Take Action for Adolescents – A Call to Action for Adolescent Health and Well-Being

What is Take Action for Adolescents – A Call to Action for Adolescent Health and Well-Being? The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Office of Population Affairs (OPA) introduces a new Call to Action focused on improving the health and well-being of our nation’s adolescents. “Take Action for Adolescents – A Call to Action for Adolescent Health and Well-Being” (“Take Action for Adolescents” of “the Call to Action”), acknowledges the diverse and complex experiences of young people ages 10-24 and prioritizes their needs. It promotes the vision that all adolescents in the United States should have the safety, support, and resources they need to thrive, be healthy, and have equitable opportunity to realize their full potential. The Call to Action is designed for use by policy makers, youth-serving professionals and organizations, health care and human services providers and organizations, researchers, and parents and caregivers.

Take Action for Adolescents reflects the “triple dividend” identified in the 2016 Lancet Commission report: the idea that investments in adolescent health and well-being lead to health for adolescents now, a healthy adult life, and better health for the next generation. The Call to Action acknowledges the opportunities and challenges young people face today and emphasizes building on young people’s strengths and potential.

How was the Call to Action developed? To develop the Take Action for Adolescents, OPA conducted foundational and qualitative research to obtain insights on key issues in adolescent health and well-being from experts across the United States, including young people, youth-serving professionals, researchers, clinicians, and parents, and caregivers. OPA gathered input from a wide array of federal, state, academic, and community-based organizations and worked closely with members of the federal Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs’ Adolescent Health Action Team to build and refine the Call to Action.

What is in the Take Action for Adolescents Call to Action? The Call to Action contains guiding principles and eight goals that are aligned with opportunities, challenges, and specific action steps that support its vision. Take Action for Adolescents is accompanied by a companion resource, the Take Action Toolkit, which provides tips to help select and customize actions, plan activities, and evaluate progress.

How will Take Action for Adolescents be implemented? OPA will work closely with allies and partners in many sectors and across the U.S. to implement the Call to Action. These allies and partners will include policy makers and health care and human services providers, youth-serving professionals and organizations, researchers, and parents and caregivers. The action steps included in the Call to Action are a starting point; they can be tailored and expanded to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities and people who are historically underserved by health care and human services systems. The Call to Action is designed to be a catalyst for allies and partners to create their own strategies to address the needs of the adolescents they serve. OPA’s Take Action Toolkit will inspire and support allies and partners in their implementation efforts.

For updates on Take Action for Adolescents, subscribe to OPA’s newsletter. For more information, please contact: Emily Novick, Emily.Novick@hhs.gov