

Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Notes for Educators

Here are some general points of the Declaration that you will want to introduce to students or make sure they highlight when discussing the articles:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is meant for every individual in every nation.
- The Declaration states that "...recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights..." of all people "is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world."

Articles that relate to health:

- A person should not work longer hours than are reasonable to the job. (Article 24)
- Everyone has the right to rest and get periodic breaks from work. (Article 24)
- Everyone has the right to some paid holidays as well as days off from work. (Article 24) [Note: *Help students understand that rest is a right as rest is an essential part of promoting health. Given the need for and rights to rest, the two points above focuses on how workplace should provide rest opportunities without loss of wages and prevent over-working that may affect both mental or physical health of a person.*]
- Everyone has the right to a standard of living that will prevent him or her from getting sick, which would disrupt his or her ability to work and get paid. People have the right to food, clothing, health care, and housing, which will help them stay healthy and lead productive lives. These are essential needs that are also specific--for example, right to food includes access to affordable, nutritious food as well as different ways to access the food such as growing your own. (Article 25)
- Everyone has the right to a free education through the elementary level. It should be required and enforced to make sure that everyone is educated in the right manner. People are also entitled to professional training and higher education if desired. Education is an important component for accessing reliable health information that supports good health. (Article 26)



Declaration of Alma-Ata: Notes for Educators

Here are some general points of the Declaration that you will want to introduce to students or make sure they highlight when discussing the articles of the Declaration:

- The Declaration of Alma-Ata was created to "...protect and promote the health of all people in the world..."
- The Declaration restates that health is a fundamental human right. (Declaration I)
- The Declaration states that action is needed also by those from the social and economic areas, and not just by those dealing primarily with health. This recognizes that the factors affecting health are diverse—e.g., social, cultural, economic, environmental, etc. (Declaration I)
- The Declaration broadly defines the scope of health beyond diseases or illnesses and as mental and physical well-being. This also extends the type of health care and services beyond access to health facilities or professionals—i.e., access to clean water, good and reliable health information, nutritious food, safe housing, etc. (Declaration I)
- The Declaration links health of an individual to the socioeconomic and political conditions of communities and nations. It calls for nations to put the universal access to primary health care as a main priority, as healthy individuals contribute to the socioeconomic and political success of their communities and countries. (Declaration VI)
- The Declaration states that primary health care should include education on health problems and prevention strategies, as well as methods for getting proper nutrition and accessing clean water. (Declaration VII, 3)
- The Declaration also states that primary health care should include immunization, appropriate treatment for common diseases, and maternal and child health care including family planning. (Declaration VII, 3)