

Reaching adolescents through the media & through mobile phones

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Key statement 1

- ❑ Adolescents and young people are attuned to mass media for information & cues on how to behave.
- ❑ Hence, mass media is an important means of reaching them with messages about their health, including sexual & reproductive health.

Key statement 2

- A systematic review by WHO showed that mass media interventions (radio, television and print) which combined with supporting media (posters, booklets/pamphlets, videos & theatre performances) are effective in improving knowledge, self efficacy in contraceptive use, influencing some social norms, increasing interpersonal communication & increasing condom use.

Source: WHO. Preventing HIV/AIDS in young people. Evidence from developing countries. What works. WHO. Geneva. 2007.

Key statement 3

- ❑ In both high and low income countries, a section of radio, television & print media targets adolescents and young people.
- ❑ Targeted mass media represents a powerful means of **understanding** what adolescents and young people are concerned about & **reaching** them with messages tailored to their needs and preferences.

Key statement 4

- ❑ Adolescents and young people everywhere are turning away from 'traditional' mass media to 'new' media for information & entertainment.
- ❑ New media use electronic means to enable users to access content. New media includes video recordings, audio recordings, CD Roms and online content.

Key statement 5

- ❑ In just a few years, social media has radically transformed how people link up and communicate with each other.
- ❑ It is a powerful tool to reach & engage adolescents and young people.
- ❑ It is also associated with negative outcomes – including cyber-bullying, sexual predation and drawing impressionable young people into fundamentalist groups.

Key statement 6

- ❑ Mobile phone subscriptions are surging worldwide; including in the poorest countries of the world.
- ❑ They represent a powerful way of reaching adolescents and young people with tailored content.
- ❑ They provide the means to reach them with information that they desperately need, when lack of comfort & capacity are important barriers to communication between adults (family members, teachers, health workers and others) and adolescents and young people.
- ❑ m4RH is an exciting initiative which uses this technology to reach adolescents and young people with contraceptive information (<http://m4rh.fhi360.org/>)

Key statement 7

- ❑ "Most published studies of mHealth interventions are from developing countries."

A I Chukwuemeka. Is mobile health (mHealth) the magic bullet ? A short review of the impact of mHealth on adolescent sexual health. Journal of Public Health & Epidemiology. 2015. Volume 7 (8), 252-268.

- ❑ To fill this gap, WHO is carrying out an intervention study in two sites, to test the impact & coverage of an on-demand m-Health system.

L Gonsalves et al. Adolescent/Youth Reproductive Mobile Access and Delivery Initiative for Love and Life Outcomes (ARMADILLO) Study: formative protocol for mHealth platform development and piloting . Reproductive Health. 2015. 12.67. DOI