.1
- 10.8
- 11.0
- 11.3
- 11.1 in 2017
Percentage of live births 2014-2016 (avg) that are preterm

- Asian/PI
- Hispanic
- White
- Black
Preterm Birth

United States, 2016

Percent of live births
- Over 10.3 (16)
- 9.2–10.3 (18)
- Under 9.2 (17)

Key Take-A-ways

• For the third year in a row, more U.S. babies were born too soon with serious risks to their health according to the 2018 Premature Birth Report Card.

• The overall U.S. preterm birth rate rose to 9.93 percent of births in 2017 from 9.85 percent in 2016. This preterm birth rate earned the nation a “C” grade.

• Each year in the U.S. more than 380,000 babies—1 in 10—are born preterm, defined as less than 37 weeks of pregnancy.

• The U.S. preterm birth rate is among the worst of highly developed nations.

• Up to 50 percent more African American women are likely to deliver prematurely and their children can face a 130 percent higher infant death rate compared to children of white women.

• A recent March of Dimes report revealed the unequal access to maternity care across the U.S., particularly in communities with higher poverty rates.
Maternal Mortality
The Human Body has over 70 organs.... The Uterus is only one of them.
Where We Need To Focus Our Energy
Women’s Health Is A Reflection of a Life Time
Socio-Ecological Model

- **Individual**: Knowledge, attitudes and skills
- **Interpersonal**: Families, friends and social networks
- **Organizational**: Organizations and social institutions
- **Community**: Relationships between organizations
- **Public Policy**
Definition:

Social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning and quality of life outcomes and risks.

5 key areas:

1. Economic stability
2. Education
3. Social and community context
4. Health and health care
5. Neighborhood and built environment
Social Determinants of Health

What we see..

Funding and Programing to address these 5 key areas:

1. Economic INstability
2. SUBPAR Education
3. Social and community CHAOS
4. POOR Health and INADEQUATE health care
5. Neighborhood BLIGHT and built environment
Many Risk Factors For Poor Health Outcomes Falls Under the Umbrella Of.. 

Poverty
Definitions

Poverty: The extent to which an individual does without resources.
What are these resources?
Resources

• Financial
• Emotional
• Spiritual
• Mental
• Physical
• Support Systems
• Knowledge of Hidden Rules
• Coping Strategies
• Traditional Solutions Focus on Mitigating the Negatives and Almost Never on Augmenting the Positive
• Deficit instead of an Asset Approach
• Health Care is Illness Care
• Public Health is Public Disease Management
• We do Risk Reduction not Strength Building
What Happens When As a Woman:

- You are discounted
- Your community is villainized
- You are told over and over and over that you are bad, sick, dispersant, underserved, (underserved) etc.
- You are judged on the color of your skin before you can even demonstrate the content of your character
- Your relationships are minimized
- You are historically denied resources, so subtly that you hardly realize it
- Your zip code is on the death list
- Your stress is considered a character flaw
..And How Might This Influence Health?
Tell them I am stressed out!!!!!!!
Normal Stress

Wear and Tear from Chronic Stress
Stress and Health

- Small amounts of stress are healthy
- Chronic or Toxic stress is dangerous
  - Leads to over activity of the stress response mechanism
  - Too much stress can lead to Major Depression and Chronic illnesses
    - Hopelessness and despair (poor motivation)
    - Difficulty working and sleeping (hard to stay employed)
    - Less focus on healthy eating and active living (obesity and loss self esteem)
    - Loss of interest in normal pleasures (unhappiness)
    - Increase in fast, immediate satisfaction (risky behaviors)
    - Fatigue (no energy to do something different)
    - Feeling worthless or guilty most of the time (hopelessness)
    - Inability to concentrate, indecisiveness (attention deficit)
So What Do You Do When Life Deals You a Challenging Hand ??
Do You Rise...?
Definition

The power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc. after being bent, compressed or stretched.

Or

The ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity or the like

Or

*The ability to thrive while others struggle*
Building Resiliency Reduces the Consequences of Stress
Lessons to Ponder

• Health is a life long journey

• Most all social determinants of health can be mapped back to resources.

• It is more advantageous to try and augment the positive than to mitigate the negative. Assets are more important than deficits

• Continuing to do the same thing and expect different results is the definition of insanity.

• Decide to dig your heals in to do what is right instead of what is popular
Thank You
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