

# 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 ages 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.

## 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.

## What is the National Initiative?

The National Initiative to Improve Adolescent Health by the Year 2010 (NIIAH 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.

## Goals of the National Initiative

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

- Elevate national, state, and community focus on, and commitment to, the health, safety, positive development, and well-being of adolescents, young adults and their families.
- Increase access to quality health and safety education and health care, including comprehensive general health, oral health, mental health, and substance abuse prevention and treatment services.
- Address the influence of social determinants on health, safety and well-being.
- Improve health and safety outcomes in such areas as mortality, unintentional injury, violence, oral and mental health, tobacco and substance use, reproductive health, nutrition and physical activity, and the prevention of adult chronic diseases.
- Eliminate disparities of health, safety and well-being among adolescents and young adults in order to achieve equity.

## Working Partners & Affiliates of the National Initiative

### Academic Institutions

Building Partnerships for Youth: University of Arizona in partnership with the National 4-H Council

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

Johns Hopkins University, School of Medicine

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

School Mental Health Program and Policy Analysis Centers

University of California, Los Angeles

University of Maryland, Baltimore

### National Organizations

Center for Applied Research and Technical Assistance (CARTA)

Children's Safety Network, National Injury and Violence Prevention Resource Center, Education Development Center

National Center on School-Based Health Care, National Assembly on School-Based Health Care

National MCH Center for Child Death Review Policy and Practice, Michigan Public Health Institute

Partners in Program Planning for Adolescent Health (PIPPAH)

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Bar Association

American College of Preventive Medicine

CityMatCH

Healthy Teen Network

National Association of County and City Health Officials

National Conference of State Legislatures

National Institute for Health Care Management Foundation

Partnership to Promote Adolescent Health in States, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP)

National Network of State Adolescent Health Coordinators (NNSAHC)

Society for Adolescent Medicine

## 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 require 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

### Prevention of 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

## 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.

## Adolescent Health Resources and Tools

Addressing the health needs of youth is a complex enterprise. State systems, local organizations and communities must work together for solutions. The extensive partnership of the National Initiative supports these efforts and makes a variety of quality resources available to the youth-serving community.

### Technical Assistance & Information

The National Initiative funds technical assistance and resources for MCH professionals.

#### State Adolescent Health Resource Center for Maternal & Child Health Professionals (SAHRC)

contact: teipe001@umn.edu  
www.konopka.umn.edu/sahrc

#### National Adolescent Health Information Center (NAHIC)

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/health/youth/funding/index.htm>

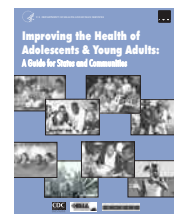
## e-Adolescence

Published bi-monthly by the State



Adolescent Health Resource Center, this free electronic newsletter presents adolescent health specific resources. Listings – from NIAH partners and others – cover the critical health objectives as well as system capacity issues. Subscribe by sending an email to boche001@umn.edu.

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



Developed by NAHIC this guide is for state and local agencies working to improve adolescent health.

Free to download, this how-to guide includes effective strategies, case studies, practical tools and links to resources.

[www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/NationalInitiative](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/NationalInitiative)

## 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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