Teen Health: Office of Adolescent Health Perspectives on Preventing Pregnancy & Promoting Healthy Youth

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Established in 2010 within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) at HHS

Vision: To advance best practices to improve the health and well-being of America’s adolescents

OAH responsibilities

- Implement and administer evidence-based grant programs
- Coordinate adolescent health initiatives across HHS
- Communicate adolescent health information
- Serve as the catalyst and convener of the national adolescent health agenda
Global Adolescent Health

- 1 billion adolescents in the world today
  - Providing health services
  - Collecting and using data to monitor interventions
  - Developing and implementing health-promoting and health protecting policies
  - Mobilizing and supporting other sectors
- Report pending from Commission on Adolescent Health formed by The Lancet and four academic institutions
American teens are generally healthy

Some face health challenges such as obesity, substance abuse, and mental health problems

Missed opportunities to promote adolescent health and intervene promptly

Many teens and young adults drift away from routine health care

Social determinants of teen health

We focus on risks rather than prevention, early intervention, and building strengths and competencies
Healthy People 2020 Adolescent Health Objectives include:

- Increasing the proportion of teens who have had a wellness checkup in the last 12 months
- Increasing the proportion of adolescents who are connected to a parent or another positive adult caregiver
- Increase the proportion of adolescents who participate in extracurricular and/or out-of-school activities

Healthy People 2020 Family Planning Objectives include:

- Reducing pregnancies among adolescent females
- Increasing proportion of sexually active teens who use condoms and hormonal or intrauterine contraception
Adolescent Health: Think, Act, Grow℠ (TAG)

#TAG42mil
A comprehensive, strengths-based approach to improving adolescent health

Goals:

- Raise awareness about the importance of adolescent health
- Engage stakeholders (youth serving organizations and caring adults)
- Get adolescent health on the national agenda
- Spur action
Stakeholder Engagement
5 Essentials for Healthy Adolescents

1. Positive connections with supportive people
2. Safe and secure places to live, learn, and play
3. Access to high-quality, teen-friendly health care
4. Opportunities for teens to engage as learners, leaders, team members, and workers
5. Coordinated adolescent- and family-centered services
TAG Resources

- Free downloadable materials on OAH website
- Playbook with specific actions steps and resources
- TAG Toolkit with sample Tweets, FB and blog posts, slides, banners, and more
What Health Plans Can Do

- Make health of adolescents a priority
- Partner to bring services to youth and young adult members
- Provide incentives to deliver clinical preventive services
- Include teen-friendly service providers in plan networks
- Engage young people directly re: services and policies
- Provide families with information on transitioning in to and out of adolescent care
- Engage adolescent health specialists
- Use risk screening tools with aggregated data to identify local health needs
What Your Providers Can Do

- Have practice policies for transitioning in to and out of adolescent care
- Update clinical preventive services at all visits
- Use risk screening tools and ask the uncomfortable questions
- Use brief interventions and counseling
- Maintain up-to-date referrals to teen-friendly services for mental health, substance use, etc.
- Encourage families to teach their teens how to use health care and insurance
- Assure parents that talking to teens matters
- Invite teens to help with a clinic/office “make-over”
- Train all employees on how to make teens comfortable
What Funders Can Do

- **Foundations**
  - Include adolescent and young adult health among funding priorities
  - Provide support for innovations to improve adolescent health
  - Test new models for bringing care to teens
  - Test use of new technologies in care delivery
  - Talk to teens and consider priorities reported by teens, including depression, stress

- **Corporate Giving**
  - Ask adolescents and young adults what would help them maintain healthy habits
  - Support youth projects that focus on improving community health
  - Host a competition for healthy innovations for high school or college age youth
  - Invite school nurses to share their views of how to improve health for young people with chronic conditions
  - Work with youth sports leagues on injury prevention
US now has lowest teen pregnancy and birth rates in years
1 in 8 adolescent US females will become pregnant before age 20
More than 614,000 teen girls in the US become pregnant each year.
The US teen pregnancy and birth rates are higher than many developed countries including Canada and the UK
In 2013 just over 273,000 babies were born to teen girls between the ages of 15 and 19 in the US
Consequences of Teen Parenting

- Teen parents face multiple risks for poor life outcomes:
  - Failure to finish high school
  - Poverty as adults
  - Reliance on public assistance

- Children of teens have worse educational, behavioral, and health outcomes than those born to older parents

- Costs to U.S. taxpayers include:
  - Lost tax revenue
  - Increased public assistance payments
  - More spent on health care, foster care, criminal justice
81 new TPP grants will serve more than 1.2 million youth over five years

Grantees will:

• Replicate evidence-based TPP programs in multiple settings in communities with the greatest need
• Increase capacity of organizations to implement evidence-based TPP programs focusing especially on serving especially vulnerable youth
• Support and foster early innovations to fill gaps in the knowledge of what works to prevent teen pregnancy
• Develop and evaluate new, innovative approaches to combating teen pregnancy
Grantees must establish linkages and referrals for high-quality, youth-friendly health care services

Grantees are required to:

- Identify and recruit organizations that provide a wide range of healthcare services for youth
- Assess identified organizations/providers to ensure services are youth friendly and accessible
- Develop protocols and procedures for making referrals
- Develop and disseminate a provider referral guide
- Identify and train key staff on referral protocols and procedures
Multi-pronged approach

- Three legs to teen pregnancy prevention stool:
  - Evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs
  - Connecting teens to connecting teens to health care, including family planning services, and making sure they have access and health insurance
  - Communicating with teens about how to prevent pregnancy and how and where to obtain the services they need
Connect with OAH

- Visit our award-winning website and sign up for email updates: www.hhs.gov/ash/oah
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- Email us: oah.gov@hhs.gov and TAGteam@hhs.gov
- Watch us at: www.youtube.com/teenhealthgov