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.
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.

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."
  

- 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