



## Closing

The 21 Critical Health Objectives for adolescents and young adults, which were identified as part of the *Healthy People 2010* process, provide a framework that unifies the efforts of different stakeholders to collectively address the health of our nation's young people. These objectives can serve as guideposts to help communities establish priorities and measure progress toward the goal of improving the health and well-being of adolescents. In this document we present guiding principles, effective strategies, and practical tools that should be helpful in working towards this goal. We hope this document will serve as an important resource for local communities as they embark on a new initiative or enhance an existing one.

The National Initiative to Improve Adolescent Health by the Year 2010 has put forth new approaches to adolescent health that are woven throughout this document. These approaches depart from a sole focus on preventing negative behavior and outcomes among individual adolescents. Instead, they emphasize focusing on young people's assets, promoting healthy development, and adopting noncategorical, ecological strategies that address the multi-level influences on adolescent health, such as family, community, schools, society and policy. These approaches require new strategies and engagement of nontraditional partners. This document is meant to support efforts to test and promote these new approaches. The strategies, worksheets, and resources presented here are tools you can use throughout your adolescent health initiative, from building a coalition, to conducting a needs assessment, to planning programs, to evaluating progress.

Improving adolescent health is a complex endeavor. This document serves as a starting point for new and evolving efforts to support the healthy development of young people. By making investments in adolescent health today we are investing in the workforce, parents and leaders of tomorrow.