

The National Initiative to Improve Adolescent Health by the Year 2010

Improving the health of adolescents and young adults is a priority for the United States. The National Initiative provides a unique opportunity for policy makers, health professionals, community members, adolescents, young adults and their families to collectively address the issues that affect the health of our nation's youth aged 10 to 24.

Why the focus on adolescence and young adulthood?

Good health (physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being) enables young people to make the most of these years while laying a strong foundation for adult life. Lifestyle behaviors developed during adolescence have immediate consequences that often continue into adulthood. These behaviors influence short- and long-term prospects for health, educational attainment, risk of chronic disease, and quality of life. Investment in the health of youth has long-term benefits.

What is the National Initiative?

The National Initiative to Improve Adolescent Health by the Year 2010 (NIAH 2010 or The National Initiative)



is a collaborative effort to improve the health, safety, and well-being of adolescents and young adults (ages 10-24).

The Initiative was launched and is led by two federal agencies.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Adolescent and School Health (CDC/DASH)
- Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau/Office of Adolescent Health (HRSA/MCHB/OAH)

In conjunction with these federal agencies, a group of working partners helps to sustain the National Initiative (see next page for complete list).

Goals of the National Initiative

Working as a collaborative, the National Initiative partners have identified goals to guide the partners' work:

- Elevate national, state and community focus on, and commitment to, the health, safety, and well-being of adolescents, young adults and their families.
- Increase access to quality health care, including comprehensive general health, oral health, mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment services.
- Improve health and safety outcomes in areas defined by the 21 Critical Health Objectives (see sidebar).
- Eliminate health disparities among adolescents and young adults, and for these age groups compared to other age groups.

Healthy People 2010 and the Critical Objectives

The 21 Critical Health Objectives at the heart of the National Initiative are derived from Healthy People 2010 – a comprehensive set of national disease prevention and health promotion objectives that measure the nation's progress over time.



While the 467 Healthy People 2010 objectives include over 100 that pertain to adolescents and young adults, a national consensus panel focused the National Initiative on 21 objectives based on the critical nature of the health issue as well as the availability of state data.

The 21 Critical Health Objectives for Adolescents & Young Adults

Mortality

- Reduce deaths

Unintentional Injury

- Reduce deaths caused by motor vehicle crashes
- Reduce deaths and injuries caused by alcohol- and drug-related motor vehicle crashes
- Increase use of safety belts
- Reduce the proportion who report that they rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol

Violence

- Reduce homicides
- Reduce physical fighting among adolescents
- Reduce weapon carrying on school property

Mental Health & Substance Abuse

- Reduce the suicide rate
- Reduce the rate of suicide attempts that required medical attention
- Reduce the proportion of those with disabilities who are reported to be sad, unhappy, or depressed
- Increase the proportion of those with mental health problems who receive treatment
- Reduce the proportion engaging in binge drinking of alcoholic beverages
- Reduce past-month use of illicit substances (marijuana)

Reproductive Health

- Reduce pregnancies
- Reduce the number of new HIV diagnoses
- Reduce the proportion with Chlamydia trachomatis infections
- Increase the proportion who abstain from sexual intercourse or use condoms if sexually active

Chronic Diseases

- Reduce tobacco use
- Reduce the proportion who are overweight or obese
- Increase the proportion who engage in vigorous physical activity that promotes cardiorespiratory fitness 3 or more days per week for 20 or more minutes per occasion

Resources and Tools

Addressing the health needs of youth is a complex enterprise. The States, and most notably State public health agencies, provide the necessary leadership. The National Initiative supports these efforts by providing practical and accessible resources.

Technical Assistance & Information

The National Initiative funds expert staff to provide technical assistance to State Adolescent Health Coordinators and MCH Professionals.

State Adolescent Health Resource Center for Maternal & Child Health Professionals

Contact: teipe001@umn.edu
www.allaboutkids.umn.edu/sahrc

National Adolescent Health Information Center

contact: nahic@itsa.ucsf.edu
http://nahic.ucsf.edu

Public Policy Analysis & Education Center for Middle Childhood, Adolescent and Young Adult Health

contact: policy@itsa.ucsf.edu
http://policy.ucsf.edu

Healthy Youth Funding Database

An on-line database of federal, foundation, and state-specific funding sources for adolescent health programs (CDC/DASH). <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/funding/index.htm>

e-Adolescence

Published monthly, this free electronic newsletter presents adolescent health - specific resources geared for state MCH professionals. Resources – from NIIAH partners and others – cover the critical health objectives as well as system capacity issues.

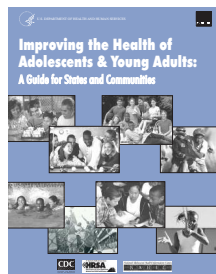
Improving the Health of Adolescents and Young Adults: A Guide for States and Communities

To help guide state and local agencies in their efforts to improve adolescent health, the National Initiative, through the National Adolescent Health Information Center (NAHIC) has developed this comprehensive publication.

Free to download, this how-to guide includes effective strategies, case studies, practical tools and links to resources. Topics range from coalition building to using data to program planning and evaluation.

This Guide and its supporting materials are available now at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/NationalInitiative>



Health is More than the Absence of Problems

To address the complex nature of the health challenges facing adolescents and young adults, the National Initiative prioritizes two key strategies:

- Fostering healthy youth development; and
- Ensuring safe, nurturing environments that help young people make healthy decisions.

This perspective defines health as more than the absence of health problems and includes well-being, assets and achieving one's full potential as an integral part of health.

The National Initiative recognizes that choices of individual young people are shaped by the world around them. Families, schools, communities and public policies influence behavior. While young people are learning to make responsible decisions, adult society bears responsibility for the world in which adolescents make these choices.

The Guide – *Improving the Health of Adolescents and Young Adults* – includes an excellent discussion of healthy youth development and its application.

Learn more and improve adolescent health!

The National Initiative is working to strengthen the focus on adolescent and young adult health, safety and well-being in the United States.

Visit the web sites referenced here to download resources or just learn more. Contact any of the partners and ask about their work on the National Initiative.

For more information about the National Initiative or its partners, contact:

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Working Partners of the National Initiative

Academic Institutions

Center for Adolescent Nursing, School of Nursing, U of MN
Leadership Education in Adolescent Health (LEAH) Program
Baylor College of Medicine
Boston Children's Hospital / Harvard Medical School
Indiana University Medical Center
University of Alabama at Birmingham
University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine
University of Minnesota, School of Medicine
University of Rochester, School of Medicine
National Adolescent Health Information Center (NAHIC), UCSF
Public Policy Analysis & Education Center for Middle Childhood, Adolescent & Young Adult Health, UCSF
State Adolescent Health Resource Center for Maternal and Child Health, U of MN
Training and Technical Assistance Centers for Mental Health in Schools
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Maryland School of Medicine

National Organizations

American Academy of Pediatrics
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP)
Building Partnerships for Youth: National 4-H Council in partnership with the University of Arizona
Children's Safety Network, National Injury and Violence Prevention Resource Center, Education Development Center
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care
National MCH Center for Child Death Review
Partners in Program Planning for Adolescent Health (PIPPAH)
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Bar Association
American College of Preventive Medicine
American Dietetic Association
American Medical Association
American Nurses Association
American School Health Association
National Association of Social Workers
State Adolescent Health Coordinators Network (SAHCN)