

## YouthLens

on Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS

# New Resources Available on Youth Reproductive Health and HIV Prevention

A roadmap can help in using the growing number of reports, program summaries, and training materials.

A growing number of policies and programs are attempting to help young people practice healthy sexual behaviors, improve reproductive health, and prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. What follows is a roadmap to some of the most recent documents synthesizing major findings in this field, organized by overview reports, summaries of agency programs/publications, bibliography/data, and reference and training materials.

## Overview Reports

**Advancing Young Adult Reproductive Health: Actions for the Next Decade.** Washington, DC: FOCUS on Young Adults, 2001.

<http://www.fhi.org/en/youth/youthnet/prog/focus.html> This 160-page report summarizes the findings of the FOCUS on Young Adults program (1995-2001), the first USAID program funded to focus on youth and reproductive health. It emphasized the need to: 1) create a supportive environment with good policies and the promotion of social norms and cultural practices favorable to the provision and use of reproductive health; 2) improve knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors of youth through schools, mass media, community-based efforts, and the workplace; and 3) increase the use of reproductive health services by youth through youth-friendly services, youth centers, linked school and health facility programs, private sector initiatives, and social marketing and mass

media. The report summarizes 39 rigorously evaluated programs and other studies and programs.

### Focus on Young Adults Materials.

<http://www.fhi.org/en/youth/youthnet/prog/focus.html> Other materials published in recent years include "how to" guides, research and policy reports, "In Focus" briefs, project highlights, and summaries of state of the art training meetings. For example, see:

- Adamchak S, Bond K, MacLaren L, et al. *Monitoring and Evaluating Adolescent Reproductive Health Programs* (2000), a 275-page detailed guide with another 175 pages of instruments.
- Nelson K, MacLaren L, Magnani R. *Assessing and Planning for Youth-Friendly Reproductive Health Services* (2000), a four-part workbook designed to plan for assessment and data collection.
- Shah, MK, Zambezi R, Simasiku M. *Listening to Young Voices: Facilitating Participatory Appraisals on Reproductive Health with Adolescents* (1999), a summary of a Zambia project and steps in using this process.

**Greene ME, Rasekh Z, Amen K. In This Generation: Sexual and Reproductive Health Policies for a Youthful World.** Washington, DC: Population Action International, 2002.

<http://www.populationaction.org/resources/publications/InThisGeneration/InThisGeneration.pdf>





This analysis of policies in seven countries concludes that, with the notable exception of The Netherlands, the other countries (Ghana, India, Iran, Mali, Mexico, and the United States) have not responded well to the reproductive health needs of youth. The Dutch experience suggests that policies supporting open communication about sexuality and making services available to youth benefits their reproductive health. The study also identifies successful policies in developing countries, including mandatory premarital courses on sexual and reproductive health issues for engaged couples in Iran, strong presidential leadership promoting AIDS prevention activities in Uganda, educational policies that help keep girls from entering the sex industry in Thailand, and others in Senegal, Mexico, and Chile. Among recommendations are laws to reduce early marriage, improvements in sexuality and life skills education, and better coordination of youth policies.

**Kiragu K. Youth and HIV/AIDS: Can we avoid catastrophe.** *Popul Rep* 2001;L(12):1-40.

<http://www.jhuccp.org/pr/l12edsum.shtml>

The report shows why young people need to be at the center of strategies to control the epidemic, including their vulnerability to HIV, outreach needs, and the consequences of inaction. The report, with 440 footnotes, recommends building support among leaders for AIDS prevention, providing skills as well as information through HIV/AIDS education programs, involving communities to change social norms that contribute to risky behaviors, promoting condoms, providing more youth-friendly services, and reaching out to particularly vulnerable groups such as street children and young sex workers.

**McCauley AP, Salter C. Meeting the needs of young adults.** *Popul Rep* 1995;J(41):1-44.

<http://www.jhuccp.org/pr/j41edsum.stm>

The 1995 overview of young adults provides a valuable reference point for conceptualizing issues and for understanding how this field has evolved.

**Kirby D. Emerging Answers: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy.** Washington, DC: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2001.

[http://www.teenpregnancy.org/resources/data/report\\_summaries/emerging\\_answers/default.asp](http://www.teenpregnancy.org/resources/data/report_summaries/emerging_answers/default.asp)

This review of about 300 U.S. and Canadian studies identifies risk and protective factors that affect adolescent sexual behavior, and the most effective types of programs from an analysis of 75 studies that met rigorous research criteria. Among the sexuality and HIV education programs, the review found 10 common characteristics of effective programs, including focusing clearly on sexual behavior and contraceptive use and delivering a clear message. In addition, certain types of service-learning programs led to lower teenage pregnancy, even though they focused on community service and a reflection process but not on sexuality. The 186-page report includes references and a summary of the 75 studies reviewed closely. These findings come from U.S. and Canadian studies and may not apply in the same way in developing countries. (For more, see YouthLens Number 2, Sexuality and Family Life Education.)

## Summaries of Agency Programs/Publications

**Adolescents: Programme Briefs, Operations**

**Research Technical Assistance, Africa Project II.**

**New York: Population Council, n.d.**

[http://www.popcouncil.org/frontiers/orta/pbriefs/adolescence\\_1.html](http://www.popcouncil.org/frontiers/orta/pbriefs/adolescence_1.html)

In the 1990s, the Population Council conducted 11 operations research studies on youth reproductive health interventions in six sub-Saharan Africa countries. This thematic summary concludes that school-based family life education programs have been effective but that two other popular types of programs — multipurpose youth centers and peer education programs — have not been shown to be effective.

**Barnett B, Katz K. *Adolescent Reproductive Health: Navigating between Needs and Services*. Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International, 2000.** Synthesizing findings from more than 70 projects on adolescent reproductive health undertaken by FHI since the 1980s, the report identifies future needs as seeing the larger picture of young people's lives, sustaining behavior change, preparing and empowering providers to serve youth, intervening before a problem occurs, improving services for pregnant teenagers and their partners, evaluating programs, getting policymakers and program managers involved in programs at an early stage, and emphasizing the three "r's" – responsibility, respect, and risk reduction.

**Bongaarts J, Cohen B, eds. *Adolescent reproductive behavior in the developing world. Stud Fam Plann* 1998;29(2):1-253.** Based on a National Academy of Sciences workshop, this special edition of *Studies in Family Planning* from the Population Council includes 11 articles on such key issues as sexual behavior, decision-making, transition to adulthood, health consequences, programming, and adolescent childbearing.

**Brown A, Jejeebhoy SJ, Shah I. et al. *Sexual Relations among Young People in Developing Countries: Evidence from WHO Case Studies*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2001. For this and other WHO youth documents, go to:**  
[http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/pages\\_resources/listing\\_adolescent.en.html](http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/pages_resources/listing_adolescent.en.html)  
Summarizing 34 WHO studies on young people conducted primarily from 1992-1996 in 20 countries, this report identifies common themes, reviews individual findings, and discusses policy and program implications. The study found major gender differences in the ability to negotiate sexual activity and contraceptive use. It recommended: more youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services; more counseling on sexuality, pregnancy, post-abortion care and family planning; and sex education programs that are age-appropriate. The report

stresses the importance of involving young people and parents in communicating information and promoting access to confidential and private services.

**Palmer, A. *Reaching Youth Worldwide: Working Paper 6*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs, 2002.**  
[http://www.jhuccp.org/pubs/working\\_papers/wp6/wp6.pdf](http://www.jhuccp.org/pubs/working_papers/wp6/wp6.pdf) Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs (JHU/CCP) summarizes its work with young people from 1995-2000, focusing on youth involvement in program design, youth-friendly centers and services, use of multiple audiences, and technology and other issues. It illustrates the approaches with case studies from Kenya, Nicaragua, Peru, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

## Bibliography/Data

**Marston C. *Young People's Sexual and Reproductive Health: Annotated Bibliography of Available Evidence*. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2002. Available at:**  
<http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/adolescent>  
The bibliography includes about 200 entries covering studies and reviews on topics and research methodology including sexual behaviors, sexual coercion and violence, dual protection, health seeking and quality of care, refugee/migrant youth, law and policy, operations research/interventions, and abortion.

*The (WHO) report stresses the importance of involving young people and parents in communicating information and promoting access to confidential and private services.*

### NETWORK ARTICLES HIGHLIGHT YOUNG PEOPLE

- Shears K. Gender stereotypes compromise sexual health. *Network* 2002;21(4):12-18.
- Shears K. Youth programs challenge stereotypes. *Network* 2002;21(4):16-17.
- Finger, WR. Campaign encourages youth to talk about sex and sexuality. *Network* 2002;21(3):19.
- Finger, WR. Youth: vulnerable but resilient. *Network* 2002;21(3):16-20.
- Adolescent reproductive health. *Network* 2000;20(3):1-36. A series of articles on STIs, sex education, improved services and abortion reduction, young men, peer educators, scouts, youth-friendly clinics, and other topics.
- Adolescent reproductive health. *Network* 1997;17(3):9-32. Articles cover gender norms, sex education, contraceptive methods for youth, key factors for successful programs, and the media.

*Network* is published quarterly by Family Health International in English, French, and Spanish.  
<http://www.fhi.org/en/topics/listings/youthlist.html>

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***Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Chartbook on Sexual Experience and Reproductive Health.***  
Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau, 2001  
<http://www.prb.org/Template.cfm?Section=PRB&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=2821>

**Reference and Training Materials**  
***Action with Youth – HIV/AIDS and STD: A Training Manual for Young People, Second Edition.***  
Geneva: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2000.

<http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/catalog/autogen/4639.asp> Designed for young people working with their peers and for adults working with young people, this 184-page manual focuses on HIV/AIDS and other STIs, covering basic information, dealing with individual worries, planning and evaluating individual programs, and other topics.

**Barnett B, Schueller J. *Meeting the Needs of Young Clients: A Guide to Providing Reproductive Health Services to Adolescents.*** Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International, 2000.

<http://www.fhi.org/en/fp/fpothor/adolhand/adolref.html> Health workers, program managers, and health educators can use this handbook, which contains an overview on adolescents' needs, technical information on contraception and STIs, and information on service delivery issues.

**De Bruyn M, France N. *Gender or Sex: Who Cares?***  
Chapel Hill, NC: Ipas and Dublin, Ireland: Health & Development Networks, 2001.

<http://www.ipas.org/arch/pdf/GenderBook.pdf>  
Building skills on gender and reproductive health

for adolescents and youth workers is the focus of this 90-page training packet, which covers violence, HIV/STIs, unwanted pregnancy, and unsafe abortion. A convenient pocket folder with 13 single-page handouts summarizing the training is also available.

**Johnson S, Finger WR, Rivera R, et al. *Reproductive Health of Young Adults: Contraception, Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases.*** Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International, 2000.

<http://www.fhi.org/en/ctu/adoltpm/main.html>  
This training module is designed for continuing education of practitioners and policymakers in developing countries and for pre-service training among health professionals. It is divided into four parts that can be used separately or together: overview of reproductive health issues of young adults, how to reach young adults, contraceptive options, and STI prevention and treatment.

**Watson C, Brazier B. *You, Your Life, Your Dreams: A Book for Adolescents.*** New York: Family Care International and Kampala, Uganda: Straight Talk Foundation, 2000.

[http://www.familycareintl.org/pubs/pubs\\_aapw.htm](http://www.familycareintl.org/pubs/pubs_aapw.htm)  
Filled with quotes from young people from Africa, this 198-page book is designed for adolescents ages 14 to 19. It puts sexuality in the context of adolescent transitions, "reaching your dream," relationships, and substance abuse, as well as body changes, pregnancy, contraception, and STIs.

— William Finger

*William Finger works with information dissemination for YouthNet.*

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YouthLens is an activity of YouthNet, a five-year program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development to improve reproductive health and prevent HIV among young people. The YouthNet team is led by Family Health International and includes CARE USA, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Emerging Markets, Ltd., Margaret Sanger Center International, and RTI International.