

Module 1: Introduction to adolescence and to adolescent health - Adolescent health and development with a particular focus on sexual and reproductive health - Assignment

Chris Opoku Fofie

Upper West Regional Hospital, Wa Upper West Region, Ghana

World Bank. World Development Report 2007. Development and the next generation. Washington: World Bank; 2007.

The youth will always influence their nations. How positively or negatively will depend on the type of education and support they receive. They need a lot of opportunities to keep challenging their ever growing capability to make the right decisions and also extra opportunities to keep correcting their mistakes (second chance).

Mass education programs across the world have not yielded the needed results because of poor quality. Young people need to acquire skills that will improve their lives and promote development.

It is far cheaper and cost-effective to invest in quality education for the youth than to spend later to keep them in prisons a well equipped youth will definitely pay back to society all the investment with interest.

UNFPA. UNFPA framework for action on adolescents and youth. Opening doors with 4 keys. New York: UNFPA; 2007.

The rise in the global adolescent population is closely followed with an increase in the trend of HIV infection, teenage pregnancy, teenage illiteracy and abject poverty yet investment and support for this vulnerable group keeps dwindling.

To promote and protect the rights of adolescents and maximize the development of their potentials in a congenial environment, the UNFPA has spearheaded a framework for action on adolescent and youth that seeks to holistically address the needs.

The four key strategic areas are:

- A. Supportive policy making taking into account population structure and poverty dynamics. That is to integrate adolescent reproductive health issues in the mainstream of national development planning at the highest level.
- B. Gender-Sensitive, Life-Skills-Based Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) education that will equip boys and girls with competencies that will permit them to make the appropriate reproductive and sexual decisions that will promote health and development.
- C. Sexual and reproductive health services that include contraception, maternal services and HIV prevention provided in adolescent friendly manner.
- D. Young people's leadership and participation. Programs to be led and own by the adolescents themselves as a way to guarantee their inputs and views are considered.

WHO. Strengthening the health sector response to adolescent health & development. Geneva: WHO; 2009.

Adolescence is a period characterized by both physical and psychological changes that predispose individuals to various reproductive health risks as well as provide an opportunity to

consolidate sound health practices that in the long term will prevent teenage pregnancy, HIV and other reproductive problems.

The World Health Organization has devised the “4 S framework” which states to strengthen adolescent and reproductive health development by improving the gathering and use of strategic information, development of supportive evidence-informed policies, scaling up health commodities and services and strengthening of other sectors.