

**(Narrator)** Today's students face many personal challenges related to public health, like opioid misuse, obesity, bullying, racism, outbreaks, and even a pandemic. Students are becoming more interested in learning about public health issues, and we can help them apply critical thinking skills to address real-world issues.

Middle and high school STEM educators are uniquely positioned to inspire students and influence the future of public health. Early engagement is key to spark students' interest in public health careers.

The CDC NERD Academy is an innovative and standards-based curriculum that covers basic concepts in public health and epidemiology. Student activities are centered around a novel emerging respiratory disease, or NERD for short. Although NERD is fictional, the science is not. This timely and relevant curriculum is built upon data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic and is presented in age-appropriate, relatable scenarios.

The curriculum's eight modules are aligned with the National Health Education Standards and Next Generation Science Standards and designed with input from STEM teachers and subject matter experts.

The curriculum includes modules that can be downloaded and used sequentially in a comprehensive series, reordered, or used as standalone lessons.

Students will learn to answer critical questions such as:

- How does disease spread?
- Who is at risk?
- Why do laboratory testing? and more.

Each module features an all-inclusive lesson plan, engaging instructional videos and a public health career spotlight.

- A 2-minute teacher video demonstrates how to implement student activities.
- A 10-minute student video with whiteboard animation activates student learning.
- A career spotlight that brings to life relatable and diverse characters, each highlighting specific jobs in public health.

We are calling on STEM educators and partners to help get this curriculum into middle and high school classrooms. Please use and share this educational curriculum to inspire students, to help them make more informed public health decisions for themselves and their communities, and to open doors to a world of careers in public health. Learn more and get the CDC NERD Academy curriculum at: [bit.ly/CDCNerdAcademy](https://bit.ly/CDCNerdAcademy).