



A New Way to Talk about the Social Determinants of Health

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Engaging in conversation around the many different factors which shape our health can be a complicated process.

The social determinants of health have long been well-established in academic circles, and a subject of considerable study. At the same time, it has also been challenging to translate the concept in a way that effectively communicates how factors such as education, income and housing affect our health, and why our nation overall is not as healthy as it could be.

In 2006, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) engaged Olson Zaltman Associates and Public Opinion Strategies to support an in-depth research and communications project focused on one primary question: How can we help expand views about health in America to include how our health is influenced by where we live, learn, work and play?

Insights from this research provided a framework for discussion and outreach related to multiple issues addressed by the [RWJF Commission to Build a Healthier America](#). It also resulted in our guide, *A New Way to Talk About the Social Determinants of Health*.

The guide discusses why we need a better way to talk about the social determinants of health, and best practices to assist in conversation with different audiences around the concept. It also includes an overview of key research findings from the project and the methodology that was employed.

[A New Way to Talk About the Social Determinants of Health \(PDF\)](#) →

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