HEALTHY PEOPLE 2020 AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH

A PRIMER

Healthy Teen Network
MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF TEENS AND YOUNG FAMILIES
HEALTHY PEOPLE: AN OVERVIEW

The Healthy People initiative began in 1979 with the inaugural report *Healthy People, and Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives*. Healthy People is a joint initiative of the Department of Health and Human Services and other federal agencies as well as a Healthy People Consortium of more than 400 national membership organizations. These partners collaborated to create a public health prevention framework by determining top priorities for the nation’s health. These national health objectives are designed to identify the most significant and preventable threats to health by establishing overarching goals to be used at all levels to reduce these potential threats.

PRIMER GOALS

The goals of this primer are as follows:

- To review the Healthy People initiative and the adolescent and young adult health component of the current Healthy People 2010 initiative (HP2010)
- To review upcoming news with regard to the Healthy People initiative, especially the upcoming Healthy People 2020 (HP2020) initiative
- To provide tips on how to maximize the use of the adolescent and young adult component of the upcoming HP2020 initiative by sharing case studies and additional resources
Developed in 2000, HP2010 continues the Healthy People initiative by setting health priorities for the nation to be used by diverse groups at the state and local levels. These priorities were chosen based on scientific knowledge and available data in order to best measure progress over time.\textsuperscript{1,2}

By now, most of you have heard of or may even be using HP2010. The goals of HP2010 are to 1) increase the quality and years of healthy life and 2) eliminate health disparities by providing a roadmap for states, communities, professional organizations, and others to help achieve these outcomes.\textsuperscript{1} HP2010 objectives were developed through a broad consultation process and are focused on 28 different health and safety areas as determined by the Healthy People Consortium and 250 state health, mental health, substance abuse, and environmental agencies. Included in these focus areas are national health objectives for adolescents and young adults.
As part of HP2010, a national panel determined objectives relevant to adolescents and young adults, ages 10-24. Given the importance and unique nature of adolescent development, a working group collaborated to identify a broad range of concerns that are salient to the wide range of needs of a 10-24 year old age group. Of the 467 HP2010 objectives, 107 were prioritized and, of these, 21 objectives were created.\textsuperscript{2,3,4} The 21 critical objectives were selected because they represented a critical health outcome or a contributing behavior and state level data was available or would be soon.

The 21 Adolescent Critical Health Objectives (CHOs) span the following six topic areas:

**MORTALITY**
- Reduce deaths of adolescents and young adults (10-24 year olds)

**UNINTENTIONAL INJURY**
- Reduce deaths caused by motor vehicle crashes (15-24 year olds)
- Reduce deaths and injuries caused by alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes (15-24 year olds)
- Reduce the proportion of adolescents who report they rode, during the previous 30 days, with a driver who had been drinking alcohol (9\textsuperscript{th}-12\textsuperscript{th} grade students)
- Increase the use of safety belts (9\textsuperscript{th}-12\textsuperscript{th} grade students)

**VIOLENCE**
- Reduce homicides (10-19 year olds)
- Reduce physical fighting among adolescents (9\textsuperscript{th}-12\textsuperscript{th} grade students)
- Reduce weapon carrying by adolescents on school property (9\textsuperscript{th}-12\textsuperscript{th} grade students)
MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
- Reduce the suicide rate (10-19 year olds)
- Reduce the rate of suicide attempts by adolescents that required medical attention (9th-12th grade students)
- Reduce the proportion of persons engaging in binge drinking of alcoholic beverages (12-17 year olds)
- Reduce past-month use of illicit substances such as marijuana (12-17 year olds)
- Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents with disabilities who are reported to be sad, unhappy, or depressed (4-17 year olds)
- Increase the proportion of children with mental health problems who receive treatment (4-17 year olds)

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
- Reduce pregnancies among adolescent females (15-17 year olds)
- Increase the proportion of adolescents (9th-12th grade students) who:
  - Have never had sexual intercourse
  - If sexually experienced, are not currently sexually active
  - If currently sexually active, used a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse
- Reduce the proportion of adolescents and young adults with *Chlamydia trachomatis* infections among 15-24 year olds:
  - Females attending family planning clinics
  - Females attending sexually transmitted infection clinics
  - Males attending sexually transmitted infection clinics
- Reduce the number of new cases of HIV/AIDS diagnosed among adolescents and adults (13-24 year olds)

PREVENTION OF ADULT CHRONIC DISEASES
- Reduce tobacco use by adolescents (9th-12th grade students)
- Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents who are overweight or obese (12-19 year olds)
- Increase the proportion of adolescents who engage in vigorous physical activity that promotes cardiorespiratory fitness three or more days per week for 20 or more minutes per occasion (9th-12th grade students)
Adolescence is a critical time in the life-span when healthy and unhealthy habits are established. Yet youth programs and the health care system face many obstacles to helping youth develop healthy habits to carry them through adulthood.\(^5\)\(^3\) HP2010’s adolescent health objectives provide a framework to help you as providers, programmers, and agenda setters address your population’s needs. While there is no federal requirement to enforce improvements in these specific areas, these objectives can guide strategic planning, resource allocation, priority setting, and program development, among others. The groundwork and research on the most relevant adolescent health issues to the nation has already been done for you, allowing you to save time and resources. Below are two examples that outline ways in which organizations have used HP2010’s adolescent health objectives to help inform their work with adolescents.

**Case Study I:**
**California Adolescent Health Collaborative**

The California Adolescent Health Collaborative has been using the 21 Critical Health Objectives (CHOs) as an overarching framework to see how California compares to the rest of the nation and how counties within California are faring in relation to the objectives. Instead of spending time researching and developing their own set of objectives and indicators, the CHOvs provide built-in indicators and objectives, according to Sandi Goldstein, Director.

“We are a multi-issue organization and the CHOvs really validated a holistic approach to adolescent health. They get folks to look beyond their particular area. The same kids who are likely to get pregnant may also suffer from depression or substance abuse,” explained Goldstein.
Most recently, the California Adolescent Health Collaborative has started the Hot Spot Project in which they selected 13 adolescent health indicators, some of which were taken from the CHOs. The goal of the project is to look at specific counties in California with high adolescent populations to see how adolescents are doing when taking all of the different indicators into account. Like the CHOs, their indicators spanned many different health areas from violence to pregnancy.

“The selection of the indicators for the CHOs is an extremely rigorous process and they were chosen because they are salient to the health of our adolescents. There was a tremendous amount of thought put into the selection of the indicators and it behooves us to pay attention to them,” Robin Kirkpatrick, Associate Director of the California Adolescent Health Collaborative said.

Case Study II:
Alabama Department of Public Health
Adolescent and School Health Program &
the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

In April 2008, the Alabama Department of Public Health Adolescent and School Health Program and the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy partnered to host the Live Life Conference: Growing Healthy Youth in Alabama. One of the organizers, Sandy Powell, Adolescent and School Health Coordinator for the Alabama Department of Public Health, said that the CHOs helped her set a more comprehensive agenda for topics to be covered in the conference.

“The CHOs really helped me make the case that no one risk behavior or health outcome is more important than the other. Adolescents are bigger than just their reproductive health system. We are trying to create and offer resources that address all the issues,” said Powell.

The conference agenda was organized to encourage attendees to take a well-rounded approach to adolescent health and illustrated the interrelatedness of different risk behaviors.

“Last year’s conference was not only focused on pregnancy prevention or violence or injury prevention, but touched on every one of those topic areas. We are using the CHOs to break down barriers between these segregated adolescent health issues. It is helpful that there is a national initiative like HP2010 and the CHOs that also takes this approach,” said Jamie Keith, Executive Director of the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.
SUGGESTIONS FOR INCORPORATING THE ADOLESCENT HEALTH OBJECTIVES INTO YOUR WORK

- Use the objectives to see where your population stands in relation to the nation.
- Use the objectives to help inform your organization’s strategic plan.
- Use the objectives to help inform resource allocation within your organization.
- Develop collaborative partnerships across the six topic areas to maximize your access to funding and your impact on your population.
- Use the objectives to help determine if your organization’s activities, ranging from programming to education to advocacy, are meeting all of your population’s needs.
Since its inception in 1980, there has been Healthy People 2000, 2010, and now collaborators are in the process of developing Healthy People 2020 which will be rolled out in 2010. Healthy People 2020 builds on goals pursued over the past three decades to 1) eliminate preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death and 2) achieve health equity, eliminate disparities, and improve the health of all groups. HP2020 will include two additional overarching goals: 1) to create physical and social environments that promote good health for all and 2) promote healthy development and healthy behaviors across every stage of life.

These two additional overarching goals are particularly exciting for the public health community as they integrate a wide array of health determinants from individual to social to biological. In addition, they build in the critical notion that healthy behaviors should be promoted throughout every stage of life.

In preparation for the adolescent and young adult component of HP2020, an adolescent health workgroup is currently examining the existing objectives to determine whether they are still relevant and to assess where gaps might exist. In addition, new objectives to address the two additional goals of HP2020 are being developed. Below we have provided resources and information on how to stay informed and be part of this very important initiative.
HOW TO STAY INVOLVED

Visit the Health People Initiative website for updates and more information: http://www.healthypeople.gov/

For a full list of the 21 Critical Health Objectives for Adolescents visit: http://www.healthypeople.gov/search/stat_21crobj.htm

To get more ideas on how to implement these objectives in your organization please visit: http://www.healthypeople.gov/state/toolkit/ to access a copy of the Healthy People 2010 Toolkit.

You can access the resource “Improving the Health of Adolescents and Young Adults,” another comprehensive CDC resource for adolescent health at: http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/AdolescentHealth/NationalInitiative/index.htm

Most importantly, be a part of the process!

Get involved with developing HP2020 objectives as they relate to adolescents by joining the Healthy People Consortium at: http://www.healthypeople.gov/hp2020/

Here you can find information on the public comment period for drafted objectives as well as a list of upcoming public meetings.
REFERENCES


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