

# Educational attainment in children is associated with positive health transitions into adulthood

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A longer education in childhood has been linked to positive transitions in health, according to research published today in the *Journal of Public Health*.

Researchers surveyed 3596 young participants in Finland, aged 3 to 18, to see how they would rate their own [health](#). The results suggested that a one year difference in [education](#) resulted in a 16% higher transition, from 'mediocre' to 'good' self-rated health. The study examined results from surveys in 1980 to 2007, where health behaviours, social support, self-esteem, and work-related health hazards were assessed. Each participant was observed three times: in 1986, 1989, and 2001.

Participants were asked questions about their current state of health, whether they smoked and drank alcohol, and how strenuous their job was in order to adjust the results of educational attainment accordingly. The main effect of a one year increase in education was robust to these other factors. The use of longitudinal data with multiple outcome measures enabled the study to test health transitions over a long period of time.

Dr Marko Elovainio, co-author of the paper, explained that: 'few studies have adopted similar robust designs to investigate the effects of education in general health status.' He went on to say that the findings may have 'some implications for policy by focussing on the

accumulation of risk factors and benefits throughout life, ensuring that children with health problems are not disadvantaged in educational opportunities.'

The study concluded that academic attainment predicts positive self-rated health transitions from [childhood](#) to adulthood, and that multiple processes rather than a single underlying factor are likely to bring about the association.

Provided by Oxford University Press

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