

# Translating Neuroscience into Education: A Neuroscience-based Health Curriculum for North Carolina ninth Grade Students

## Background

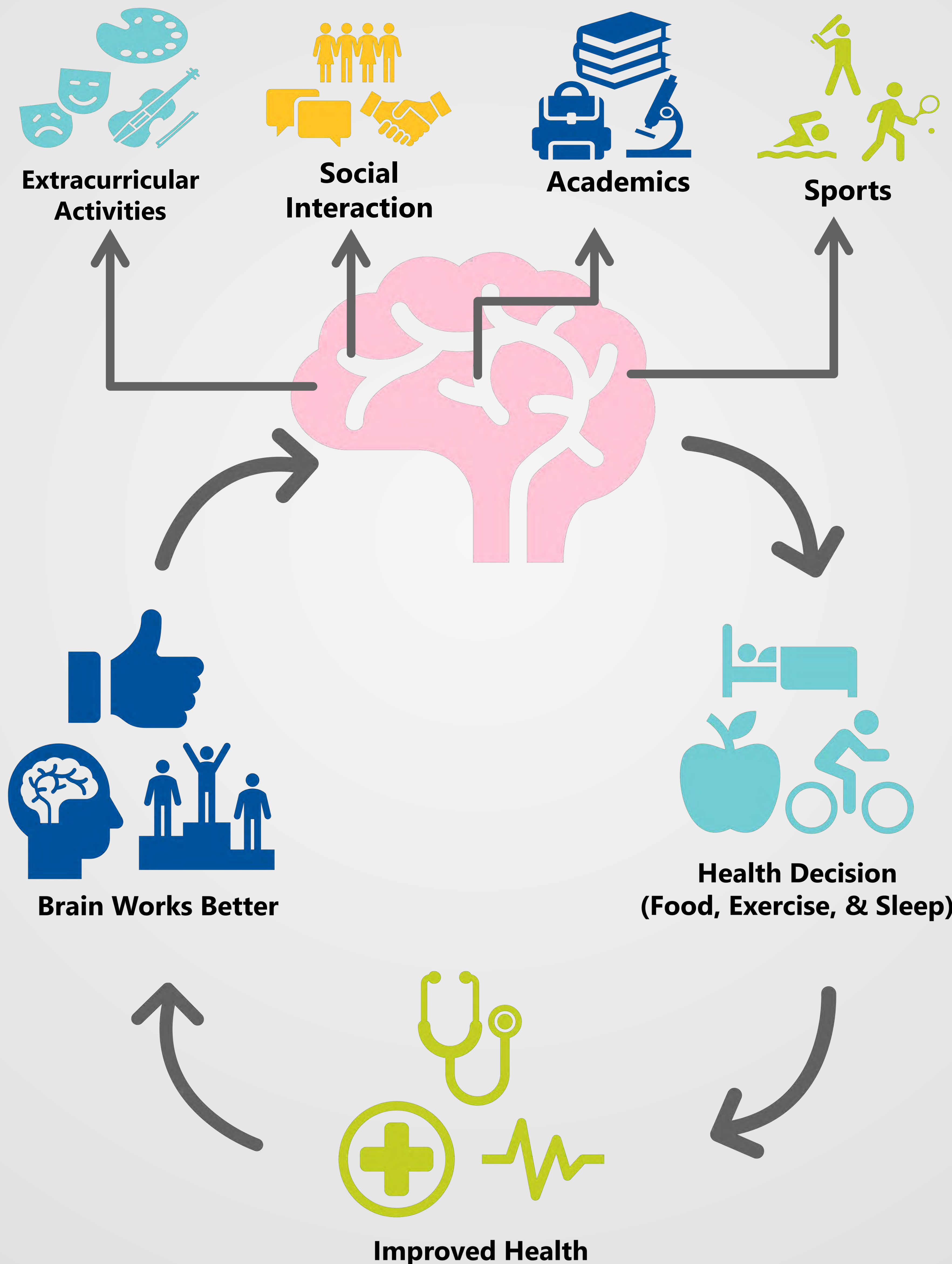
- The North Carolina Healthful Living Course<sup>1</sup> is designed to teach students behaviors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle and improve overall quality of life.
- Unfortunately, these classes are usually undervalued and **lack critical details regarding brain health and function.**
- When teenagers understand what is happening in the brain, it can be the first step to having the power to make healthier choices.

*We bring teenagers to school to use their brain but we never teach them about the brain.*

## Problem Statement

- A major impediment to student success is the lack of opportunity for teachers to receive adequate training in STEM disciplines.
- Previous work revamped standard health curriculum into an Honors version of the 9th grade Healthful Living course in Wake County, NC.
- However, the teachers (often coaches with little science background) were uncomfortable teaching this new health curricula.
- **The goal is to create a community in which the teachers feel supported and confident to teach this material.**
- **We aimed to create an online platform where health teachers can learn the new honors health class curriculum and engage in open discourse with each other alongside a neuroscientist from Duke.**

## Lifestyle Choices



**There is a reciprocal relationship in learning how to make healthful living decisions.**

## Teacher Training Modules

- The training platform resembles a virtual school course where teachers can work through the modules, watch informational videos, and engage in open discourse with a neuroscience expert.
- Each online module includes:
  - an introductory quiz which debunks myths about the brain
  - a series of instructional videos
  - comprehension questions
  - an exam
  - additional materials are included for further reading
  - a community section where teachers can communicate with other teachers or professors from Duke to ask questions.

## Conclusion

- The connections between decision making and the consequences to your body is missing from the current NC Healthful Living course.
- We created an **online training platform** for teachers that makes the neuroscience content understandable and accessible to NC Healthful Living teachers. The training is supported by an **online community** that includes support from other teachers and neuroscience experts.

## References

- <sup>1</sup>Public Schools of North Carolina. (n.d.). Healthful Living: Essential Standards . Retrieved from K-12 Standards, Curriculum and Instruction: <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/curriculum/healthfulliving/scos>